

Sustainable Management of Food

About the 2018 Food Recovery Challenge Regional Award Winners

Great Lakes Region (Region 5)

SAVOR...Chicago – McCormick Place West Building

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago's McCormick Square is the Western Hemisphere's largest convention center. The convention center welcomes more than three million visitors each year. Millions of visitors mean that the facility's commitment to sustainability is not a small undertaking. SAVOR...Chicago, the official foodservice operator for McCormick Square, works closely with the Metropolitan Pier & Exposition Authority, as well as show organizers like WindPower, the Radiological Society of North America and the American Society of Clinical Oncology to divert and minimize food waste and to implement other innovative, sustainable practices.

“Consumer education is a vital part of our being able to take sustainable practices to the next level. We have just seconds to educate millions of visitors on what goes in which waste stream. We know from experience that most people want to do the right thing when it comes to recycling and waste diversion. If we can make it simple and convenient for them to do this correctly, we all win.”

- Doug Bradley, SAVOR... Vice President of Culinary

In 2017, SAVOR...Chicago diverted a record 40.4 tons of food waste – a more than 85 percent increase over 2016. SAVOR...Chicago attributes this jump to its ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and a large amount of consumer education. Education is an essential component of the foodservice operator's continued success since tradeshow attendees only have a limited amount of time to discard their meals and waste. This is the reason why SAVOR...Chicago's efforts to clearly communicate its three distinct waste streams (compost, recycle, and trash) are so important. New visual graphics both illustrate and spell out which items are compostable and recyclable, while staffers named the "Green Angels" are on hand at most major shows to help direct visitors who need additional help or encouragement.

RECYCLE	COMPOST	LANDFILL
 <p>PLASTIC • ALUMINUM • CARDBOARD • GLASS</p>	 <p>FOOD SCRAPS • BOXES, NAPKINS • TABLEWARE • PAPER CUPS • STRAWS</p>	 <p>SNACK • CANDY WRAPPERS • CONDIMENTS • COFFEE CUP & LID</p>

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Electric Forest and Bright Beat

Rothbury, Michigan

The culture of reuse and conservation is woven into the fabric of Electric Forest, an annual music and camping festival hosting over 70,000 attendees and staff. In 2017, BrightBeat, a sustainability consulting firm led Electric Forest’s food recovery efforts, as well as the festival’s other sustainability actions. Electric Forest donated 14,600 meals (7.35 tons) to Teen Challenge of Western Michigan, a foundation helping the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual well-being of thousands in need.



Electric Forest also diverted 38.12 tons of organic material from entering landfills and incinerators - a nine-fold increase from 2016. The organic material included wasted food, front and back-of-

house food scraps, certified compostable serviceware (29.58 tons), liquid bio-waste (non-water/non-grease liquid kitchen waste consisting of soups, sauces, juices, stocks, etc. (five tons), and used vegetable oil (3.54 tons). With the help of Spurt Industries, a compost processing facility and wood waste recycler and Earth Additives, a company that converts used cooking oil into biodiesel for vehicle and farm equipment, and land applies liquid bio-waste, the organic material became a valuable soil amendment, a land-applied liquid fertilizer, and biodiesel that fueled a local farmer’s equipment for a year.

“Electric Forest provided the best donation we’ve ever had.”

- RJ Russell, Western Michigan Teen Challenge

Food vendors, caterers, bars and sponsors were required to use certified compostable service ware. BrightBeat worked in partnership with Eco-Products to procure verified-compostable products. Resource recovery training was also conducted with all levels of food vendors, catering, bar and maintenance teams, along with ongoing monitoring, guidance and communication to address issues in real-time. This hands-on approach enabled the clean and efficient collection of significant amounts of food scraps, liquid food waste and used vegetable oil. Maintaining clean waste streams also required staff to sort bins and decontaminate bags and dumpsters

Finally, to achieve these food recovery results, Electric Forest’s concessionaire, caterer, food vendors, maintenance crew and sustainability personnel tightly coordinated their work. Festival-goers engaged in Electric Forest’s sustainability efforts through the festival’s Electricology program which heightened awareness and encouraged the proper diversion of compostable and recyclable items.

“Though it isn’t easy to build infrastructure and manage large-scale food recovery in a ‘pop-up city’ emerging from the forests of Western Michigan once a year, it is doable, and totally WORTH IT.” - Stephanie Katsaros, Sustainability Director, Electric Forest