



SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING

Purchasing decisions you make for your business can have an impact on the environment as well as your bottom line. Making a sustainable choice when purchasing can be as easy as finding out where your products come from. Here are some tips to get you started:

Rethink your purchasing

Making the most use of available resources and avoiding unnecessary materials is the first step towards sustainable purchasing.

- Can you replace disposable products with reusable products? These products can minimise the cost of disposal as well as the ongoing costs of further purchasing.
- Can you purchase secondhand or reconditioned products?

Plastic bags

Plastic bags cost a lot of money and take hundreds of years to break down in landfill. Avoiding them can be easier than you think:

- don't offer your customers a bag – let them ask for one
- offer paper bags as an alternative
- talk with local retailers about producing a branded reusable bag for the entire shopping area

Get to know your suppliers

Ask your suppliers questions about the sustainability of their products.

- Is your product made from recycled content?
- Where and how was it manufactured?
- Can your product be reused or recycled at the end of its life?
- Is your packaging minimised, and made from environmentally friendly products?

Buy local, buy Australian made

Locally grown and made produce and products can be an ideal way to reduce the carbon footprint of your purchases.

Encourage your local suppliers to be sustainable so you don't need to source products from further away.

Purchase recycled content

Where possible purchase products with recycled content. The more products with recycled content are purchased, the more retailers and manufacturers get the message that sustainable products are in demand.

Buy fruits and vegetables in season

Reduce your environmental impact, and save money by opting for locally grown produce that is in season.

Avoid lengthy 'food miles' and seasonal produce does not require cold storage to keep it fresh all year round.

Helpful websites

There are online resources to help you find a more sustainable version of the product you need.

General information

resourcesmart.vic.gov.au

Helpful hints and ideas

climatecommunities.vic.gov.au

Green purchasing assistance and green supplier listings

ecobuy.org.au

greenpages.com.au

gmagazine.com.au

Further tips

If you decide to use a particular product, but it isn't as sustainable as you would like, think about ways you can reduce the impact. Here are some examples:

- If your coffee or drinks supplier requires you to display their branding, select items that can be reused (eg. outdoor table guards and umbrellas), rather than disposable coffee cups.
- Return packaging and pallets to suppliers or ask that products be supplied without the additional plastic wrapping.
- Ask that invoices be provided electronically to avoid extra paperwork.

For further information about improving the sustainability of your business please call Council's Economic Development Unit on **9243 8866** or visit **businessinmv.com.au**