



# Sustainability Report

## IMEX America 2024

Prepared by

MeetGreen®  
[www.meetgreen.com](http://www.meetgreen.com)



## Our mission



**Carina Bauer,**  
CEO, IMEX



What do buses, badges and beef-free menus have in common? They're among the new sustainable initiatives we introduced at IMEX America 2024. For the first time last year we introduced five electric buses into our event transport fleet and launched a 100% paper badge holder to replace the single-use plastic version. Menus at IMEX America catering outlets were all 100% beef-free which helped to reduce menu emissions by 39% compared to the 2023 show.

These are just some of many first-time initiatives detailed in this report—we're always open to experimenting with new ideas and building on what's gone well. However we not only learn from what's gone well, but from what we can do better. We've highlighted the areas to improve at our next show, specifically around material use and charity donations. Producing sustainable events is a gradual process and we're learning and iterating as we go.

Our sustainability report for IMEX America 2024 is an open and honest look at the

successes and learnings from our show. It's designed to give you the practical information you need to make changes to your own events and enhance your conversations with colleagues and clients. Having the right knowledge to hand is key to making meaningful progress, according to research – isla's survey at IMEX America last year showed that 42% believed client education would help improve sustainability outcomes.

This report's also just one element of our wider sustainability strategy where we're challenging ourselves and others to deliver as much positive social and economic impact as possible for the high environmental cost of international travel to events.

There are numerous positive impacts that result from bringing together people at global events: we learn from each other, do business, spark innovation and drive positive progress. Maximizing these catalytic effects ensures our participants see a positive return on their investment, time and resources to balance their carbon spend.

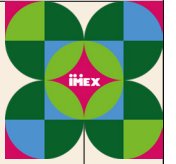
The global events industry's role in supporting a net-zero future has never been more critical, so I invite you to dig into this report: discover planet-friendly inspiration for your own events and examples of good practice to share with your colleagues and clients.

Finally, I'd like to end by thanking all of our partners. Working with them has helped us elevate the sustainable impact of our show year after year and embody our company value: 'achieve together.'





# IMEX America 2024



**Dates:** October 8 – October 10, 2024

**Venue:** Mandalay Bay Convention Center

**Location:** Las Vegas, NV

**Attendance:** 15,873



**3,500**

Exhibiting  
companies

**5,758**

Total buyers from  
75 countries

**15,873**

Total  
participants



# IMEX AMERICA SUSTAINABILITY GOALS ↓

**Measure** our event footprint

**Share** what we learn and  
amplify best practices

**Educate** make sustainability  
education accessible to all

**Give back** to our  
local communities

**Champion** the positive  
impacts of meetings and events







HIGHLIGHTS

Classified as a **zero-waste event** for the sixth time in a row



Did you know?

**93%** of event waste by weight diverted from landfill

**Lowest** per participant waste volume since 2018

**100%** **beef-free** menu at IMEX America outlets



NEW

Menu choices reduced emissions by an estimated **3,547 kg CO2e**

**17,733** PET plastic bottles eliminated through single-use plastic reduction initiatives

**900** **Clean the World** hygiene kits assembled on site by attendees



IMEX America 2024 was our **largest edition** to date in terms of attendance *and* exhibitor floor space

**32,193** **square meters** of event carpet saved for reuse, representing approximately **87%** of total stock sourced for IMEX 2024





Some of the total impacts since we began measuring IMEX America in 2012:

**822,927kg**  
of event materials recycled

**194,909kg**  
of event organics composted

**61,610kg**  
of event materials donated

**74,122kg**  
PET plastic bottles eliminated since 2019

**1,086,139kg**  
of event materials diverted from local landfills

**7,558** Clean the World  
hygiene kits assembled for charities by attendees



## IMEX AMERICA LEGACY IMPACTS 2012-2024

IMEX AMERICA LEGACY IMPACTS 2012-2024



**6,694kg**  
of event meals donated

**1,572**  
**She Means Business**  
education session attendees since 2019

**451** IMEX-MPI-MCI  
**Future Leaders Forum**  
students since 2019





## A word from our host destination and venue partners



At MGM Resorts, we are honored to collaborate with partners who share the same values around working to create a more sustainable future in our operations and beyond. Year after year the IMEX Group sets the bar by reducing the environmental footprint of their show and also supporting our greater Las Vegas community. We are excited to continue coming together in support of both the planet and its people through innovation and forward-thinking sustainability initiatives.

**Kristen Royal**  
Director Sustainable Operations  
MGM Resorts International



With sustainability at the core of our efforts, GES is thrilled to further strengthen our partnership with the IMEX Group. IMEX consistently leads the way with innovative sustainability initiatives, as demonstrated in 2024. Together, we collaborate to significantly enhance sustainability, while creating a dynamic and engaging environment for both exhibitors and attendees. As the live event industry continues to evolve, we are excited to work alongside IMEX to stay at the forefront of these advancements.

**Adam Gordon**  
Director of Business Development,  
GES

A WORD FROM OUR HOST DESTINATION AND VENUE



# DESTINATION AND VENUE



DESTINATION AND VENUE

For all 13 of our **IMEX America shows in Las Vegas**, we've worked closely with our host destination and venue to manage our environmental impact. Below are some of the benefits of hosting our event in Las Vegas:

**Las Vegas Polymer Center:** Opened in spring 2024, the Republic Services Polymer Center is the first plastics recycling facility of its kind in the United States. We used this new center for IMEX America 2024

**Renewable energy:** Over 24 hours, approximately 30% of MGM Resorts' in-show energy comes from solar photovoltaics

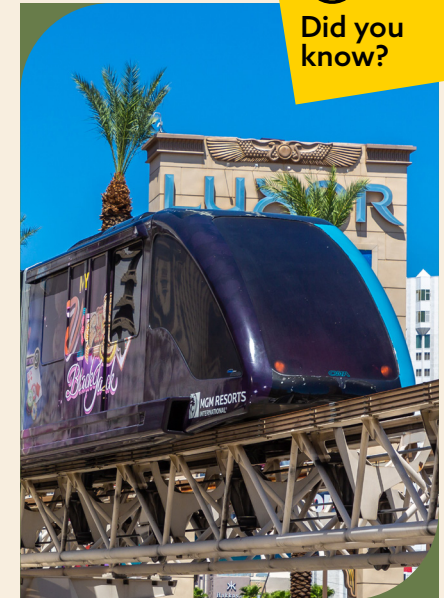
**City transportation:** Event attendees have access to approximately 88,656 hotel rooms on the Las Vegas Strip. These rooms can be accessed via the Las Vegas Monorail and Mandalay Bay Excalibur Trams, reducing the need for bus or car use<sup>1</sup>

**Las Vegas Livestock:** Water-rich organics, such as food scraps, are a high-density waste stream, making up a large percentage of our total waste. MGM Resorts' partnership with the Las Vegas Livestock Pig Farm helps ensure food that cannot be donated to humans can be used to feed animals

**Terra Firma Organics:** Mandalay Bay Convention Center's partnership with this organic recycler helps ensure our paper cups, lids, bamboo service ware and leaf ware plates can be fully composted into nutrient-rich soil conditioner in Las Vegas



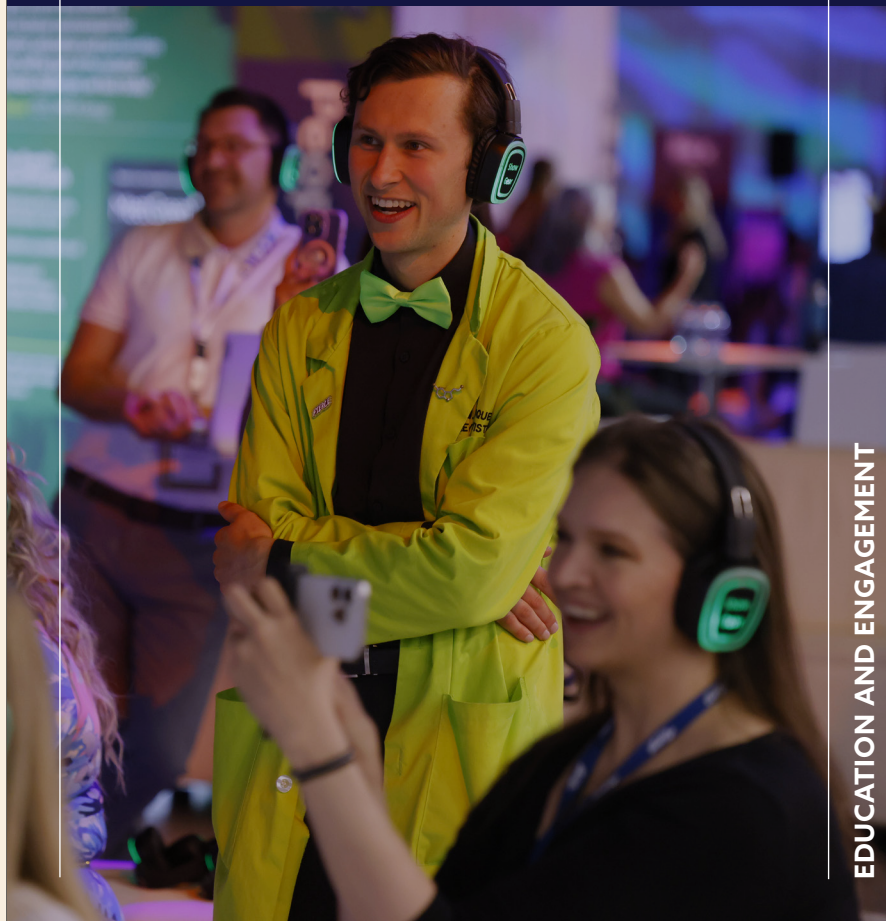
Did you know?



The Las Vegas Monorail alone is estimated to **save 2.1 million vehicle miles annually** from Southern Nevada's major roadways. That's roughly equivalent to more than nine trips to the moon!<sup>2</sup>



# EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT



EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT



The next generation of event professionals are key to driving sustainability. At IMEX America, **94 students** took part in the **IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum**, taking their first steps as event professionals.

These future leaders were given the chance to understand more about sustainable event initiatives and how sustainable practices now inform and guide many industry roles.



**Inspiring action**

**111**

People and  
Planet Pledge  
signatories



# WASTE MANAGEMENT

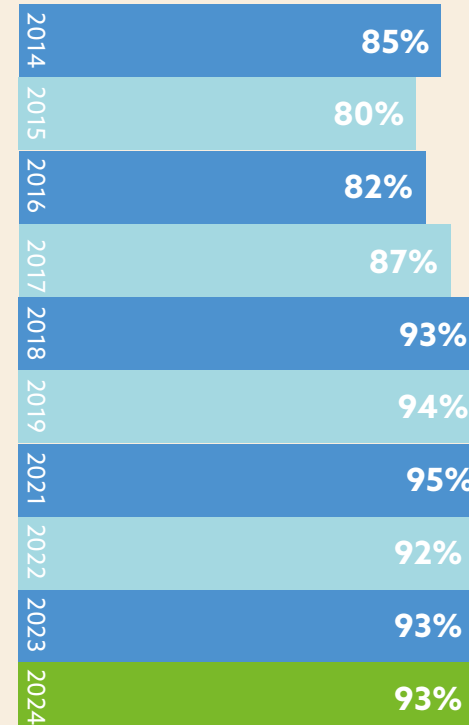
WASTE MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY

For the **sixth consecutive year**, IMEX America successfully diverted **more than 90% of its waste stream** (by weight) from landfill earning its designation as a zero-waste event.

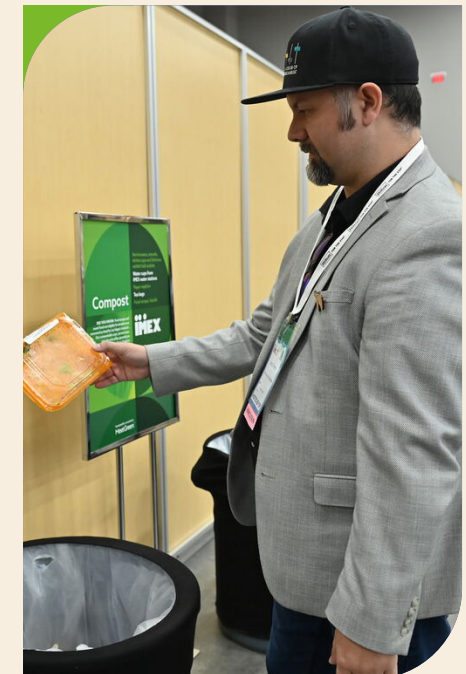
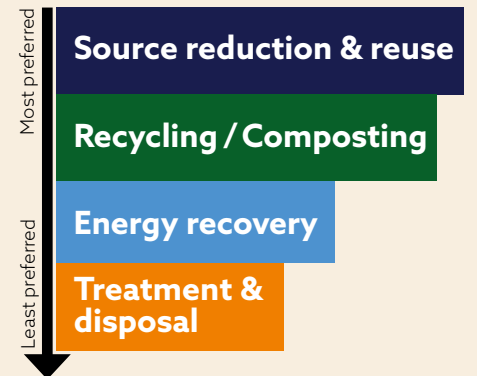
IMEX America's enhanced waste management and source reduction strategies closely align with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's own Waste Management Hierarchy which prioritizes reduction and reuse upstream over recycling and composting post-event.<sup>3</sup>



Event diversion rate % from landfill



## Waste management hierarchy







## WASTE MANAGEMENT

IMEX America 2024 recorded **56,608kg less waste** than its previous edition, as well as its lowest waste total per participant since 2018:

This reduction is a culmination of numerous factors, including material and service ware choices as well as efforts by exhibitors and attendees to help reduce waste. For example, only one small exhibitor booth was left for full disposal during move-out in 2024

Badge holders and paper badge inserts were **100% paper** and were all recycled by the venue. The organic cotton lanyards and clip were collected and recycled through the TerraCycle Name Tag and Lanyard Zero Waste Program

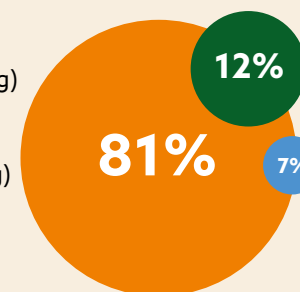


### Waste stream distribution

**81%**  
Recycling  
(101,911 kg)

**12%**  
Compost  
(14,243 kg)

**7%**  
Landfill  
(9,254 kg)



Year	kg waste/pp
2012	6.1
2013	9.2
2014	6.8
2015	6
2016	9
2017	4
2018	7
2019	9.2
2021	12.1
2022	8.8
2023	12.1
2024	7.9

### Total event waste (kg)





# FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Menus are designed to achieve four sustainability goals:

- 1 Reduce single-use plastic
- 2 Reduce carbon emissions through menu choices
- 3 Support the local economy through locally-sourced items
- 4 Offer delicious and nourishing food

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

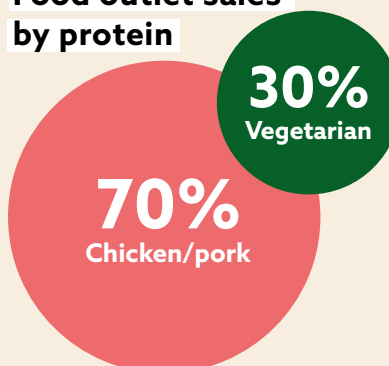
**100% beef-free** menu at IMEX America catering outlets

**100%** of IMEX entrées were categorized as low to mid-tier emissions in terms of their production and manufacture

Compared to 2023 data, IMEX America 2024 reduced the emissions of meals served at Hall B food outlets by an estimated **3,547 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e**.

**That's the equivalent in emissions made by a standard US passenger vehicle driving from Mandalay Bay Convention Center to New York City 3.5 times!**<sup>4</sup>

**Food outlet sales by protein**



## Single-use plastic reduction

**2,801 liters** of water consumed at plumbed Wallop Water Stations event-wide. This helped save the equivalent of **7,892 standard 12-ounce PET plastic bottles**

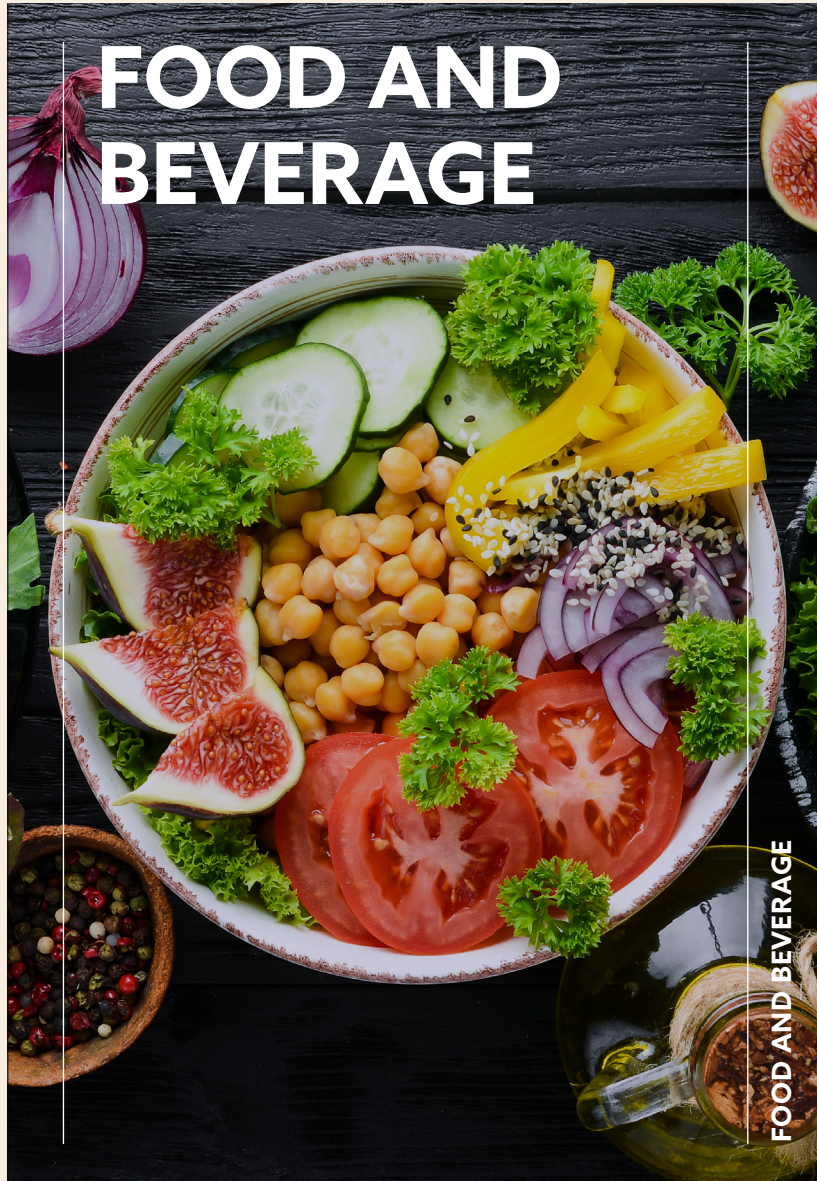
**Five-gallon** capacity water refill bottles were replenished 106 times during the show, saving the equivalent of **5,653 standard 12-ounce PET plastic bottles**

**4,188 12-ounce PET plastic bottles eliminated** through use of the venue's built-in water stations

This makes a total of **17,733 bottles eliminated**. If placed end to end, these would extend approximately **2,815 meters**. **That's over eight times the height of the Stratosphere Tower in Las Vegas!**<sup>5</sup>



# FOOD AND BEVERAGE



FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Food and beverage is an opportunity for us to tighten and refine both our procurement and supply chain practices as well as waste reduction efforts. After reviewing our 2023 operations, we made improvements across these areas:



Increased reusable service ware options



Bulk condiment dispensers were used at Hall B food outlets for the first time



Bulk milk and cream dispensers were used across the show



Partnered with Mandalay Bay Food Services to source **100% compostable hot and cold drink cups, lids and unpackaged bamboo service ware**, which were not part of the venue's standard offerings



Worked with the venue to recover approximately **600 pounds of event food** that was repurposed for the Mandalay Bay Convention Center Employee Dining Room





COMMUNITY IMPACT

## COMMUNITY IMPACT



**900 Clean the World hygiene kits** were assembled by attendees.

Of these, **400** were distributed to **WASH Foundation Hurricane Helene disaster relief** and **500** to **The Shade Tree** in Las Vegas, NV.



### Charitable Donations:

**\$1,000** to

Shade Tree Las Vegas

Noah's Animal House Foundation

Opportunity Village Foundation

**\$500** to

Spread the Word Nevada





EXHIBITOR ENGAGEMENT

# EXHIBITOR ENGAGEMENT

Many exhibitors use the show to share their sustainability initiatives. Here are a few highlights:

## Destination Canada:

Offered **65% plant-based booth catering** and minimized single-use plastic use

Estimated the emissions associated with its booth and **neutralized 91.16 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e** via certified carbon credits<sup>6</sup>

Hosted a **Sustainability Stories Pavilion** to share actionable ideas



## IMEX America 2024 Maritz Wellbeing Challenge:

According to the Maritz team's calculations, this program achieved an estimated **1,795kg CO<sub>2</sub>e in emissions reductions**<sup>7</sup>

## isla:

The **isla** team volunteered their time while in Las Vegas with the Three Square food bank where they helped assemble **1,000 meal boxes** for the local community





**32,193 sqm** of event carpeting saved for reuse—approximately **87% of total**

**2,322 sqm** of carpet padding saved for reuse—approximately **99% of total**

**1,298 sqm** of print signage **saved for reuse** at IMEX America 2025

Use of adhesive **decals** made from **recycled plastic**

### We also launched a new badging initiative:

The partnership with pc/nametag featured a **100% paper** badge holder, replacing the single-use plastic holder.

The kraft fiber construction allowed badges to be easily recycled after use.

Did you know?



MATERIAL USE

**MATERIAL USE**



We're part of a group of exhibition organizers piloting the Better Stands 10-point framework.

This program aims to **reduce single-use disposable booths** at tradeshows in favor of reusable structures.

The IMEX team used the show as a chance to **informally pilot** this framework across its exhibitor base.

Key areas of assessment included booth flooring, walls and electrical set up.





ENERGY AND WATER

# ENERGY AND WATER

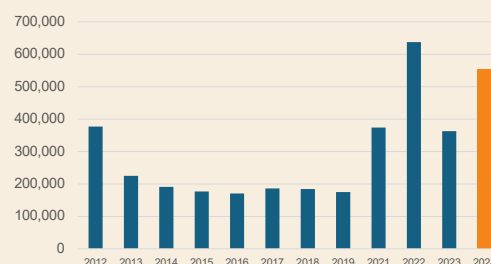


**IMEX America** is largely dependent on Mandalay Bay infrastructure, and external environmental factors such as weather can impact both electricity and water consumption. However, we're committed to measuring consumption and continue to work closely with our venue to explore ways to reduce use, such as adjusted temperature and lighting setpoints during move in and move out.

## ENERGY

Mandalay Bay Convention Center is powered by 90% renewable energy during daylight hours, and around 30% over a full day cycle.<sup>8</sup> Over a 24-hour period, including non-daylight hours where generation does not occur, we estimate around **166,500 kWh** of the 550,000 kWh of venue energy was **produced from renewable sources**.

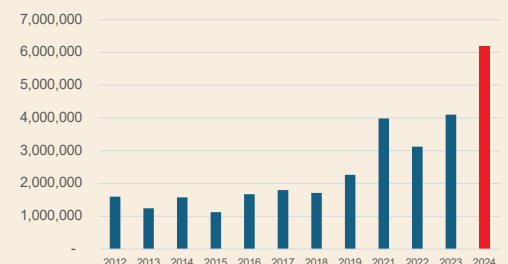
Electricity use Mandalay Bay Convention Center (kWh)



## WATER

According to MGM Resorts, **more than 75% of water** at their Las Vegas properties is returned to its source at Lake Mead<sup>9</sup>. Based on this, we estimate approximately **4,644,699 liters** of water used at the show were recovered for reuse.

Water use Mandalay Bay Convention Center (liters)





# MANAGING CARBON EMISSIONS

Responsibly measuring, managing and mitigating our show emissions is a key priority:

➞ **Mandalay Bay Convention Center and MGM Resorts accommodations:** they are currently powered by significant amounts of renewable solar energy generated through MGM's photovoltaic panels which convert solar energy into electricity

➞ **Shuttles:** five electric buses were used for transportation at IMEX America for the first time



NEW

➞ **Freight:** IMEX assets are stored just five miles from the Mandalay Bay Convention Center, helping to reduce direct freight fossil fuel burn

➞ **Materials:** Nearly every IMEX-owned structural asset as well as 87% of carpet is kept for reuse post-event

➞ **Air travel:** To help mitigate air travel emissions, we worked with Cloverly to enable attendees to balance their travel by buying carbon credits from a choice of impactful sustainability projects



Did you know?

**F&B:** Menus at IMEX America catering outlets were **100% beef-free** for the first time. This helped **reduce menu emissions by 39%** compared to the 2023 show

NEW





EQUITY, ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING



# EQUITY ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING



278

Attendees  
participated in  
the **IMEXrun**

730

Attendees participated  
in **sustainability  
and ESG education**  
sessions

164

Attendees  
participated in **She  
Means Business**  
education sessions





# THIRD PARTY AUDITING

In addition to on-site auditing and verification, IMEX America is quantitatively assessed by the **MeetGreen® Calculator 2.0**. This tool allows organizations to benchmark progress against their own efforts and other events of similar size and type.

For the **fifth time in a row**, IMEX America achieved the highest tier. IMEX America 2024 was awarded **Sustainable Event Visionary**.

Key categories assessed include:

Destination

Accommodations

Venue

Catering

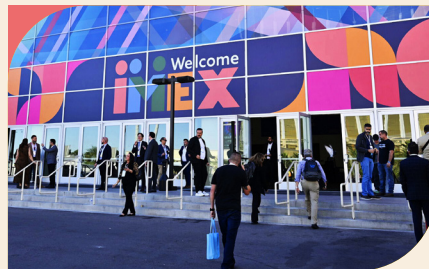
Transportation

Exhibits

AV

Marketing and communications

On site



## A SUSTAINABLE EVENT VISIONARY:

“Leads within their own industry, prioritizes measurement and works to move the sustainability dial. They research and develop new initiatives to improve environmental performance and use the organization’s buying power to drive change with venues and vendors”





While we're encouraged by our results for IMEX America 2024, we're always looking for new ways to **improve, innovate and re-imagine.**

For IMEX America 2025 we're exploring:

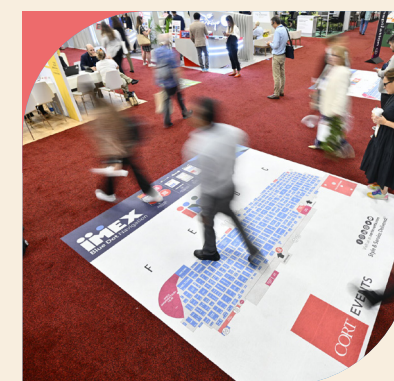
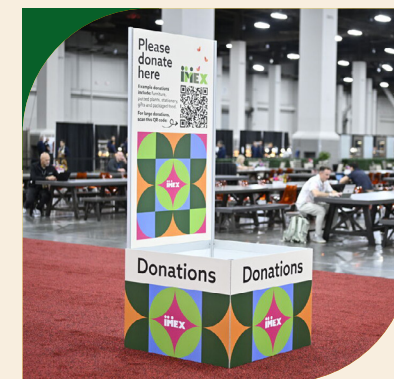
# OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE

➔ **Material donations:** Ways in which our charity partners can access the floor earlier, potentially immediately after hall closing, to facilitate smoother pickup of material donations

➔ **Paper-based adhesive decals:** These will require testing on site in advance to confirm they can be removed without damage to the venue's walls

➔ **Polymer Center tour:** We hope to visit this new facility to meet the team and improve our understanding of material choices

➔ **Three stream waste bins:** Increase the number of three stream compost, recycling and waste bins in both the Hall B food outlets and Hosted Buyer Lounge







We would like to thank our valued long-term **venue and supplier partners** who have made our 2024 sustainability impacts and initiatives possible:

- [Events Industry Council \(EIC\)](#)
- [GES Events](#)
- [Hadco Staffing](#)
- [MGM Resorts](#)
- [PRA](#)
- [Showgear Productions](#)
- [Spring Valley Floral](#)

Prepared by:

**MeetGreen**<sup>®</sup>  
[www.meetgreen.com](http://www.meetgreen.com)





## APPENDIX

1. <https://vegasprimer.com/how-many-hotel-rooms-in-las-vegas>
2. <https://www.lvmonorail.com/vegas-taxi-alternative/#::~:~:text=The%20Monorail%20uses%20regenerative%20braking,from%20Southern%20Nevada's%20major%20roadways.>
3. <https://www.epa.gov/homeland-security-waste/waste-management-hierarchy-and-homeland-security-incidents>
4. <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>
5. [https://www.bigbustours.com/en/las-vegas/las-vegas-landmarks-the-stratosphere#::~:~:text=At%201%2C149%20feet%20\(350%20meters,star%20hotel%20and%20a%20casino.](https://www.bigbustours.com/en/las-vegas/las-vegas-landmarks-the-stratosphere#::~:~:text=At%201%2C149%20feet%20(350%20meters,star%20hotel%20and%20a%20casino.)
6. Reported by program's own internal estimates and is not an IMEX or MeetGreen calculation
7. Reported by program's own internal estimates and is not an IMEX or MeetGreen calculation
8. <https://mandalaybay.mgmresorts.com/en/amenities/sustainable-hotels-las-vegas.html>
9. <https://www.mgmresorts.com/en/company/sis/protecting-the-planet/water.html>