



When you protect
the health of
customers you
protect your
business and
the planet



SCA Business Report

Making Green and Clean Part of Your Menu

What is it that excites patrons most when visiting a restaurant? Is it the friendly wait staff? The popular décor? The extensive menu? Whatever the experience you've created, taking the proper steps to maintaining that caché goes far beyond plating memorable cuisines.

Hygiene and sustainable restaurant practices are becoming more and more relevant to those choosing to dine out.

According to a survey commissioned by SCA North America and conducted online by Harris Interactive among a sample of 2,175 U.S. adults, 86 percent think restaurant hygiene is very important to their dining experience¹. Also, 88 percent agree that restroom cleanliness is an indication of the hygiene standard of the restaurant and its staff, kitchen and food prep areas.

Along with taking proper precautions to serve safe food in hygienic environments, if you are a conscious supporter of the environment and want to lessen your restaurant's carbon footprint, there are various changes you can make now to positively contribute to the sustainability of the planet.

More and more restaurants are exploring ways to make their operations sustainable. Trends show that consumers are increasingly educated about the benefits of sustainability and that advertising your green practices will help reinforce positive images of your brand. And, of course, you can feel good about the food you serve, which can be a reward in itself.

Let's look at hygiene first.

Another study conducted in 2006 by the nationally recognized Food Safety Policy Center at Michigan State University offers insights as to why people keep coming back. The study, which was based on telephone interviews with more than 1,000 U.S. adults, found that while 96 percent of the respondents trust themselves to prepare food safely at home, only 58 percent say they know a lot or quite a bit about food safety. And 46 percent of Americans said they "think" about food safety when eating at a restaurant.

Clearly there is room for hygiene improvements in the eyes of Americans dining out.

01

Why Foodservice Operators Should Care

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)², the food supply in the U.S., while remarkably safe, can become contaminated with a variety of germs. After eating contaminated food, people can develop anything from a brief and mild illness, often mistakenly referred to as "food poisoning," to dangerous sickness.

The CDC estimates that 76 million Americans — approximately one in four—get sick, more than 300,000 are hospitalized and 5,000 die from foodborne illnesses each year. The CDC also says that 34 percent of all documented cases of foodborne illness are directly caused by poor hand hygiene.

From a financial perspective, foodborne illnesses can create major doom and gloom to a restaurant. In the past, once a reported instance of salmonella poisoning struck the news, it became extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a restaurant to recover from the negative publicity. And that's just salmonella. Now factor in other recent challenges such as H1N1 (swine flu), MRSA and avian flu. The potential impact of poor restaurant hygiene becomes even more alarming.

Health and hygiene liabilities aside, even the appearance of a less-than-pristine washroom can have a direct impact on a restaurant's bottom line, as evident by the Harris Interactive survey. Since restaurant patrons reported they are far less likely to return if they find washrooms that are

¹ Survey conducted online Aug. 1-5, 2008, within the United States by Harris Interactive via its QuickQuerySM online omnibus service on behalf of SCA Tissue North America among 2,175 U.S. adults ages 18 and older, of who 2,108 visit restaurants. Results were weighted as needed for region, age within gender, education, household income and race/ethnicity. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

² www.cdc.org

unhygienic or poorly maintained, it's important to focus on washroom cleanliness —especially when 29 percent of respondents said they would never return to a restaurant with an extremely unclean or unsanitary restroom.

An even further potential hazard was revealed when the survey found that 50 percent of those who visit restaurants say they would tell their friends and family about a negative experience with an unclean or unsanitary restaurant restroom, and 46 percent say they would avoid going to a restaurant because of a bad experience with a restaurant's restroom that they had themselves or one they heard about from others.



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The results provide valuable insight and guidance for restaurant owners in terms of how to approach hygiene and cleaning.

Simply put, restaurant patrons associate the conditions in the restroom with the facility's overall cleanliness and hygiene standards. A dirty or poorly serviced restroom drives away repeat business and spreads poisonous word of mouth.

Moving from the washroom to other areas of the restaurant, in a separate survey conducted online by Harris

Interactive and sponsored by SCA Tissue North America in November 2009³, 74 percent of respondents who regularly eat at restaurants say chefs repeatedly using the same rags to clean food contact surfaces is a very unhygienic practice. Seventy-six percent agreed that employees using color-coded cleaning products to prevent cross contamination would be very hygienic. Additionally, 77 percent feel that using disposable wiping products to clean food-contact surfaces is considered very hygienic.

02

How to Keep Your Patrons and Your Bottom Line Safe

Safe food handling is the basis for avoiding food poisoning and transmission of infections and viruses in the food industry. Proper hand hygiene can prevent serious illness among your customers and save expenses.

"Food quality and hygiene are our top priorities," said Wade Howard, category manager, P.F. Chang's China Bistro.

"Hygiene in our restaurants is a rigorous process that spans from the kitchen to the host stand to our guest's tables. Hygiene is not something that we preach, it is a passion that we live and breathe daily in our restaurants."

In the high turnover world that is the restaurant industry, the success of a restaurant business rests on three "musts": quality produce, good service and safe food handling.

It's easy for micro-organisms to find "comfortable homes" in common kitchen items such as washing cloths, cutting-boards, kitchen appliances, textile rags and towels. They will also happily stick to any corner and joint that is overlooked in the cleaning process. Thirty-two percent of all food poisoning incidents are due to poor hygiene. This, the largest infection factor, should be the easiest to address.

Hand hygiene gets passed on and nearly 30 percent of us are affected by illnesses caused by contaminated food every year.

The presence of Tork soap dispensers in the kitchen and washroom will facilitate good hygiene practices. Employees can use Tork paper towels, as dry hands are safe hands.

³ Survey conducted online November 10-12, 2009, within the United States by Harris Interactive via its QuickQuerySM online omnibus service on behalf of SCA Tissue North America among 2,495 U.S. adults, ages 18 years and older of whom 2,442 visit restaurants. Results were weighted as needed for region, age within gender, education, household income and race/ethnicity. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

Germs love moist hands and tests show that paper is the best fabric for doing a thorough job drying hands. Studies also clearly show that paper is superior to the hand dryer solution for efficient drying.

Managers like Howard believe proper sanitation processes are pivotal to assure cleanliness at all levels.

“We put forth an investment on quality SCA products and sanitizers because we know our guests are getting the very best when they visit us, and that’s a creed we stand by,” said Howard.

03

Hygiene 101 from the Expert

Donna Duberg is an assistant professor in Clinical Laboratory Science at Saint Louis University (SLU) and a member of SCA’s Tork Green Hygiene Council. The four-member council provides best-practice information for Tork customers and the general public to ensure they are up-to-date on the latest sustainability trends and hygiene methods. Duberg is an expert on germs and hygiene with an academic and clinical background in infectious diseases and microbiology. Duberg also serves on SLU’s H1N1 Pandemic Issues Committee.

Following are a few tips from Duberg for restaurant owners:

- » Use paper not cloth. Contrary to popular belief, cloth towels are not as hygienic as single-use nonwoven wipes when it comes to cleaning. Bacteria can live for days on a surface and for weeks on cloth. Because cloth rags and cloth towels used for cleaning are generally kept in dark places and are not always completely dry before they are put away, they become the perfect breeding ground for bacteria. Single-use wipers clean surfaces and then are discarded.
- » Eliminate cross contamination. Since bacteria can live on cloth for a considerable amount of time, the risk of cross contamination is greater with cloth than with non-woven wipers. Cloth allows for bacteria from back-of-the-house tasks to easily migrate to the dining area.

- » Color code your products. Using color-coded cleaning products, such as wipers, can be very helpful in the prevention of cross contamination as each color can be designated for separate uses or certain areas of the restaurant.
- » Wash properly. If cloth must be used, remember that cloth used for cleaning should be sanitized by washing in hot (at least 160 degrees), soapy water.

“Restaurant owners need to take that extra step to ensure both the kitchen and the dining areas are clean,” said Duberg. “Hygiene is one of the first things the customers notice when they walk into a restaurant. If they do not appreciate what they see, they’re most likely not going to return.”

04

Surpass the Standards and Serve Only the Best

As is well known in the restaurant industry, when it comes to assuring food safety, the ServSafe Food Safety program is the industry’s gold standard for training and certification⁴. Whether a restaurant or foodservice program is just getting started or needs to keep current with emerging technologies, issues and practices, www.servsafe.com should be a first and frequent stop for restaurant managers.

The ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification process is accredited by the American National Standards Institute’s Conference for Food Protection as valid, reliable and legally defensible. Following the ServSafe model, operators can ensure the highest level of food safety while also providing protection from the kind of devastating legal consequences that can stem from an outbreak of foodborne illness.

ServSafe does a remarkable job in providing the tools and resources to ensure food safety from the back of the house to the front. And while much of the focus is on mechanics such as time, temperature, storage and handling requirements, ServSafe’s inclusive training and materials also cover proper handwashing techniques and systems.

⁴ www.ServSafe.com/FoodSafety/news

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Clean + Green = Smart Steps to Success

Josh Radoff is a co-founder and principal of YRG sustainability and another member of the Tork Green Hygiene Council. YRG is a technical and strategic sustainability consulting firm with clients around the globe. YRG supports developers, architecture and engineering firms involved in green building projects and works directly with businesses and organizations on ways to achieve their sustainability goals. Radoff holds a bachelors degree in physics, a masters in electrical engineering, and a master's in sustainable energy.

To help make your restaurant more sustainable, Radoff offers some suggestions below:

Reduce resource consumption through conservation, package reduction and recycling.

There are a number of easy and surefire ways for restaurants to protect the planet, connect with customers and reduce costs through their procurement and waste strategies. The first step is trying to conserve by reducing demand for products that cannot be reused or recycled. Then operators can find ways to buy in bulk and recycle materials as much as possible. Operators who recycle are meeting the needs of today's environmentally conscious consumers and are a step ahead when it comes to welcoming future generations of diners.

Bring sustainable products to the menu.

The first and most obvious step for restaurant operators looking to visibly incorporate sustainability into their operation is to add items to the menu that are grown, processed and produced in a sustainable fashion. Purchasing locally grown food when possible and seeking natural, organic and pesticide-free products with few ingredients and minimal packaging is a great way to start.

Here are some others:

- » Partner regionally with sustainable suppliers for products not available locally
- » Foster relationships and communicate with vendors
- » Evaluate suppliers for their sustainable practices and use recommendations from a third-party certifier to find sustainable vendors

Reduce use of toxins and hazardous materials.

This practice is endorsed by restaurant owners and operators who want to provide a safe, healthy environment for their workers and their patrons. Be sure to take the necessary

steps to evaluate your restaurant operations to determine the use of toxins or hazardous materials you may have onsite. Some other ways to reduce the use of hazardous materials include:

- » Replace harsh soaps and other cleaning products with natural ones. SCA's Tork products are a good example as they provide cost saving solutions while maintaining a strong focus on our environment with 100 percent recycled, process-chlorine free products to help reduce your environmental footprint. Hygiene is about being healthy, and Tork ensures healthy people, a healthy planet and a healthy bottom line for you.
- » Use low-VOC paints, glues and coatings wherever possible
- » Maintain good fresh air exchange in your buildings and change air filters regularly



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Create a company plan for social responsibility.

The pursuit of social responsibility among restaurant operators is a mission fueled by passion. The process of improving sustainable practices is a work-in-progress that evolves as technology changes and offers new ways to reduce operators' environmental footprints. Some specific suggestions include:

- » Craft a mission statement that reflects your company's sustainability goals and specific benchmarks
- » Share your mission statement with employees, diners and vendors
- » Regularly report on ongoing performance related to your goals and make the data available to the public

Communicate your sustainability messages.

Restaurant operators need to let customers know about their sustainability practices. Delivering an environmentally responsible message to customers makes patrons feel good about choosing to eat in these restaurants. Craft a mission statement that reflects your company's sustainability goals and share that mission statement with your employees, diners and vendors. In addition, train employees to be ambassadors of the brand by delivering the sustainability message to diners and set an example by commuting on bicycle or public transportation, using hybrid delivery vehicles, energy-saving appliances and other green products.

Restaurants are in a unique position to cut down on some of this waste by recycling, reusing and reducing. The statistics are staggering: the U.S. uses on average 580 pounds of paper per person, and tosses out enough aluminum in just three months to rebuild all commercial airplanes.

As for food, approximately 100 billion pounds a year of uneaten, prepared food ends up in incinerators or landfills. Processing that wasted food costs the country \$1 billion per year, according to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports.

As the Earth's resources are strained and rising costs begin to squeeze profits, it is more important than ever that restaurant managers understand the synergies between green and hygiene and look to implement business practices that promote a hygienic environment that is also sustainable. It's a smart business strategy. And, not only does living and promoting a clean and green lifestyle help protect your customers and the environment, it saves costs in the long run and shows your restaurant patrons that you're committed to doing your part to leaving behind a legacy of conservation and good health for future generations.



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