



Procure with ease and gain some extra value on the side

Why sustainable and circular procurement matters for your business

Acknowledgement of Country

Circular economy inspires regeneration of land and rethinking the current waste and resource intensive systems we are a part of. It asks us to rethink how we can apply better practices in our businesses that prioritise community, land, and welfare of people and planet. This toolkit acknowledges the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation who practice this care and have for tens of thousands of years, providing a lesson for us all to value the materials and food products in our business and supply chain, now and into the future.

How to use the toolkits

These toolkits are designed for managers, owners and chefs who want practical, workable sustainability improvements. Each toolkit focuses on simple actions you can introduce into day-to-day operations without disrupting service. The examples show how circular economy principles can be applied in real kitchens and venues, improving efficiency, reducing waste and uncovering measurable cost savings.

Each guide covers one core area of your business: waste management, food and organics, packaging, and procurement. Use them individually or as a series. Start with the area that creates the most waste or cost pressure in your venue.

You'll find clear steps to reduce environmental impact, strengthen operational discipline, cut unnecessary spend and build a story your staff and customers can stand behind.

Definitions

CIRCULAR PROCUREMENT

Purchasing products that can be ideally reused, repurposed, or recycled at end-of-life.

CERTIFICATIONS

Documents that verify claims made from a business are correct.

EMISSIONS

Production of greenhouse gases which enter our atmosphere, trap heat, and change the planet's climate. Emissions are produced from any product when it is created or when it enters landfill, especially organics. This includes gases such as methane (organics) and carbon dioxide.

RECYCLED CONTENT

Products that are made with materials that were previously recycled.

Why sustainable and circular procurement matters for your business



Sustainable and circular procurement is about buying smarter, choosing products and assets that deliver value for your business, your customers, and the environment. This means selecting products that reduce emissions, whether through reuse, recycling, or minimising transport.

By shifting how you buy, you can strengthen your supply chain, reduce future costs and build resilience to disruption. This may involve purchasing locally, choosing recycled or recyclable products, or selecting items designed to last longer.

The bigger picture

These choices also create opportunities to share your story with customers and staff, and strengthen credibility through recognised certifications such as organic, regenerative or ethical sourcing standards.

76%

76% of Australian consumers have considered a business purchase based on an organisation's sustainability actions.

+50%

Over 50% of consumers believe sustainable and ethical packaging and products is the most important outcome for a business they care about.¹

Reviewing procurement spend can uncover cost-saving opportunities. Smarter procurement can deliver value by:

- Changing to a new independent/local supplier could offer opportunities for special deals and considerations, such as seasonal produce or discounts for excess products.
- Working with local seasonal suppliers minimises transport costs and can produce stronger relationships that avoid effects of climate weather events on long-haul transport routes.
- Reviewing order patterns to reduce delivery frequency and associated costs.
- Prioritising menus with seasonal products avoids inflation of product costs during off seasons.

1. <https://www.southpole.com/publications/australia-sustainability-communication-report>

The state of procurement in hospitality

Procurement in hospitality has become more complex, with automation, multiple suppliers and dynamic pricing. While consolidating suppliers can improve efficiency, price alone is no longer a measure of value.

What works in practice



Choosing suppliers with verified certifications that support ethical and sustainable production.



Buy from local suppliers to reduce transport emissions, support the local economy and build stronger supplier relationships.



Procure second-hand assets or products made with recycled materials to reduce environmental impact and avoid the need for new raw materials.

Certifications to look for when choosing suppliers

<p>Australian Certified Organics (ACO)</p>  <p>Producers can ensure farm-table compliance whilst meeting strict organics practices to exclude the use of synthetic chemical and GM</p>	<p>Regenerative Organic Certified</p>  <p>Recognises farms that implement regenerative practices to build soil health, increase biodiversity and promote animal welfare</p>	<p>NASAA Organic Label</p>  <p>Farmers are audited by a third party to demonstrate proof of genuine organic integrity towards the produce</p>
<p>RSPCA Approved Farming</p>  <p>Focuses on producing food at a higher-welfare standard, beyond what is legally required in Australia</p>	<p>Fair Trade Australia</p>  <p>Ensures products are sourced from producers who meet fair pricing standards, labour standards and sustainable agriculture which ensures better trading conditions</p>	<p>Fair Farms Australia</p>  <p>Certification enabling businesses to meet fair, ethical and responsible worker treatment and social compliance</p>
<p>Supply Nation</p>  <p>Promotes the procurement of products from majority (close to 100% owned) Indigenous owned businesses and producers – driving positive social outcomes</p>	<p>FSC Certified</p>  <p>Ethically grown and responsibly managed timber</p>	<p>ISO 20400</p>  <p>Demonstrating a commitment to sustainable and ethical procurement across their procurement of products (e.g. furniture)</p>

These certifications help verify ethical sourcing, environmental performance and responsible production practices. While there are many options, understanding what to look for allows you to make confident procurement decisions and communicate these choices to customers.

Setting your team up for success

1. Know the certifications to look for

GOOD

List all suppliers and request their certifications. Use the list on page 5 of this toolkit as your guide.

BETTER

Using that list, engage suppliers that do not meet standards and ask about future commitments.

BEST

Prioritise suppliers that meet recognised standards or offer Indigenous-led products, and communicate these choices to customers and staff.

2. Use local and seasonal produce

GOOD

Identify local ingredients that can be prioritised in menu items throughout the year and adjust as seasons change.

BETTER

Map opportunities to transition to local suppliers within your region. This could be prioritised with producers in your wider city region.

BEST

Transition to local suppliers for the majority of your produce to support the local economy, minimise costs by prioritising fresher and local products that last longer, and improve supplier relations within your supply chain.

3. Buy recycled and second-hand

GOOD

When your business needs to dispose of large assets, check online for opportunities to rehome or donate usable assets instead of sending them to landfill.

BETTER

When planning the design of your venue, choose products that include recycled content.

BEST

Identify what assets could be purchased from second-hand markets to help with your fitout. Complete quick scans on online second-hand marketplaces.

What to expect

Uplifting your procurement process will require upskilling sessions, research, and honest conversations with your suppliers. Not all suppliers will meet expectations immediately, but gradual change can deliver cost savings and stronger supplier relationships.

Case Study

Cherry Moon General Store

Location

Annandale

Overview

Cherry Moon General Store, along with owner Kimmy, produce artisanal baked goods using seasonal produce, local suppliers and a sustainably designed fitout. By prioritising seasonal ingredients and maintaining strong supplier relationships, the business adapts to availability while helping manage costs. Suppliers provide guidance on what is fresh and local, while flexible recipes enable the team to adjust ingredients as needed. Cherry Moon also sources non-GMO produce, works with local community gardens and incorporates by-products, such as malt from Wildflower Brewery, into its menu.

Working with certified suppliers

Cherry Moon partners with Wholegrain Milling Co, sourcing grains from certified sustainable producers. Certifications include:

Non-GMO Compliance Australia

Australian Organic Certified

Kosher Australia

Changing the fitout process:

To reduce costs and environmental impact, Cherry Moon prioritises second-hand and recycled materials in its fitout. This includes reused bricks, timber furniture and refurbished equipment sourced from local markets and community groups.

The Result

Cherry Moon found that their diverse range of independent and local suppliers did not affect their procurement model. It strengthened it. Constant communication with suppliers led to Cherry Moon receiving discounts or special deals on new and seasonal products. The result is a consistent, high-quality product that Cherry Moon's customers always come back to.

Acknowledgement of organisations supporting the Circular Economy and Sustainability Toolkits developed by Edge Impact, supported by the City of Sydney.

Edge Impact acknowledges the organisations who contributed their expertise and practical insight to the development of these toolkits. Through consultation and detailed feedback, they identified key barriers and enablers to circularity in hospitality and shared best-practice examples from their own operations.

Their input has strengthened the relevance and impact of this work.



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