

Scorecard Tool for Vendor Selection: *Identifying Vendors Aligned with Sustainable Purchasing Priorities*

Developed by Kaiser Permanente

Introduction

The Sustainable Food Scorecard was developed by Kaiser Permanente for use in any food related contract. This tool is used to gather information from potential vendors regarding distribution and corporate practices related to sustainable food. Its intent is to help hospital food service identify vendors that can support meeting sustainable purchasing goals as part of the broader RFP process and includes questions outside of sustainability such as preferred product availability, cost, and service. Vendors provide the requested information and hospitals score their responses, ultimately taking these scores into account for final vendor selection.

In the scorecard we ask vendors to respond to questions regarding their corporate and distribution practices, and to provide detailed line item lists of every product they can provide which meets our company's sustainable food criteria. Distribution practice questions seek to gather information on the ability to identify products by sustainability criteria for food and non-food product categories, as well as, the ability of a company to track and report on sustainable purchases. Corporate practice questions gather information on a company's internal sustainability policies and practices that reduce their environmental impact. For each product category, potential vendors are asked to list products they carry that meet specific sustainability criteria.

Instructions for Use

- 1) Make sure the document worksheets are protected before sending to potential vendors.
 - a. Each worksheet is protected individually, and will require using the code to modify the cells. The purpose of protecting the worksheets in the document is to maintain the integrity of the formulas and to ensure that each potential vendor provides data in a consistent/standard format. If you need to unprotect any of the worksheets to modify before sending to vendors, the code to unprotect is **sust** (go to Review menu, select Unprotect Sheet). Remember to protect each edited page of the document before sending to potential vendors.
- 2) Determine how you want to score responses. Some suggestions include:
 - a. Give each response the same weight and add up total scores for each worksheet (Corporate Practices, Distributor Practices, and each food and non-food category). The highest scoring vendor may be able to best meet your purchasing goals.
 - b. Give more "weight" to certain criteria based on your organizational policies and purchasing priorities. Examples include:
 - i. Responses to product category questions may have higher point values than responses related to general corporate practices.
 - ii. "No" responses to some questions may eliminate a potential vendor from consideration, such the ability for potential vendor to track and report on sustainable spend.
 - c. You may want to highlight/indicate to potential vendors which questions are the highest priority/imperative for your organization, and which are "go"/"no go."
- 3) This scorecard will included as part of the RFP Packet. Include language in RFP that references both sustainable purchasing goals and priorities and the inclusion of the scorecard. For example: *Our health care facility has a strong commitment to promote the public and environmental health of the communities we serve. It is our goal to support that commitment through purchasing food that has been produced using environmentally sound, socially responsible, and economically viable methods. Please complete the attached Sustainable Food Scorecard as part of responding to this RFP.*
- 4) Present the items below to Potential Vendors as part of an RFP Packet which includes:
 - a. **Cover/introduction letter** to potential vendor
 - b. **The Scorecard** (with cells protected; code to unprotect is: **sust**)

- c. **Sample letter** that vendors can use to gather the needed information from their manufacturers/suppliers
 - d. **Sustainable food purchasing criteria code list** for manufacturers to use in identifying products that meet sustainability criteria (also included in sample manufacturer letter)
- 5) Meet with potential vendors to explain the scorecard and how to complete it. Kaiser Permanente has found that this greatly increases the quality of the information provided by potential vendors. After initial RFP responses are submitted by potential vendors, additional meetings may be necessary to ensure that scorecard responses are complete and accurate.
 - 6) Receive vendor information and analyze responses to inform vendor selection process.

A Case Study of Use – The Kaiser Permanente Experience

Procurement Policy and Supply Chain Engagement at Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente recently developed a Sustainable Food Scorecard to use in evaluating potential food and food service vendors’ ability to support its sustainable food purchasing initiatives. The scorecard has been an instrumental tool in the contracting process, providing Kaiser Permanente with: insight into potential vendors’ corporate and distribution practices, and thus, their commitment to sustainability; detailed lists of the types of products they offer by product category and how they meet Kaiser Permanente’s Sustainable Food Criteria (which align with the Green Guide for Health Care Food Service Credits); and a commitment from potential vendors to track and report on Kaiser Permanente’s sustainable spend.

The scorecard is included in all food-related Requests for Proposal (RFPs) sent to potential vendors. Potential vendors are scored based on their corporate and distribution practices, the selection of products they offer which meet Kaiser Permanente’s Sustainable Food Criteria and their ability to track and report on the organization’s sustainable spend. These scores are then used in the vendor selection process. Responses to the Sustainable Food Scorecard are one piece of the vendor selection process, which also includes an evaluation of vendor service, quality and assurance of products, cost, and other factors.

The Sustainable Food Scorecard is setting sustainable food standards within the industry. As distributors are exposed to this type of tool and sustainability criteria, the industry begins to adapt to meet their customer needs, and access to and tracking of sustainable food becomes more readily available. Used by the Kaiser Permanente in 2011, the scorecard helped them identify a distributor that was willing to work with the health care system to identify sustainable products, track their spending and ultimately support their sustainable food service purchasing. The scorecard has been an essential tool for Kaiser Permanente in partnering with group purchasing organizations (GPOs) and distributors to clarify a shared vision of sustainability and objectives in realizing it.

Kaiser Permanente’s use of the Sustainable Food Scorecard enabled the organization to select a vendor that could meet their needs in terms of sustainable, and has allowed the organization to maintain and exceed the level of sustainable food spend in their transition to a new vendor. The new vendors selected using the scorecard are collaborating with Kaiser Permanente to identify and target key high-volume food purchases to convert to sustainable. The use of the scorecard with GPOs and distributors is having a ripple effect within the industry, as these companies have begun using the scorecard in their own RFPs and contracts.

The Sustainable Food Scorecard and accompanying resources were developed by Kathleen M. Reed of Kaiser Permanente, with support from Health Care Without Harm, with contributions from Marie Kulick, Gretchen Miller, and Emma Sirois. Contact: Kathleen.M.Reed@kp.org with questions.