

GREEN EFFORTS

AT THE BAY VIEW CAFÉ

The Bay View Café at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory on the campus of the University of California-Berkeley tries to operate as sustainably as possible.

The café, which has been operated by the Epicurean Group for the last year, offers a wide range of services to the labs. “We run the café for breakfast and lunch,” said Brian Barisione, district manager with the Epicurean Group. “We also provide a wide range of catering to them at the lab. We do a lot of catering with the university itself. We bid against other caterers on the campus.”

Bay View features several concepts. “We have a grill concept which is basically anything that you can think of that would be produced on a grill,” he said. “We also have a fresh, made-to-order deli station and a tossed-to-order salad station. The tossed-to-order salad station is unique in that the salads presented in that, you can get as a tossed-to-order salad, a wrap or as a sandwich.

“We have fresh-made paninis, fresh-made pizza with everything from scratch — the pizza, the dough, the sauce, the cheese grated fresh. We have a tacqueria concept with traditional Mexican recipe items — everything from tacos to burritos to nachos to taco salads. We have a salad bar. We have fresh soups that we make every day. We have two hot entrées that we offer in the café every day.”

The focus is to use organic, sustainable products that are local. “All of our vendors source their foods within 150 miles of our kitchen,” said Barisione. “We have a chalkboard display every single day that we put up who and where we are buying our products from, our local farms, local producers. We change it up every single day to mirror what we are actually serving in the café.”

He continued, “We have posted around the café dining room and kitchen different charts to show how much water is used in the production of different items. For example, it will show you how much water it takes to produce a pound of beef versus how much it takes to produce a pound of vegetables. We try to show the impact of what we are

purchasing and how what we are eating will affect our natural resources.”

Epicurean also makes sure to offset the environmental impact of its catering vehicle. “We buy carbon credits for the use of our catering vehicle,” said Barisione. “We don’t have a hybrid vehicle, but we do buy carbon offsets to make up the difference of having to use a fossil fuel vehicle on campus.”

Composting is a very important part of the café’s sustainability efforts. “We



are a member of an organization called Green Town Los Altos,” he said. “This is an organization that promotes the use of compostable paper products. We have created a co-op within Green Town in which small businesses can get together and use the collective purchasing power to purchase compostable products at a rate that is a penny more expensive than Styrofoam. It really makes it cost effective for them to go green and compostable with their disposable products.”

The café uses items that are completely compostable or reusable. “All of our disposable utensils and to-go containers are 100 percent compostable,” Barisione said. “Our napkins and other products like that are made out of recycled materials. Our to-go cups are 100 percent compostable. This is our take-out stuff, but even beyond that,



we really focus on using reusable items to serve the product. We have china and we have metal flatware and plastic tumblers for beverages. That is our primary vessel of choice when it comes to serving the food,

but we still have people who want stuff to go. To meet that need, we use the compostable items.”

The foodservice staff is also trained on how to separate compostable pre-consumer waste. “We have what we call ‘ten meetings,’ he said. “We talk about everything from safety to sustainability to giving them little tidbits and information on our vendors and how they’re responsible vendors. They are 10 minutes at 10 a.m.”

Epicurean contracted with a company called Recycology that picks up the material and composts it offsite. “We put the pre-consumer waste in the compost bin and that is how we dispose of it,” said Barisione. “They are pretty comprehensive as far as pulling that stuff out for us and taking care of it in a responsible manner.”