

UConn dining's green initiatives

By **Hallie Letendre** - September 23, 2022

With nearly 20,000 undergraduate students, dining locations across the University of Connecticut campus have a lot of mouths to feed.

With so many students, waste is a large concern.

How many trays of each dish should one dining hall prepare for breakfast versus another? What about breakfast versus lunch? And what should each retail location expect to see in any given week in terms of students choosing them as their next meal?

Scott Hauver is the assistant director of retail operations at the UConn Storrs campus. He talked about the newly reimplemented green piece reusable containers, available to all faculty, staff or students.

"To get one, you would purchase a membership with a credit card, husky bucks or cash. You can purchase one at any point of sale at retail locations," Hauver said in a phone call interview. "The containers can be used at the Union Street Market, the Union Cafe, Earth, Wok & Fire and One Plate Two Plate."

Hauver explained that the containers are just five dollars and have recurring benefits that go beyond the eco-friendly perks.

"It's a one-time charge of five dollars. Then you will get 50 cents off of every retail dining purchase. In 10 transactions, you can get your money back," Hauver said.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the reusable or more eco-friendly options that dining services provided had to be temporarily put on pause. Now, however, many of those practices can be reinstated, University Spokesperson Stephanie Reitz highlighted in an email interview.

"UConn offered the containers before the COVID-19 pandemic, but had to put them on hold temporarily," Reitz said. "We felt this was a good time to bring them back, both because campus operations had largely returned to normal and because it's in keeping with our commitment to sustainability."

With practices like the green piece reusable containers being available again, UConn dining urges students to take advantage of them.

"We're providing an option for people to participate and put words into actions," Hauver said. "Do you really want to do something? Well you can do this."