

Northland College Sustainable Purchasing Policy

Purpose

Northland College is committed to procuring products and services that will minimize negative impacts on society and the environment while simultaneously maximizing positive impacts through responsible purchasing.

To accomplish this, Northland College commits to the following Best Practices and Procurement Strategies:

Best Practices and Procurement Strategies

1. Source products manufactured or produced locally and/or from local vendors
2. Reduce waste at the point of purchase
3. Purchase durable and reusable goods
4. Purchase resource efficient goods
5. Lease and rent when appropriate
6. Buy goods in bulk or concentrated form
7. Procure products that are certified to meet credible third-party sustainability standards
8. Procure refurbished goods and utilize refurbishing services
9. Purchase goods that protect the users health and safety
10. Products that are recyclable or compostable and that contain a high percentage of postconsumer recycled content
11. Purchase from suppliers who strive to improve their environmental performance and who can document the supply-chain impacts of their efforts

To ensure the highest social and environmental standards, Northland College commits to obtaining NO products or services from companies, including their subsidiaries, which are found to be in violation of any of the following:

Screens

1. No human rights violations as documented by global non-profits such as Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International.
2. No documented violations of national or international laws, treaties or embargoes by similarly credible third-parties.
3. Products or services in compliance with all applicable environmental laws and regulations.

Companies responding to Northland College requests for proposals or invitations for bids must submit documentation addressing the following:

Required Submittals

1. Copy of most recent Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) report or equivalent reporting on corporate governance, environmental management, environmental goals and performance, product stewardship, community and social involvement, labor practices and worker health and safety.
2. Documentation of relevant product or service certifications (Energy Star, Water Sense, Green Seal, Cradle to Cradle, ISO, FSC, GreenGuard, etc.)
3. Specify product and packaging take-back procedures.
4. Outline of how proposed products and/or services meet the Best Practices and Procurement Strategies outlined above.

In accordance with its Environmental Liberal Arts mission, Northland College shall consider full-spectrum sustainability in all aspects of its operations. Specifically, the College commits to the following purchasing goals:

Local Food: Northland College commits to a goal of procuring 80% local foods on campus by 2020. This requires maintaining and expanding relationships with local farmers, creating innovative sourcing methods, developing seasonally appropriate menus, and advancing food processing and storage for off-season consumption.

The College will continue its long history of offering vegetarian and vegan options, purchasing certified USDA Organic items, supporting Fair Trade initiatives, and providing flexibility to meet student's dietary requirements such as gluten-free, diabetic, low-sodium, and religious and cultural needs. Additionally, the College will continue its policies of trayless dining in the cafeteria, reusable beverage containers, biodegradable to-go containers, and zero plastic bag use in the campus store.

Northland College will maintain its efforts to develop a strong network of local providers within 150 miles of campus, to support the development of a local food distribution infrastructure, and to innovatively address the significant challenges of seasonal eating in a northern climate. The College will maintain its efforts to purchase food that is locally produced, USDA Organic, non-GMO, minimally processed, Fair Trade, and independently owned. When possible, it will avoid purchases from national and multi-national agribusiness interests such as Tyson, Con Agra Foods, Chiquita, General Mills, Dean Foods, Kellogg, etc. and their subsidiaries.

Beverage Vending Machines: Northland College commits to improving the nutritional quality of the beverages sold on campus as well as minimizing the environmental and social impacts of product sourcing, production, and distribution. The College strives to purchase products that are locally produced, USDA Organic, no added sugars, no artificial sweeteners, caffeine free, and independently owned. It will avoid purchasing products from multi-national beverage companies such as Coke and Pepsi, including their subsidiaries.

Water and Energy Efficiency: To fulfill its commitment of becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030, Northland College will manage its buildings and operations as efficiently as possible. Consideration of energy and water efficiency, reduction of waste, and environmental impacts, will drive decisions regarding all equipment purchasing. New appliances should be Energy Star qualified or better when possible.

Composting, Waste Reduction, and Recycling: Northland College will continue to support its composting, waste reduction, and recycling programs by providing space and resources, by participating in waste audits, and through waste reduction and recycling educational activities.

Electronics: Northland College will ensure that the technology utilized by the College is energy efficient and made through environmentally responsible methods. The College will strive to purchase computers, monitors and laptops that are Energy Star certified and/or rated EPEAT bronze or higher whenever possible. This does not include servers, mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones, or specialized equipment for which no EnergyStar or EPEAT certified products are available.

Cleaning Supplies: Northland College will purchase Green Seal certified cleaning supplies whenever possible for all janitorial and facilities maintenance operations. When Green Seal products are not available for the required application, the College will select products that conform to environmental and health safeguards (e.g. reduced toxicity, biodegradable, low ozone depletion potential, non-polluting to aquatic ecosystems, reduced volatile organic compounds, recyclable packing).

Data and Reporting: Northland College commits to achieving full transparency in its purchasing programs by creating an openly-accessible data base. The proposed data base will track expenditures of purchased goods, energy and water consumption, food products, fuel used for the campus fleet, resources for buildings and grounds, paper and office supplies, and others. The data base will support academic research, campus sustainability surveys, and the completion of rankings, report cards, and AASHE submissions.