

For Immediate Release

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Bon Appétit Management Company
Exceeds Carbon Reduction Goals
Company achieves dramatic reductions
ahead of Low Carbon Diet Day

Palo Alto, Calif. (April 6, 2009) — As companies scramble to add “Reduce Carbon Footprint” to their **to do** lists, sustainable food service provider Bon Appétit Management Company is working on its **tah dah** list. The company is announcing they’ve exceeded their reduction goals for 2009, just in time for their Low Carbon Diet Day on April 22, and are well on their way to achieving their overall reduction commitment of 25% by April 2010. This year they’ve focused on reducing beef purchases by 25%, cheese by 10%, tropical fruit by 50%, and total food waste by 20%. The food waste reduction alone is responsible for removing 112,000 pounds of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions a week from the atmosphere.

Bon Appétit Management Company’s *Low Carbon Diet Day* takes place every Earth Day as an illustration of how the company is reducing carbon emissions generated by the 80 million meals it serves each year in 400 cafés at colleges, universities and corporations in 29 states.

“Since nearly 50% of all American meals – about 500 million per day – are produced in commercial kitchens, it is imperative that food service take an active role in reducing its carbon impact,” said Fedele Bauccio, founder and CEO of Bon Appétit Management Company, “We’ve proven it’s possible to do so and inspire our customers to do the same. We’re using our sourcing practices to influence the supply chain. And with each plateful of food that goes from our kitchens into the hands of a diner, we have the opportunity to educate with a crystal clear example of what low carbon eating looks like on the plate.”

The company set aggressive goals for reducing beef, cheese, food waste, air-freighted products, tropical fruits, and processed foods, over a three-year period which began in April of 2007 – far before food’s role in global warming was on the radar of most food system leaders. By giving the chefs and managers in each café both the tools and the autonomy to meet the goals, the company is ahead of schedule in meeting its reduction commitments for 2009.

- Through chef-driven menu engineering, the company has reduced beef purchases by 25% and cheese by 10%. By offering a variety of tantalizing low carbon options, experimenting with how different items are displayed, and creating alternatives that replace beef in a way that is satisfying to diners, chefs are able to offer the usual cheeseburgers to diners who want them, and still reduce the amount of beef they purchase. This reduction is a key component of the program because regardless of how far it travels, or how the animals are raised, beef and cheese come from methane emitting ruminant animals and methane is a greenhouse gas 23 times more powerful than CO₂.
- Compost and diversion programs keep 35% of all food waste out of landfills. In addition, through smart buying and preparation, and educating prep staff, kitchen food waste was reduced by 20% over a 10-week period. This action packs a double whammy because it lowers emissions from the production of food at the same time that it reduces methane emissions associated with food waste in landfills. Chefs hold the keys to this effort. In a powerful example of synergy, some company chefs have developed relationships with vendor farmers to take the kitchen scraps and use it to build healthy soil that gives back neatly in great tasting, fresh food for the cafés.

- By emphasizing seasonal fruit, tropical fruit purchases (which are distributed by high-emitting airplanes) have been trimmed by 50%
- By 2010 the company has set a goal to reduce energy and water use by 20% and food waste by a total of 25%. And they're well on their way with the early 20% reduction.

For a complete list of commitments: <http://www.circleofresponsibility.com/page/322/bon-apptits-commitment.htm>

Low Carbon Diet Day

The program is in operation year round, behind the scenes, but on Earth Day, April 22nd, the company will celebrate its second annual Low Carbon Diet Day. Low Carbon Diet Day is a fun way for diners to experience how delicious low carbon, planet-friendly fare can be. For at least one day, cheeseburgers are out in favor of lower carbon options like turkey burgers with spicy guacamole. Cheese pizzas are replaced by tasty offerings like pork with hoisin sauce and pickled cucumbers. Chefs are on hand to explain the concept, and diners are engaged in the process with educational slide shows and colorful signage.

Interactive Tools for Consumers

To supplement the program in the cafés, and to engage the larger public, the company has created two consumer-facing web 2.0 tools, an [online food calculator](#) and a [Facebook quiz](#), available to anyone. Both let eaters evaluate the carbon impact of everyday meal choices. The quiz answers also provide useful information about why some foods are more high carbon than others.

With the food system responsible for up to 1/3 of greenhouse gasses it is imperative that we tackle climate change where we eat. Bon Appétit has set meaningful goals and achieved them ahead of schedule, serving as a model for other businesses looking to reduce their carbon impact.

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Bon Appétit Management Company (www.bamco.com) is an onsite restaurant company offering full food service management to corporations, universities and specialty venues. Bon Appétit is committed to sourcing sustainable, local foods for all cafés throughout the country. A pioneer in environmentally sound sourcing policies, Bon Appétit has developed programs addressing local purchasing, the overuse of antibiotics, sustainable seafood, cage-free eggs, and most recently, the connection between food and climate change. The company has received numerous awards for its work from organizations like Seafood Choices Alliance, The Humane Society of the United States, and Food Alliance. Based in Palo Alto, CA, Bon Appétit has more than 400 cafés in 29 states, including eBay, American University and the Getty Center.

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