

PRESS RELEASE:

No more secrets about what you are eating

A new foodservice provider in Chicago is bringing transparency to the forefront of their business model and asking others to do the same

For years, Greg Christian, the founder of Beyond Green: Sustainable Food Partners has been traveling the country to improve the food served in institutional kitchens.

He typically finds heat-and-serve kitchens serving over 80% processed foods that operate with tons of waste. His consulting model finds the ways in which a facility can reduce inefficiencies so those resources can be reallocated to the food arena.

“When you eliminate waste you find the time and money to cook and buy better food. The first place I always start is the menu. Variety has become the solution to low-quality, flavorless food. If nothing is good, add something else,” says Christian.

In the summer of 2013 Christian was approached by a group of local parents in his hometown of Chicago who were aware of his conscious catering company that operated in the city for over 17 years. The group was seeking an alternative to the current school lunch services that existed in their communities.

“There were certain schools I couldn’t work with through consulting because they had no kitchen. I ran a catering company in the past, these parents wanted an alternative, so I opened a foodservice business,” says Christian.

Beyond Green Foodservice (BGF) has been operating since the 2013-2014 school year. They offer a scratch-cooked menu made in their zero-waste kitchen and promote their commitment to purchasing locally, organically, and antibiotic and hormone free. Their difference to existing companies lies in transparency.

“Anyone can call themselves green or organic. But what does that mean without data to back it up?” says Christian, “Come into our kitchen, look at our receipts, we want our customers to know what is and is not possible and that we really are doing our best within the skinny margin of school lunch.”

BGF transparency reports were sent directly to clients during their first year of operations, not the company will release this data monthly on their website. This includes the amount of waste that was generated and diverted each month and the percent of preferable sourcing that occurred over meat, product, dairy and bread. BGF considers anything purchased locally, organically, or antibiotic and hormone free to be preferable and values each of these equally.

The company hopes that consumers will see this data and start asking bigger questions about the global food systems. Labels and communication around

preferable foods can often be misleading, Beyond Green wants their clients to understand the limitations and drivers that currently exists within the food system infrastructure which either prohibit or support the local, healthy food movement.

“We’re a B-Corporation, which means we have a triple bottom line: people, planet, and profit. We are about real change, and the only way to start is in being honest with our customers and ourselves. This holds us all accountable for the change we really want to see and acknowledges the role that everyone plays in that,” says Christian.

Beyond Green Foodservice has doubled business from their first year of operation and is now managing all aspects of the service internally. They offer an online ordering platform for parents as well as customer support. The company started working with its first preschool in the summer of 2014 and continues to grow in both the city of Chicago and its surrounding suburbs.