

## Fact sheet: University of California, Irvine

### OPERATIONAL INITIATIVES

#### Health, Nutrition and Sustainability

- UC Irvine Hospitality and Dining Services takes an integrated approach to health and sustainability that includes responsible purchasing, campus-wide education minimization of waste and the sharing of best practices with both the regional and national sustainability community.
- UC Irvine provides Healthy for Life Wellness Centers at the residential dining commons; searchable menus with nutritional information on [ucdining.com](http://ucdining.com), the CampusDish mobile app and through the MyFitnessPal mobile app; Vegan & Vegetarian and Gluten-Free guides to eating on campus; and cooking demonstrations and other events for Meatless Monday, National Food Day, Recyclemania and Earth Week.
- UC Irvine also provides opportunities for students to learn about sustainability through events such as local food tours, Fair Trade coffee seminars and sampling events, World Water Day celebrations and bi-quarterly Weigh the Waste events. In the 2013-14 academic year, 15 tons of food waste were avoided through education conducted at Weigh the Waste events.
- UC Irvine is committed to purchasing local and sustainable foods in alignment with the UCOP Sustainable Practices Policy and AASHE STARS 2.0: 32.03 percent of residential food purchases meet the UCOP requirement and 20.94 percent meet the STARS 2.0 requirement. Retail dining locations also source sustainable products, such as cage-free eggs, Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch 'Best Choices' and 'Good Alternative,' Fair Trade, USDA Organic and Rainforest Alliance Certified coffees and a variety of local foods. Campus dining locations also use only zero-trans-fat cooking oils and do not use Styrofoam.
- UC Irvine utilizes campus and community partnerships to minimize and dispose of food waste. Food waste from campus is anaerobically digested and used as fuel for the Irvine Ranch Water District. This program digested more than 500 tons of food waste in 2013; more than 600 tons were diverted or avoided through source reduction activities. All residential dining commons, concessions at the Bren Events Center, one café, one convenience store and one retail food court are all Zero Waste under the UCOP definition. UCI also diverts 100 percent of its fryer oil. Waste is also avoided through reusable programs (such as the Reusable To-Go Program and Reusable Cup & Mug Program) and through programs led by the Green Captain Team. In 2013, more than 37 tons of plastic waste were avoided through Hydration Stations and other reusable beverage options at UCI. The Reusable To-Go Program available through UC Irvine Hospitality and Dining Services has avoided over 200 tons of CO2 versus disposables.
- UC Irvine Hospitality and Dining Services provide informational resources to educate the campus about sustainability. Resources include a monthly sustainability newsletter and website, Carbon Footprint, and "Watermark" identifiers to educate students about the environmental impacts of various foods.

#### Food Availability and Security

Since fall 2012, more than 6,500 pounds of food have been donated through UC Irvine to the Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim, supporting local food security.

### RESEARCH INITIATIVES

#### Health, Nutrition, and Security

Anthropologist Michael Montoya leads the [Community Knowledge Project](#), an action-research partnership with community organizations in Santa Ana. Past projects have tackled obesity prevention and school lunch/food access. Upcoming project on diabetes prevention in Fullerton.

### Sustainability

- Ecologist Travis Huxman and anthropologist Valerie Olson, among others, lead a water sustainability and climate project with community stakeholders in Borrego Springs and ecologist Tim Bradley leads the [UC Irvine Salton Sea Initiative](#). Both the Borrego Springs and Salton Sea efforts grapple, in part, with scientific and governance questions regarding industrial agriculture in extreme environments.
- Historian Yong Chen leads [Edible Education](#), an effort to raise awareness about current food studies offerings at UC Irvine, encourage new classes about food, stimulate collaborative research around food issues, and create a minor in food studies.
- In AY 2014-15, the [Sustainability Initiative](#), in conjunction with social ecologist John Whiteley and UC Irvine's oceans faculty, will host a regional conference at the National Academies of Sciences' Beckman Center on Ocean Health, Sustainable Fishing, and Food Security.

## STUDENT INITIATIVES

### Sustainability

- Ecology and evolutionary biologist Peter Bowler, in conjunction with UCI Hospitality and Dining, organizes local food tours of the UC Irvine arboretum and San Joaquin Marsh Reserve to teach students about local edible native and non-native species of plants.
- UCI Hospitality and Dining partners with student organizations to ensure participation in educational events and the [Global Sustainability Resource Center](#) convenes the Students for Sustainability Council, comprised of student leaders from 12 sustainability-focused student organizations. Organizations with food-related focus areas include the Real Food Challenge, Theta Psi sustainability fraternity, Irvine Students Against Animal Cruelty, PowerSave, and The Green Initiative Fund.
- The [UC Irvine Costa Rica Program](#) focuses on sustainability, food, and diversity themes.
- The Green Initiative Fund supports students who initiate projects to green the campus. Many projects involve transforming food and beverage at student events to be more sustainable.

### Food Availability and Security

- The Sustainability Initiative convenes [The Garden Project](#), which coordinates the four campus community gardens (three of which are student-run) and builds links with the broader community involved in sustainable food production in Orange County, particularly in low-income communities.
- The ASUCI Garden Commission works to maintain the undergraduate student-run, on-campus food garden. The commission's mission is to maximize the garden's effectiveness in educating students about the food they eat. The primary goal of the garden is to provide UCI students an opportunity to learn about the food system through garden volunteering, workshops, and curriculum integration. The garden is an extension of the classroom.

### Service (Outreach & Engagement)

UC Irvine Hospitality and Dining Services identifies student employees who are passionate and knowledgeable about sustainability to be Green Captains each year. Green Captains implement and maintain practices designed to reduce the environmental impact of campus dining locations and educate students through events about environmental sustainability.