

Invitation to Green the Commons

To: UB Commons Vendors
From: Domenic J. Licata, UB Professional Staff Senate
139 Center for the Arts | 716-645-0531 | djlicata@buffalo.edu
Justin M. Imiola, Student Environmental Network
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Re: Styrofoam Alternatives & Recycling
Date: March 24, 2015

Dear Vendor:

The UB Community has a proud tradition of environmentally friendly practices. Our food service areas have been recognized for their commendable commitment to reducing waste, composting scraps, and using only recyclable materials. UB Commons, while recognized as a privately managed entity, is a valuable part of our community, contributing to the perception of UB held by students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The Professional Staff Senate in partnership with the Environmental Network, UB's student environmental club, invite you to replace your styrofoam packaging with recyclable or compostable alternatives, and to install recycling bins within your facilities. By joining UB's efforts, you will not only be moving towards greater sustainability, but you will retain the business of the growing number of our community who are concerned about health and environmental issues such as styrofoam waste.

- Styrofoam production is the fifth largest source of hazardous waste
- Styrofoam is non-recyclable
- Styrene, the main chemical found in styrofoam, is a dangerous neurotoxin and potential carcinogen.
- Styrene leaches into hot and acidic food and beverages
- Styrofoam is banned in an increasing number of cities and institutions concerned with the health and safety of people and the environment

We have consulted with Johnston Paper, a locally owned company that supplies numerous businesses, including UB, with alternatives to styrofoam. They have agreed to extend to you the possibility of group purchasing discounts. Johnston will prepare, on your request, a personalized quote for products which could easily and affordably replace the toxic and non-recyclable packaging you now carry. Johnston invites you to contact them for an analysis of your needs and a customized quotation.

We are enthusiastically looking forward to supporting your progress towards sustainability.

Sincerely,

Domenic J. Licata, UB Professional Staff Senate

Justin M. Imiola, Student Environmental Network

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Frequently Asked Questions

How will switching to non-styrofoam containers impact my business?

We expect that business will increase as a result of your efforts to become more sustainable. A majority of students list a campus's sustainability record as a deciding factor when choosing a school. We will actively promote your business, and encourage students and staff to support those who have eliminated the use of styrofoam.

Will my costs increase?

Our informal polling suggests that most shoppers would welcome a small price increase knowing that they are supporting sustainable practices. In fact, some have suggested that a small price increase would be unnoticeable, or have no impact on their purchasing decision.

Johnston Paper is eager to work with you to discover potential cost savings, including wholesale pricing and identifying in-house dining alternatives. For example, using compostable plates instead of clamshells may result in savings.

Will this effect operations?

We anticipate that switching to non-styrofoam containers will have no negative impact on daily operations. In fact, the delivery of Johnston products directly to your store may reduce your transportation and delivery costs.

Do we need to purchase from Johnston Paper?

Certainly not. However, Johnston Paper is the preferred vendor for the UB campus as well as the supplier to a number of local restaurants and grocery stores. They have acknowledged a desire to work with us to ensure the best pricing options.

How can I contact Johnston Paper?

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