

# Maropeng follows "local" and "sustainable" global predictions

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The US National Restaurant Association (NRA) predicts that "local" and "sustainable" will be the hot buzzwords in restaurants globally in 2012.

A recent Global Food Losses and Food Waste study conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) suggests that roughly one-third of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally, which amounts to about 1.3 billion tons per year. The huge amount of food waste inevitably also means that huge amounts of the resources used in food production are used in vain, and that the greenhouse gas emissions caused by the production of food that gets lost or wasted are also unnecessarily high.

## Sustainability prioritised

As a World Heritage Site, Maropeng has always prioritised sustainability and it has kept mindful of this in its kitchens. Besides scrupulously recycling all kitchen waste, it has opted to source the majority of its fresh produce from local farmers.

Currently, 65 percent of the food on Maropeng's menus is sourced from within 15km of the Magalies and Cradle of Humankind areas, ensuring not only the freshest produce, but local farmers have given Maropeng an undertaking that their production processes are sustainable. All fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, milk, eggs and herbs are locally sourced.

According to the FAO study overall, on a per-capita basis, much more food is wasted in the industrialised world than in developing countries. It is estimated that per capita food waste by consumers in Europe and North-America is 95 to 115 kg per year, while this figure in sub-Saharan Africa and South/South-east Asia is only 6 to 11kg per year.

## Time to take responsibility

While it is good to see that sub-Saharan Africa's wastage is still significantly less than that of our European counterparts, we need to work hard to ensure this number does not increase. Now is the time to take responsibility and, as a result, we have a waste-not-want-not philosophy in our kitchens when it comes to disposing of food and kitchen waste. That is why when we saw that on average we dispose of approximately 30 litres of cooking oil per week, we decided to look for greener sustainable options. We now have an initiative in place in which all cooking oil waste is collected by a food oil-disposal company, from which it is recycled to produce biodiesel and soap products.

Local is a word that is very close to Maropeng's heart as we strive to not only do things more sustainably, but we are also committed to giving back to the communities in which we operate. We try to support not only local farmers, but also all relevant local business initiatives. We have a very good relationship, for example, with the nearby Maloney's community.

## Additional green measures

Maropeng has also implemented additional green measures to continue sustainability when food leaves its kitchens. We use biodegradable takeaway cups, teaspoons, knives, forks and plates, which, once disposed of, are carefully sorted for recycling. Strict measures are also taken within the kitchens to ensure that stoves are switched off when not in use and that only refillable Spirit Jelly - a combustible gel used to keep portable Bain Marie's hot, is used.

We are continuously looking for ways to limit our impact on the environment. It's good to know that visitors can leave here knowing that not only have they enjoyed great food, but also that it was locally and sustainably sourced.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Patrick Mutavhatsindi is the food and beverage manager of Maropeng.

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