

University of Cambridge Sustainable Food Policy

Introduction

The University of Cambridge recognises its responsibility to provide healthy and sustainable food to our staff, students, and visitors. This Policy sets out the University's intentions to minimise the impact of its catering operations on the environment, and to promote sustainable practices and consumption. This Policy applies to the catering outlets in departments of the University run by the University Catering Service¹; it does not apply to the Colleges.

Policy aims

- Reduce the consumption of meat, in particular ruminant meat (e.g. beef and lamb).
- Promote the consumption of more vegetarian and vegan foods.
- Ensure that no fish from the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) 'Fish to Avoid' list is served in the University and seek Marine Stewardship Council certification.
- Reduce the amount of food that is wasted in the University.
- Source food and other products locally where possible in order to sustain the local economy and reduce environmental impacts.
- Use Fairtrade products where applicable, and promote products which actively support Fairtrade initiatives.
- Ensure that animal welfare standards are adhered to for any animal produce purchased and to insist on Red Tractor Assured standards as minimum, where applicable.
- Communicate to customers, staff and suppliers our commitment to serving sustainable food.
- Continue to implement all sustainability measures taken to date.

Implementation

- Raise awareness of the benefits to the environmental and individuals of following a mainly vegetarian/vegan diet via promotional guidance, product information and awareness campaigns.
- Set sustainable food targets and measure our performance against these annually.
- Examine this Sustainable Food Policy bi-annually (every other year) and amend targets.
- Work with suppliers to progress our sustainability agenda.
- Engage with other operators on University sites including outside caterers, departments not provided for by the University Catering Service and colleges, to encourage adoption of this Policy and its objectives.

Scope of the Policy

This Policy is focused on the provision and procurement of food in the catering outlets within departments of the University; it does not apply to the Colleges.

¹ Outlets are listed here: <http://www.unicen.cam.ac.uk/food-and-drink/places-eat/out-university-centre>

The Policy applies to all aspects of sustainable food, including procurement, preparation, provision, food waste and waste management, education.

All suppliers will be expected to assist the University in meeting the Sustainable Food Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

The University has a responsibility to procure food in a sustainable manner in accordance with the Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy and Strategy.

Heads of Department have responsibility for implementation of the Policy in their department. The University Catering Service's Head of Operations has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Policy within the services delivered either by the University Catering Service or commercial operators.

Responsibility for application of the practical delivery of this Policy within operations lies with the University Catering Service Unit Managers and their teams.

Responsibility for application of the principles and practical delivery of this Policy within the Schools and Units lies with the Head of School or Department.

Guidance and advice with regards to all aspects listed above will be provided by the Environment and Energy Team and the University Catering Service's Head of Operations as required.

Objectives

Communication and engagement

- Increase awareness of this Sustainable Food Policy – and its evidence base – through newsletters, the Environment and Energy Coordinators (EECs) network, websites and intranets, and other University publications.
- Participate in University-wide campaigns and other events by promoting healthy and sustainable food, including vegan options.
- Participate in Cambridge's efforts to become a Sustainable Food City. Showcase good examples and practices across the University that support the aims and objectives of this Policy.
- Include a requirement for adherence to this Policy in all new and retendered projects (including new café contracts).
- Provide catering staff with training about sustainable food and the objectives and reasons for the Policy.
- Encourage adoption of this Policy and its objectives by outside caterers, departments and colleges across the University.

Meat and dairy

- Reduce the consumption of meat in particular ruminant meat (e.g. beef and lamb).
- Promote the consumption of more vegetarian and vegan foods.
- Increase the range of animal products from certified higher welfare standards.
- Where possible and appropriate, use local produce/suppliers and actively include and promote use of these products in menus.
- Aim to ensure all milk and dairy products are Red Tractor Assured or equivalent as a minimum standard.

- Use free range eggs as standard.

Fish

- Achieve Marine Conservation Society accreditation.
- Uphold our commitments to the Sustainable Fish Cities pledge.
- Eliminate the use of fish from the Marine Conservation Society's 'Fish to Avoid' list.
- Seek Marine Stewardship Council certification.
- Use diverse species of fish to reduce pressure on sensitive stocks.
- Investigate various species of tinned fish and the capture method, aiming to purchase more sustainable alternatives, where possible.

Fairtrade

- Increase the Fairtrade product range and raise awareness of Fairtrade campaigns organised throughout the year.
- All tea, coffee, sugar and bananas that are provided are Fairtrade (subject to supply).

Fruit and vegetables

- Develop menus which make use of seasonal fruit and vegetables, where practically possible.
- Actively promote vegetarian options more than meat options.
- Source fruit and vegetables that are from local suppliers and, where possible, that are Red Tractor Assured, equivalent or fully traceable.
- Encourage suppliers to understand the production system under which the fruit and vegetables were grown.
- Increase the amount of fruit and vegetables used that are grown from systems that cause the least harm to the environment, where possible.

Sustainably sourced products containing palm oil and soya

- Aim to avoid products containing palm oil, or source products that are certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).
- Aim to source soya products that are certified by the Round Table on Responsible Soy (RTRS) or ProTerra.

Energy

- Any new or replacement cooking/catering equipment should seek to provide efficiencies in energy consumption.
- Conduct energy audits to identify ways to reduce consumption within University Catering Service outlets.

Waste

- Monitor food waste and record amounts being collected.
- Aim to achieve a significant reduction in waste in all café operations, in line with the University's recycling targets to send zero non-hazardous waste to landfill by 2020 and to recycle at least 95% of total waste produced at the University by 2016.
- Reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill, through the use the waste food collection scheme and compostable food packaging which is collected with the food waste and composted.
- Recycle used cooking oil for turning into biofuel.

- Measure and reduce the amount of disposables used on an annual basis.
- Continue to offer a discount scheme on all hot drinks for those who use KeepCups.

Water

- Uphold our provision and promotion of chilled water fountains in all cafes to reduce the demand for bottled water.
- We will analyse the impact of phasing out the sale of bottled water, with a view to eventually ceasing sale in all cafes.

Research

- Work with the Living Laboratory for Sustainability, Cambridge Conservation Initiative and other relevant bodies to carry out research linked to food sustainability, for improving monitoring, performance and impacts over time.

Metrics and monitoring

- Kilograms of meat and dairy bought
- Number of meals served
- Kilograms of waste generated
- Measurement of food footprint of University catering

Contact information

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