

# The ACA Corner: July insights from Air Chefs

## The ACA Corner: July 2026



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## Caterer's perspective: Aza Zandile Mzilikazi, Acting CEO, Air Chefs

### **Operational sustainability in inflight catering: Turning commitments into measurable impact**

As sustainability expectations across the aviation sector continue to evolve, inflight caterers are increasingly being measured not by their commitments, but by their ability to deliver tangible results. The challenge is no longer defining sustainability goals but embedding them into daily operations in ways that create measurable impact.

Environmental sustainability remains a key focus area. Across the industry, organizations are implementing initiatives aimed at reducing waste, improving landfill diversion, and lowering water and energy consumption. Sustainable procurement is also gaining momentum, with caterers recognizing the important role supplier partnerships play in reducing environmental impact throughout the value chain.

Equally important is the social dimension of sustainability. Community food redistribution programs help address food insecurity while reducing waste, demonstrating how operational efficiency can create wider social benefits. At the same time, employee wellbeing initiatives and investment in hospitality and culinary education contribute to workforce resilience and support the development of future industry talent.

Strong governance underpins the success of these efforts. Sustainability is most effective when it is integrated into operational processes, supplier agreements, and performance management frameworks rather than being treated as a standalone initiative. Clear accountability, ethical business practices, and measurable targets are essential to driving meaningful progress.

Leading organizations across the sector have shown that sustainability delivers the greatest value when it becomes part of everyday decision-making. By aligning environmental, social, and governance objectives with operational execution, inflight caterers can move beyond intent and demonstrate real, measurable outcomes.

As the industry continues to evolve, those organizations that successfully translate sustainability commitments into operational action will be best positioned to create long-term value for their businesses, customers, communities, and the aviation sector as a whole.

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