

University of Cambridge Sustainable Food Policy

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.

Aims

- Offer no ruminant meat and reduce the offering of other meat.
- Reduce the consumption of dairy products.
- Promote the consumption of more plant-based foods.
- Reduce food wastage.
- Source food and other products locally where possible.
- Ensure that products are traded fairly throughout the supply chain.
- Ensure that we provide fish from sustainable sources, limiting the impact on threatened stocks and through the environmental impacts of aquaculture.
- Ensure that animal welfare standards are adhered to, including through adherence to Red Tractor Assured standards as minimum.
- Communicate the commitment to sustainable food to customers, staff and suppliers our commitment to serving sustainable food.
- Do not sell any single use plastic bottles and reduce the use of all plastic packaging.
- Continue to implement forward thinking sustainability best practice.

Objectives

- Raise awareness of the benefits to the environment and individuals of reducing meat consumption via promotional guidance, product information and awareness campaigns.
- Monitor performance against policy aims, including by setting sustainable food targets, and reporting regularly on performance against these.
- Examine this Sustainable Food Policy bi-annually (every other year) and amend targets.
- Work with suppliers to progress our sustainability agenda including incorporating the Sustainable Food Policy as part of the contract documentation for all preferred catering suppliers and contracted caterers.
- Engage with other operators on University sites including outside caterers and departments not provided for by the University Catering Service (UCS) and Colleges, to encourage adoption of this Policy and its objectives.

Scope of the Policy

- This Policy applies to the catering outlets in departments of the University run by the UCS as well as all catering outlets in departments operated by the private sector managed by the UCS's Head of Operations; it does not apply to the Colleges. However, the Colleges adhere to the Catering Managers Committee Sustainable Food Policy, which is based on this policy.
- All suppliers will be expected to assist the University in meeting the Sustainable Food Policy.
- The Policy applies to all aspects of sustainable food, including procurement, preparation, provision, food waste and waste management and education.

Roles and responsibilities

- The University has a responsibility to procure food in a sustainable manner in accordance with its Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy and Strategy¹.
- The UCS's Head of Operations has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Policy within the services delivered either by the UCS or commercial operators. Responsibility for

¹ www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy

application of the practical delivery of this Policy within operations lies with the UCS Area Catering Manager and her 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 University's Environment and Energy section and the UCS's Head of Operations as required.
- Ongoing monitoring of the policy is to be led by the Environment & Energy section, with support from the UCS, with input from academics, students and external partners where relevant.
- Customers are encouraged to support the aims and objectives of the policy.

Monitoring

Targets

- To reduce carbon emissions from food year on year, scaled to the size of the business
- For plant-based meals to make up an increasing proportion of the offer year on year.

Key Performance Indicators

- Carbon emissions per kilo of food procured (kgs of carbon per kg of food procured).
- Carbon emissions from food per £ revenue.
- Carbon emissions from food per transaction.
- Kilograms of meat and dairy purchased as a proportion of total food purchased.
- Proportion of plant-based meals served.
- Kilograms of food waste generated.
- Number of single use takeaway disposables used.
- Life cycle impact per kilo food purchased (specifically carbon and where possible land use, water use and other environmental metrics).

Implementation

The Sustainable Food Policy is supported by an action plan outlining the specific actions and areas of focus that will help achieve our aims and objectives. See overleaf for a copy of the Sustainable Food Action Plan.

Sustainable Food Action Plan 2019-2021

Communication and engagement

- Increase awareness of this Sustainable Food Policy – through newsletters, the Environment and Energy Coordinators (EECs) network, websites and intranets, and other University publications. Encourage its adoption by outside caterers, departments and colleges.
- 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 and supplier contracts).
- Engaging with suppliers to better understand their supply chains and to support our suppliers in their own sustainable procurement of food items.
- Provide catering staff with training about sustainable food and the objectives and reasons for the Policy.
- Share the policy and its results with external stakeholders through awards entries, articles and other promotional activities.

Meat and dairy

- Ensure that no ruminant meat is sold (e.g. beef and lamb).
- Reduce the consumption of other meat by providing and promoting more plant-based meals so that they consistently form a larger proportion of the offering.
- Reduce the consumption of dairy products.
- Ensure that animal products are from certified higher welfare standards.
- Where possible and appropriate, use local produce and/or 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.
- Continue to use free range eggs as standard.
- When using other egg products e.g. frozen whole eggs, egg whites or mayonnaise etc. use free range if available.

Fish

- Continue to limit fish consumption.
- Eliminate the use of fish from the Marine Conservation Society's 'Fish to Avoid' list, and where possible aim to only serve fish with a 'best choices' rating from the MCS Good Fish Guide, based on information at the time of purchase.
- Reduce the consumption of tinned tuna by only offering it on selected days of the week and increasing prices.
- Investigate various species of tinned fish and the capture method, aiming to purchase more sustainable alternatives, where possible.
- Uphold our commitments to the Sustainable Fish Cities pledge.
- Use diverse species of white fish to reduce pressure on sensitive stocks.
- Consider other options for increasing the sustainability of fish, including opting for pole and line caught fish, promoting consumption outside of the 'big five' (cod, salmon, tuna, haddock, prawns) and reducing or eliminating the consumption of carnivorous aquaculture species such as shrimp, prawns and salmon in favour of lower-impact aquaculture species such as tilapia.

Fairly Traded Products

- Ensure that all of our products are fairly traded throughout their supply chains.
- All tea, coffee, sugar and bananas served to be certified Fairtrade (subject to supply).

Fruit and vegetables

- Aim to develop menus which make use of seasonal fruit and vegetables, where practically possible.
- Source fruit and vegetables from local suppliers where possible.
- Food produce is to be Red Tractor Assured, equivalent or fully traceable.
- Where possible procure fruit and vegetables from low impact production systems.
- Consider the feasibility of growing fruit and vegetables on the University estate. Herbs would be our first commitment, followed by seasonal fruit and vegetables that can be incorporated into menus across the University.

Sustainably sourced products containing palm oil and soya

- Aim to source products containing palm oil that are certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).
- Commit to investigating and sourcing the most sustainable oil options possible.
- Aim to source soya products that are certified by the Round Table on Responsible Soy (RTRS) or ProTerra.
- Reduce overall consumption of oil.

Food Waste

- 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.
- Monitor food waste records in order to assess portion size and therefore implement portion control sizes to avoid unnecessary waste.
- Recycle used cooking oil for turning into biofuel.

Plastics and Packaging

- Eliminate the use of non-recyclable plastics and reduce the use of all single use disposable items. Using compostable options where this is impossible.
- Encourage our suppliers to go plastic-free.
- Increase awareness that we have moved away from single use non-recyclable plastic in the cafes.
- We will continue not to sell single use plastic bottles. In recognition of the demand for 'to go' water, plastic free options such as cans, glass or compostable bottles will be sold.
- Where possible and where appropriate facilities exist, use china plates and bowls and reusable cutlery in place of disposable options.
- Offer initiatives and discount schemes for customers who use reusable cups and crockery.
- Reduce plastics and non-recyclable waste with the aim of no longer needing the general waste bin in the cafes.
- We will continue to only issue paper till receipts on demand.

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 UCS outlets.
- Catering Staff to be given energy saving training.
- Encouraging customers to pay via card rather than in cash.

Water

- Uphold our provision and promotion of chilled water fountains in all cafes to reduce the demand for bottled water.
- Work to reduce the amount of water used in the kitchen.

Products

- Eco-friendly cleaners and detergents will be introduced to reduce environmental impact.

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.