

## ZERO WASTE BUSINESS PROFILE

### QUALITY SEAFOOD

5621 Airport Blvd.



*"As we pick up new oysters, we deliver [used] shells back to the coast."*

— Carol Huntsberger, Owner  
Quality Seafood

#### BACKGROUND

Starting as a farmer's market stall near UT in 1938, Quality Seafood has been serving up fresh fish and ocean delicacies in Austin for 81 years. Their products are now sold to more than 250 restaurants with about 50 percent of those being locally-owned.

Quality Seafood believes in using the whole fish by adding fish heads and bones in their stocks and sauces. The restaurant is even seeking pet food partnerships for fish skins and scales.

To replenish ocean habitat, Quality Seafood delivers their empty oyster shells back to the gulf for reef reconstruction. These reefs protect sea life such as crabs, shrimp and small fish. The restaurant also offers to pick up oyster shells from businesses who bought oysters from them.

#### RESULTS

- Over 3,600 pounds of shells returned to the Texas coast each week
- Diverts nearly 75 percent of their waste away from landfills
- Saves more than \$1,000 per month on utility bills using the Austin Energy efficiency rebate
- Downsizing to a smaller, less expensive trash dumpster allowed for new recycling pick-ups without additional costs

#### LESSONS LEARNED

Unsold fish are integrated into new dishes to ensure nothing goes to waste, allowing for creativity in the kitchen and cost savings. For example, tuna or salmon heads that are unsellable are used to create daily specials.

Staff members also participate and see a direct benefit from organic diversion by taking home food prep scraps for their chickens.

Plastic waste in the ocean is garnering attention around the globe. Quality Seafood aims to be part of the solution by offering paper straws and compostable to-go wares at a small charge to customers.

"It was kind of fun going through the recycling ordinance process with the City and realizing how much we were already doing. It's not always going to be picture perfect, but when you make an effort to do good, it comes back."



#### AUSTIN RESOURCE RECOVERY

Free consulting services are available to help businesses reduce waste, increase diversion and meet or exceed the requirements of the Universal Recycling Ordinance (URO). Find more information and resources at [austintexas.gov/bizorganics](http://austintexas.gov/bizorganics) or contact us:

**P** » (512) 974-9727

**E** » [commercialrecycling@austintexas.gov](mailto:commercialrecycling@austintexas.gov)

