



The Community Table Project

Dana Ng, UC Davis Student Farm

University of California, Davis, Global Food Initiative Fellowship



Introduction

The Community Table Project (CTP) is a food access and inclusion project based at the UC Davis Student Farm. The project aims to look at ways the Student Farm (SF) can address campus food insecurity, and start dialogue around the intersections of people, place, and food.

CTP is comprised to two inter-related efforts:

The Fresh Focus Program facilitates production, harvest, and delivery of free, organic produce to students through campus food distribution programs, such as the ASUCD Pantry and Student Health and Wellness Center's Fruit and Veggie Up!

Community Connections engages with the UCD community to expand the reach and impact of the farm as a space for inclusive dialogue around food systems – ultimately developing lasting relationships centering food and culture.

Project Goals

- Increase the amount of free produce grown, harvested, and delivered for distribution across campus
- Create and sustain relationships with faculty members, student organizations, ASUCD, and external organizations
- Support food-related work on campus by providing free produce and educational materials
- Address issues of food insecurity on campus by increasing food access, participating in food justice efforts, and fostering experiential education



Materials and Methods

Food Insecurity:
29% of UC Davis undergraduate and graduate population experiences food insecurity

Food Justice:
"Food justice is the application of social justice solutions to address inequality in the food system."

Experiential Learning:
"EL can help students increase their self-awareness and intentionally strengthen and diversify their learning skills by helping them understand their strengths as learners and explicitly practice activities outside their preferences or strengths."

Achieving greater food access –
Increasing the amount of produce donated from the Student Farm

Harvest and Packing System: The Fresh Focus team created a system at the Market Garden in which selected items are harvested for campus food distribution programs. Over-harvested produce is collected from other Market Garden student farmers to distribute as well.

- Aim:**
- Communicate closely with Lead Farmers in maximizing produce available for donations
 - Developing stronger delivery system to make produce available more days of the week

Supporting On-Campus Food Justice Efforts –
Developing relationships with other campus departments (i.e Chicanx Studies, Asian American Studies, Cross Cultural Center, Design Department) and providing support

- Aim:**
- Connect with faculty and students interested in topics of food justice, food access, food sovereignty, racial justice, and food & culture.
 - Hold diversity and inclusion trainings within the Student Farm community to educate on how to hold productive and sensitive dialogue around food system topics

Fostering Experiential Learning --
Creating internships for undergraduate students to engage and explore the campus food system, from harvest to distribution of donated produce

- Aim:**
- Develop and lay the foundation for on-farm internships that support the Fresh Focus and Community Connections Program
 - Connect undergraduate students at the Student Farm with other students from different campus organizations, such as the Pantry and Fruit & Veggie Up!

Results and Outcomes

Fresh Focus:

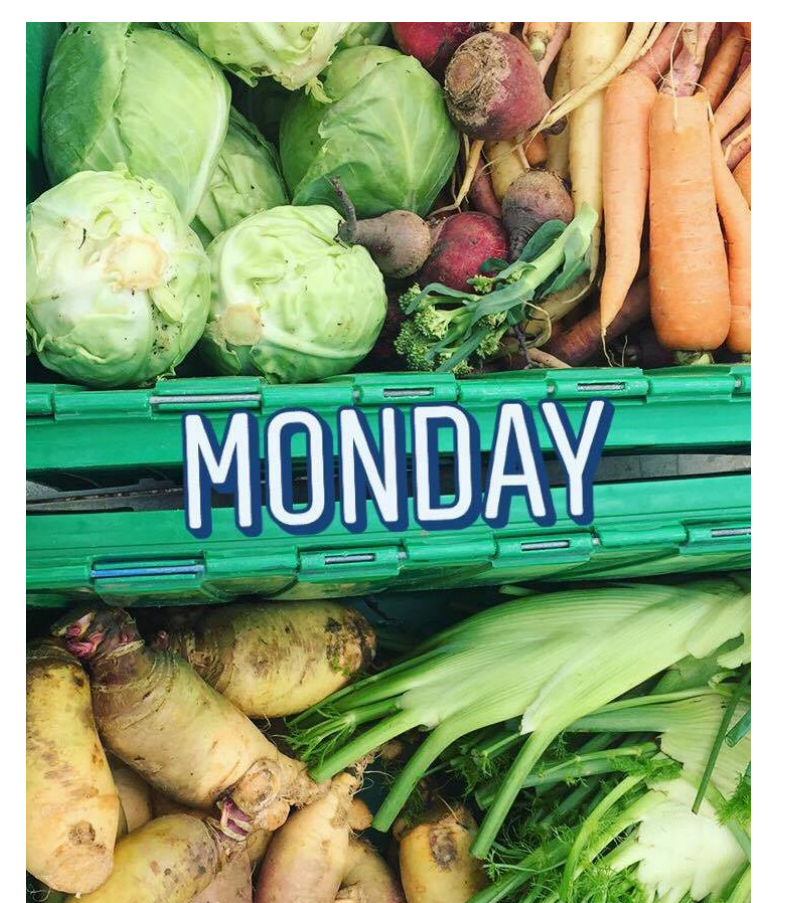
- **Produce Donation / Tracking:** Produce donations have **increased 4-fold** since receipt of GFI funding. **Donations average 1600 lbs/qtr.**
- **Internships:** 5 Internship positions created for students, co-located between the Student Farm's Market Garden and distribution centers. These interns have also worked hard in developing educational material such as recipes and food waste fact sheets to educate and connect with patrons at the Pantry and Fruit & Veggie Up!
- **Connections:** The Student Farm tabled for the first time at the 10th Annual Wellness Carnival sponsored by Student Health and Counseling Services and Campus Recreation and Unions. This event allowed Student Farm representatives to inform 400+ attending students about programs at the farm and the food access resources available to them on campus.

Future Goals

- Streamline greater amounts of produce to the ASUCD Pantry and Fruit & Veggie Up!
- Support other campus communities by exploring other areas of food distribution on campus
- Reach out to off-campus food justice organizations to developing in-depth programming on topics surrounding
- Establish deeper connections with other entities on campus in creating initiatives to better support the campus community

Community Connections:

- **Training/Capacity Building:** Hosted two Inclusion trainings for members of the Student Farm community. Office of Campus Community Relations presented a three-part training on building shared vocabulary, analyzing race and class dynamics, and self-reflection.
- **Support for Food-Related work on Campus:** Provided produce and educational materials for on-campus events related to food, cultural work, and health including: *Winter 2017* – Co-hosting a Teaching Kitchen series with the Cross Cultural Center titled *Rasquatchismo!* We used and highlighted Student Farm produce and taught on topics of seasonality and eating locally.
- **Academic Diversity at the SF:** Arranged SF class visits and farming demonstrations for academic departments not currently engaged at the SF including: *Fall 2016* - CHI 198 - Decolonizing Spirit - Dr. Susy Zepeda / Dr. Melissa Moreno (WCC), *Winter 2017* - GEO 200 DN - Socio Spatial Analysis - Dr. Patsy Eubanks Owens, *Spring 2017* - CHI 113 - Latinas Social Movements - Dr. Natalia Deeb Sossa / Dr. Melissa Moreno



Literature Cited

Cady, Clare L. "Food Insecurity as a Student Issue." *Journal of College and Character* 15.4 (2014): n. pag. Web.

Kaplan, K., Parr, D., Sowerwine, J., Thrupp, L., Van Horn, M. (2016) "Learning from the Ground Up: Experiential Learning in Food and Agriculture Systems Education at the University of California." Retrieved May 29, 2017.

Scorza, D., Henderson, N., & Castillo, L. (2012). *Facilitating Change in the Food Justice Movement* [White paper]. Retrieved May 29, 2017.

"Student Food Access and Security Study - Board of Regents." N.p., n.d. Web. 3 June 2017.

"Welcome." *Welcome - Student Farm*. N.p., n.d. Web. 03 June 2017.

Acknowledgements

This project is supported by the Global Food Initiative, UC Davis Student Farm, ASUCD Pantry, and SHCS's Fruit & Veggie Up. I would like to thank the Cross Cultural Center, the Student Community Center, PEACE Program, Office of Campus Community Relations, Dr. Susy Zepeda, Dr. Melissa Moreno, Dr. Patsy Eubank Owens, Dr. Natalia Deeb Sosa, Shana McDavis-Conway, my amazing CTP and GFI colleagues, and other faculty members and students for their consistent support and collaboration in making the UC Davis food system more accessible and equitable.