

**Application for
Green Initiative**

**Ocean Fest,
Ocean Fest Inc., NC**

Judges' score: 8.56

Detailed description of the event:

Ocean Fest is an annual environmental festival centered around live music, art, education & surf culture united to benefit Mother Ocean.

Detailed description of the environmental impact of the event or initiative:

In May 2025, Ocean Fest included live music throughout the day, dozens of arts & crafts vendors - curated to be focused on sustainability & ocean friendliness, a dozen ECO Exhibits from local environmental non-profit organizations, a Kids Zone focused on environmental education, a beer garden, food trucks, a surf experience, a beach clean up and our #Promise to Protect photo experience. We strive to be a Zero Waste event and put significant effort in to reducing waste generated and managing our waste to send as little to the landfill as possible. Our food & beverage vendors are required to use compostable serving ware and drinks in aluminum cans or compostable cups only - no single use plastics. We work with a local compost service company to ensure that all of our compostables are recycled into nutrient rich compost that goes to local farms and gardens. In May 2025 - we diverted 1477 lbs of waste to compost, 7 bins (96 gallon) of aluminum cans, 2 large bags (33 gallon) of plastic films from our landfill. Throughout the event, attendees are presented with information about how they can make more ocean friendly decisions - announcements by our emcee, re-useable infographic posters, messaging from exhibitors and vendors. We staff our waste stations with volunteer "Waste Warriors" to ensure we are sorting our trash responsibly while communicating with attendees why we do what we do. Our #Promise to Protect photo experience invites attendees to pick a pre-printed promise they will make to help protect the environment and hold it up for the camera in front of our backdrop and then post the photos on social media. We also really lean into evergreen signage that can re-used every year, like un-dated banners and chalkboard signs. When we do have to use a banner that can't be re-used, like for sponsor recognition, we save those and send and send them off for upcycling into tote bags. All of these efforts lead to a fully immersive experience that highlights environmental issues and solutions. After the event, Ocean Fest uses the proceeds to provide grants to local environmental organizations to support the work they do to further protect the environment and our Ocean.

Estimated number of attendees?

3500

Testimonials or community feedback:

"Ocean Fest turns love for our coastal waters into action—uniting our community through conservation, learning, and ocean stewardship." - Chris Lener We are so excited & honored to be part of @theoceanfestorg, sharing our Eco swaps and initiatives!" Topsail Dental "Ocean Fest lives its mission by proving that coastal celebration and environmental responsibility can and must go hand in hand. As an organization dedicated to protecting the quality of water and quality of life in coastal North Carolina, Coastal Carolina Riverwatch sees Ocean Fest as a true partner in stewardship through its commitment to waste reduction, education, and thoughtful event design. Having [a strong team] at the helm of waste reduction programming has been crucial to turning values into action and making sustainability visible, effective, and impactful for the entire community." Lisa Rider, Coastal Carolina Riverwatch



Vendor Agreement

For Art, Craft, and Food Vendors

EVENING DATE: NOVEMBER 1, 2025

Location: Soundside Park, Surf City, NC

This Vendor Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into between OceanFest, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (“Organizer”), and the undersigned vendor (“Vendor”) for participation in Ocean Fest.

By signing this Agreement, Vendor commits to the following terms and conditions, which are designed to ensure a high-quality, sustainable, and safe event that aligns with Ocean Fest’s mission of protecting our oceans and coastal communities.

1. **SUSTAINABILITY & ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES**

1.1 No Single-Use/Disposable Items

Vendor agrees to **ELIMINATE SINGLE-USE/DISPOSABLE ITEMS** such as plastic bags, ties, plastic tablecloths, plastic sample cups or spoons, balloons, or any materials likely to blow away.

1.2 Sustainable & Upcycled Materials

Vendor will **PRIORITIZE** recycled, upcycled, organic fabrics, bamboo, compostable, or reusable materials for displays, packaging, serveware, and products.

1.3 Eco-Friendly Service Materials

ALL SERVEWARE (i.e. cups, plates, utensils, and trays) **MUST BE REUSABLE OR COMMERCIALLY COMPOSTABLE**. If straws are required, they must be compostable.

Reach out to vendors@theoceanfest.org if you have questions or need assistance sourcing compostable products.

1.4 No Plastic Swag or Giveaways

All promotional/giveaway items must be made from sustainable materials — no plastic keychains, toys, or other single-use promotional items.

- **No Raffles:** You can give items away and ask for donations, but no ticket sales.

1.5 Year-Round Commitment

VENDOR AGREES TO MAKE A GOOD-FAITH EFFORT TO CONTINUE SUSTAINABLE BEYOND OCEAN FEST EVENTS.

2. SETUP & BREAKDOWN REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Setup

- Vendor setup must be complete no later than 1 hour before the event starts.
- Displays must be sturdy, wind-safe, and designed to minimize waste.
- No single-use/disposable setup materials may be used (e.g., plastic zip ties).

2.2 Breakdown

- Breakdown may not begin before the official end time of the event.
- Vendor must remove all materials, trash, and equipment from their assigned space by approximately 9:30pm unless notified otherwise.
- Vendor agrees to follow the Leave No Trace principle — the site must be left clean and free of debris.

3. COMPLIANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

3.1 Violation of Sustainability Standards

Vendors who fail to follow the above sustainability requirements may be:

- Required to make immediate corrections on-site.
- Denied participation in future Ocean Fest events.

3.2 Regulatory Compliance

Vendor is responsible for complying with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, including health, safety, and tax regulations.

4. FEES, SPACE, & OPERATIONS

4.1 Vendor Fee

Vendor agrees to pay the participation fee by **OCTOBER 7TH, 2025**.

4.2 Assigned Space

The Organizer will assign Vendor space. Vendors may not move or expand outside the assigned footprint without prior written approval.

4.3 Power & Utilities

- **NO GENERATORS:** Except for food truck vendors.
- **NO ELECTRICITY:** Bring battery-operated lights if needed.

5. LIABILITY & INSURANCE

Vendor assumes full responsibility for their property, products, and personnel. The organizer is not liable for loss, theft, damage, or injury.

Vendors are encouraged to carry liability insurance.

6. AGREEMENT TERMINATION

The Organizer reserves the right to revoke Vendor participation at any time if these terms are not met, or if Vendor's conduct is deemed unsafe, unsustainable, or contrary to Ocean Fest's mission.

Ocean Fest Vendor Agreement 2025

BY SIGNING BELOW, VENDOR AGREES TO COMPLY WITH ALL TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGES THAT NONCOMPLIANCE MAY RESULT IN REMOVAL FROM THE FEST AND DENIAL OF FUTURE PARTICIPATION.

Vendor Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Ocean Fest Representative: _____

Date: _____

Waste Warriors

Your job is to make sure that waste is disposed of properly. You have a sheet with examples of compostables and a sheet with details for recyclables. Everything else, aside from plastic films, goes in the garbage, destined for the landfill.

If you see that a bin is getting full, call or text Ryan at (951) 491-9783 to let him know. We have plastic bags to replace the ones in the garbage & recycle bins. Wilmington Compost has a truck with empty compost bins to switch out for full ones.

If you have questions, please ask. The folks from Wilmington Compost are here to help. They are at a tent near the main zero waste station Eco Expo and will be checking in with you periodically.

Please try to make the process fun & informative. Everything we can divert to compost or recycling is a win and less waste going to the landfill. I know this is not a glamorous job, but it is probably the most impactful effort at Ocean Fest. Be proud Waste Warriors!

Below are some fun facts about waste, recycling & compost:

Compostable vs. Biodegradable -

While biodegradable items refer to just any material which breaks down and decomposes in the environment, compostable goods **are specifically organic matter** which breaks down, the end product having many beneficial uses which include fertilizing and improving soil health. Biodegradable items should go to the landfill, not the compost bin or facility.

Cigarette Butts - NOT biodegradable or compostable - they contain plastic fibers and toxic chemicals that can leach into the soils & waters when not disposed of properly.

Plastics - Over the past 50 years, world plastic production has doubled. 50% of all plastic produced (380 million tons/year) is for single use purposes; used for minutes, then tossed away. Only 9% of all plastic produced is recycled and most plastics can only be recycled once. 10 million tons of plastic are dumped in our oceans annually; that about a garbage truck per minute.

Why compost? - Compost is organic material that can be added to soil to help plants grow. Food scraps and yard waste together currently make up more than 30 percent of what we throw away, and could be composted instead. Making compost keeps these materials out of landfills where they take up space and release methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

Chose wisely - Glass & Aluminum are infinitely recyclable, meaning they can be recycled over & over. When making purchases, look for alternatives to plastic packaging, for example, buy sodas in cans, not plastic bottles or refill glass bottles for cleaning products and other household items.

