

## **UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA**

### **M11.103 SUSTAINABLE FOOD-SERVICE PRODUCTS**

#### **I. POLICY STATEMENT:**

The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM) seeks to advance environmental stewardship and sustainability on our campus which embody approaches that reduce life cycle costs, restore or maintain the functioning of natural systems, and enhance human well-being. As part of this broader effort and to address trash reduction, public health, marine life protection, and environmental sustainability, UHM will transition to the use of more responsible food service products on campus.

#### **II. PURPOSE:**

This policy aims to eliminate the purchase and use of disposable expanded polystyrene (EPS) foam food-service products on campus.

#### **III. APPLICABILITY/SCOPE:**

This policy applies to the entire campus community and is especially relevant to units handling food services and contract vendors doing business with UHM.

#### **IV. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. Compostable = All materials in the product will break down into usable compost in a safe and timely manner without leaving any toxic residue.
- B. Contract vendors = Service provider having a contract with UHM who is subject to the control and direction of the University for which services are rendered.
- C. Expanded polystyrene (EPS) foam = A rigid and tough closed-cell foam, in the form of beads commonly known as packaging “peanuts.” Thermoplastic petrochemical materials utilizing styrene.
- D. EPS foam food service products = Carry-out food packaging including trays, plates, bowls and cups.

#### **V. IMPLEMENTATION:**

- A. Vendors negotiating new contracts will be prohibited from using EPS foam food-service products.
- B. Vendors operating under existing contracts are encouraged to phase out EPS foam products use as soon as possible. Contracts with current vendors will not be renewed unless said vendors commit to eliminate the use of all EPS food service products. .
- C. University personnel are advised not to purchase disposable EPS foam food products with university funds and not to use such products at campus events.

- D. Favored Alternatives to EPS foam - Preference should be given to:
  - 1. Products that are reusable;
  - 2. Products that are non-toxic and certified compostable;
  - 3. Products that can be recycled in Hawai‘i.
- E. Single-use biodegradable plastic products should not be considered a viable alternative.
- F. Exceptions may be granted by the Chancellor or designee in consultation with appropriate campus groups, including Campus Services, OVCS, and UHM Sustainability Council. Exceptions are allowed under the following guidelines:
  - 1. Up to one (1) year;
  - 2. Applies to specific food items that cannot be properly held by available sustainable alternatives, including hot products for the safety of customers.
  - 3. Shall be approved or renewed only after a vendor runs a pilot project using favored alternatives and only after demonstrating that no feasible, ecologically sustainable alternative to EPS foam exists for the required use.

## VI. REFERENCES:

- A. UHM Sustainability Council Resolution Supporting a Campus-Wide Ban on POLYSTERENE/STYROFOAM™ - Click or see page 5.
- B. University of California – Sustainable Practices Policy  
<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/policy/sustainable-practices-policy.pdf>
- C. Hawai‘i 2013 Senate Bill 619 Expanded Polystyrene foam Disposable Food Service Containers – Measure Deferred February 7, 2013  
<http://legiscan.com/HI/text/SB619>

## VII. HISTORY:

None.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions as thoroughly as possible for user's reference:

- 1) What impact will this new or revised policy/procedure have on other UHM campus programs/departments/offices?

**This policy impacts departments and programs by getting units to be environmentally responsible through the use of non-EPS products on campus to help address trash reduction, marine life protection, and environmental sustainability. There should be minimal to no increase in costs to existing contracts whereby vendors are encouraged to phase out EPS foam products use as soon as possible. New University contracts will require the use of non-EPS products, where applicable.**

- 2) What steps were taken to ensure all appropriate constituents were consulted (who was consulted, what concerns were raised, how were these concerns addressed, etc.)?

**This policy has undergone consultation with campus units handling vendor contracts, including Campus Services (Food Services) and Office of the Vice Chancellor for Students (Campus Center, Student Housing).**

**Comments received:**

- **Not all contracts expire and/or need to be renewed on a yearly basis.**
  - **Response: Noted.**
- **Some contracts with longer terms (i.e., Athletic Concessions, Panda Express) have clauses that allow for price increases. This occurs through a contract modification process and is not viewed as a contract renewal.**
  - **Response: Noted.**
- **Recommend policy be written less as a complete ban and more towards a philosophical approach to good practice.**
  - **Response: The University is banning the use of EPS foam products on campus to advance environmental stewardship. An exception clause is included in the policy and thus, the ban language should be clear.**
- **Recommend removing "single-use" line as it seems overly restrictive and not aligned with the purpose.**
  - **Response: The original "single-use" line will be kept to be clear the University discourages the use of biodegradable plastics which break down quickly into micro-plastics which cannot be cleaned up.**
- **May want to consider exemptions not having to go all the way to the Chancellor for approval.**
  - **Response: Have revised to "Chancellor or designee" and will monitor volume and process of requests over the first year this policy is in effect to see whether any changes are required.**
- **My only concern is the time we have to negotiate and implement a transition plan with our vendors. The smaller vendors are not a major problem. It's basically the large concessions contract (Athletic Department) that has major cost implications. Also because of the large volume of products to be used, we need to assure that the availability of product on the island before setting deadlines. There needs to be a reasonable transition period in negotiating cost and being able to reduce current**

**product inventory with the vendors. The negotiating may include reduction of commission rebate percentage and/or food price increases impacting the consumer.**

- **Response: No deadline to be specified in policy. Vendors operating under existing contracts are encouraged to phase out EPS foam products use as soon as possible.**

**Review and comments will also be sought from the Faculty Senate and Executive Team.**

- 3) Does this policy/procedure have a financial impact? If so, how?

**There may be a financial impact on new/renewed contracts due to this policy which may be off-set by the cost savings in reduced trash and clean-up costs. Regular monitoring and feedback will be sought from units handling vendor contracts to ensure necessary updates to the policy is made.**

- 4) Does this policy/procedure affect space (classroom, research, etc.) on campus? If so, how?

**No.**

- 5) Are there safety measures that need to be implemented prior to execution? If so, please specify. Who will be responsible to ensure safety standards?

**No.**

- 6) What steps will be taken to ensure that proper clarification and training is provided to the appropriate campus representatives?

**This policy will be shared and reviewed with Deans/Directors/Department Chairs to ensure their respective units are aware of this policy and transition to non-EPS foam products as soon as possible. The Sustainability Council will assist in providing proper clarification and training of non-EPS form products to campus units when needed.**

- 7) What steps will be taken to ensure update and compliance of this policy?

**This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years to ensure update and compliance.**

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A CAMPUS-WIDE BAN ON  
POLYSTERENE/STYROFOAM™

**WHEREAS**, Hawai'i's geography, tourist economy, and limited recycling infrastructure produces numerous environmental challenges related to opala or trash;

**WHEREAS**, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, as the state's leading research institution, should strive to protect the archipelago's natural resources and serve as a model for sustainability;

**WHEREAS**, Styrofoam™, also known by its chemical name polystyrene, constitutes one of the most pervasive types of non-biodegradable waste in Hawai'i;

**WHEREAS**, bulky polystyrene foam products stress landfill capacity and have contributed significantly to the Great Pacific Ocean Garbage Patch;

**WHEREAS**, polystyrene is a principal pollutant ingested by marine life and other wildlife;

**WHEREAS**, the manufacturing of polystyrene products contributes to global warming and ozone depletion;

**WHEREAS**, polystyrene foam products—both as packaging materials and throw-away food ware—produce unsightly waste on campus and increases the university's maintenance costs;

**WHEREAS**, the production of styrene can have deleterious effects on human health;

**WHEREAS**, dozens of universities, municipalities, and companies have successfully and economically switched from polystyrene to alternative technologies;

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED**, that due to these concerns, the UH Sustainability Council urges the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to ban the purchasing and usage of polystyrene-based disposable products on its campus.

**DATE: 4 February 2013**