

COMMITMENT

A Sustainable Food System for Campus

A HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS FOOD SYSTEM is one in which the food is accessible, transparent, responsibly sourced, and nutritious. Food provides the opportunity for student engagement, community collaboration, and equity across campus and the broader community.

STRATEGIES

- 1 Procurement
- 2 Access
- 3 Literacy
- 4 Leadership



◀ Students harvest ripe tomatoes at the Edible Campus Garden in preparation for the U of U farmers market.



Progress to date

In 2015, then University of Utah President David Pershing signed the Real Food Campus Commitment, making the U part of a national campaign for food justice and committing our Dining Services to buying at least 20 percent “Real Food” by the year 2020.

Since 2016, the Organic Gardening Course has consistently been at capacity, enrolling 4x as many students as previous years. This can be attributed to the strength of the partnership that has developed between the food system programs and faculty.

Starting in 2017, approximately 300 pounds of produce grown by students on campus has been donated to the Feed U Pantry each year. This has become an annual goal for the Edible Campus Gardens.

In 2018, the Sustainability Office created the Sustainable Food Initiatives Manager position to address the expansion of the role beyond campus garden development.

REAL FOOD CHALLENGE BEARS FRUIT

In 2015, the Real Food Challenge student group determined that the U purchased 12.3% real food. They conducted the same analysis for the 2018 fiscal year and reported an increase to 15% real food. The U is well on its way to achieving the 20% by 2020 goal.

PRODUCE PICKS UP

The Edible Campus Gardens and University of Utah Farmers Market strive to promote local and healthy food consumption. A student study conducted in 2017 determined that around 5,000 campus community members are exposed to the farmers’ market on a daily basis. Funding from the Double Your Dollars program, giving students an opportunity to double their \$5.00 to \$10.00 was primarily spent at fresh produce stands. Focus groups are being used to determine how to ensure that students who visit the market and participate in garden programs represent the broad spectrum of students at the U and are inclusive of underrepresented groups in our community.

The Edible Campus Gardens have significantly increased the quality and quantity of produce grown on campus in recent years. This has resulted in an increase in funds raised through Farmers Market sales which have been used to improve garden infrastructure and create an outdoor classroom space, enhancing student experiences at the garden.

STUDENTS LEAD THE WAY

Collaboration between student food groups including the Food Recovery Network, Edible Campus Gardens, Real Food Challenge, and Feed U Pantry has provided the necessary momentum to integrate sustainable food practices into campus life. The mission statements of these groups are aligned around food justice, reducing food waste, bringing real food to campus, and teaching students how to grow their own food.

A recent partnership between the Edible Campus Gardens and Feed U Pantry resulted in 300 lbs. of free, fresh produce reaching pantry users. Through an event called Produce Pickups, the Edible Campus Gardens have donated produce on a weekly basis during the growing season to the Feed U Pantry. Often times, this food would include leftover garden produce from the Farmers Market that was still edible, but had not sold. This collaborative effort has become standard practice and will help achieve two important goals: feeding hungry people and reducing food waste.

Aside from the aforementioned student groups, a Slow Food student chapter is in the works to foster a healthy, diverse food culture on campus. The students will bring awareness to social and environmental justice issues surrounding food and increase understanding of food terminology.

STRATEGY 1 Procurement

actions	indicators	term
Meet the University of Utah's Real Food Challenge (RFC) commitment.	Twenty percent of food purchases meet Real Food criteria as sustainable, organic, local and humane based on annual invoice analysis. Real Food Challenge language is incorporated into dining services contracts.	Short term (2019-2020)
Expand goals for dining services beyond the RFC minimum criteria to address specific University of Utah priorities and student needs.	Goals for dining services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Promoting health and nutrition •Increasing purchases of food produced under fair and humane conditions •Increasing support of local businesses and farms purchases •Administration signs and approves new challenge goals developed by the Campus Food Advisory Committee that address all aspects of procurement described above. •Dining contracts incorporate these new goals. 	Short term (2019-2020)
Expand goals to all food outlets on campus.	Food outlets follow sustainable dining practice guidelines adapted from goals used by dining services.	Mid term (2019-2025)

STRATEGY 2 Access

actions	indicators	term
Analyze Food Access on campus and use data to inform action.	Sustainable Food Systems Team conducts annual survey of students on campus to direct food access efforts. Results are published and shared with appropriate stakeholders. Sustainable Food Systems Team works with stakeholders to develop an action plan.	Short term (2019-2021)
Improve Food Access.	All food venues on campus are contractually obligated to provide at least one affordable and healthy meal option as defined by the Campus Food Advisory Committee based on the results of the above survey.	Short term (2019-2021)



▲ Garden interns sell produce they've grown at the University of Utah farmers market.

STRATEGY 3 Literacy

actions	indicators	term
Develop an informative food labeling system.	Dining halls and cafeterias utilize a labeling system developed by the Campus Food Advisory Board that integrates sustainability and health. Dining contracts for all venues require this new labeling system.	Mid term (2019-2022)
Expand goals for dining services beyond the RFC minimum criteria to address specific University of Utah priorities and student needs.	New employee and new student orientations include introduction to sustainable food initiatives on campus. Sustainable Food Systems Team works together with Housing and Residential Education to explore programming related to sustainable food. Sustainability Office works with University communication outlets to provide content highlighting sustainable food initiatives on campus at least once per semester.	Short term (2019-2021)

STRATEGY 4 Leadership

actions	indicators	term
Create Campus Food Advisory Committee.	Cross campus advisory committee meets quarterly to establish goals and set priorities for large scale food systems projects.	Short term (2019)
Define Sustainable Food Systems Manager role.	Sustainable Food Initiatives Manager fosters collaboration among student food groups by holding quarterly meetings, planning joint events, and providing annual reports of group progress.	Short term (2019)



▲ Students gather around for free produce at the Edible Campus Gardens Produce Pickup event held weekly during harvest season.