Sustainable Food Service Practices
Annual Report to UCOP

University of California, Riverside
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Prepared by
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Purpose

This report is a summary of UCR’s accomplishments in the ongoing implementation of sustainable foodservice practices in compliance with the UC Policy on Sustainable Practices.

Overview of Food Services at UCR

UCR is unique amongst the UC campuses in that Housing, Dining & Residential Services operates both the residential and retail restaurants and cafés on the main campus. Additionally, there are three leased tenant foodservice providers on the main campus and a contract provider at the UCR Extension Center.

Key 2011/12 UCR Dining Facts:

Self-op food services:
- $6.11 million annual food purchases
- $660 thousand annual non-food purchases
- $17.9 million net annual sales
- 2.25 million meals/transactions served annually
- 9,500 average daily meals/transactions
- 2 residential dining all-you-care-to-eat restaurants
- 2 residential take-out restaurants
- 4 convenience stores
- 9 self-op retail restaurants & cafés
- 2 food trucks
- Catering & special events
- Online ordering for pick-up
- Concessions
- 170 career employees
- 500 student employees

Contract/Leased Third Party Foodservice Providers:
- 3 leased tenant foodservice providers
- 1 contracted food service provider
**UC Policy on Sustainable Practices**

UCR Dining Services has made considerable progress in FY 2011/12 in an effort to meet the UC policy guidelines of section H.1. Campus and Medical Center Foodservice Operations. This year’s notable accomplishments are detailed below for each of the subsections of the policy:

A. Food procurement  
B. Education  
C. Engagement with external stakeholders  
D. Sustainable operations

**A. Food Procurement**  
Policy guideline: 20% sustainable food procurement by the year 2020. Dining Services has worked to establish a system to track all food purchases requiring annual reports from all food suppliers. Although Dining Services has made attempts to educate suppliers about the UC Policy and the UC definition of sustainable foods, few vendors actually track products based on sustainability criteria. Due to the slow progress in the vendors’ inventory tracking systems, Dining Services provides a best estimate of sustainable food purchases. To facilitate the reporting, the department will use the FoodPro menu management system to track sustainable food purchases going forward. Furthermore, contracted and third-party food service providers currently do not track their sustainable food purchases. Using the limited information available, the University estimates its sustainable food purchases as follows:

- Dining Services’ annual spend on food totaled $6,114,779.  
- $1,012,023 or 17% of the total food purchases went to products that meet one or more of the UC Policy on Sustainable Practices sustainable food definitions.

**Total Dining Food Purchases by Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEATS</td>
<td>$1,284,471</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAPLES</td>
<td>$1,169,942</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FROZEN</td>
<td>$899,632</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRODUCE</td>
<td>$779,669</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAIRY</td>
<td>$567,372</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETAIL FOODS</td>
<td>$516,651</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEVERAGE</td>
<td>$897,042</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Food Purchases: $6,114,779 (Dining Services Only)
Total Sustainable Purchases by Category

Food products meeting the UC definition for sustainable foods can be grouped into four categories: Local and Community-Based, Fair Trade, Ecologically Sound and Humane, similar to the Real Food Challenge. Using this model, UCR Dining’s sustainable food purchases can be summarized as follows:

![Pie chart showing sustainable food purchases]

**Total Dining Services Sustainable Food Purchases: $1,012,023, or 17% of Total Food Budget**

Dining Services reviews menus for opportunities to reduce energy-intensive food stuffs. Some of the programs featured in the past year include *Meatless Mondays*, which was launched on Food Day 2011, and was promoted as an ongoing campaign to encourage patrons to eliminate meat from their diets one day a week. Dining Services continues to promote *Beefless Fridays* by not featuring beef on the menu at the Residential Restaurants on Fridays. Additionally, in Fall 2011 Dining Services conducted an audit of recipes served and determined that 27% of the menu entrees served at the Residential Restaurants were either vegan or vegetarian.

**B. Education**

Policy guideline: Each campus and medical center shall provide patrons with access to educational materials that will help support their food choices. UCR Dining Services actively provides ongoing education on sustainable foodservices through printed materials, digital and online media, product displays and demonstrations, special events and educational sessions. Here are some noteworthy accomplishments of our ongoing educational campaigns:

- March is Nutrition Month – supported the Campus Wellness *Color Your Health Campaign* by providing posters and other marketing materials.
• Food Day, October 24, 2011 - UCR Dining Services joined the Food Day campaign with our introduction of Meatless Mondays where we showcased vegan and vegetarian items at all our restaurants.

• Earth Week – several events were held throughout the week:
  o Featured citrus mojitos made from fresh picked fruit from the UCR Citrus Varietal Collection.
  o Gave away over 1,100 vegan tacos made from all locally-sourced ingredients from the Culinary Chameleon food truck during an Earth Week promotion.
  o Vendor representatives were invited to speak to our guests regarding sustainable produce and cage-free eggs during lunch service at the residential restaurants.
  o A Food Waste Reduction Challenge was run at the residential restaurants and met the goal of reducing food waste by 20% to 3.7 oz. per person.
  o A Food Waste Separation Challenge was run at the Highlander Union restaurants, raising awareness among our patrons regarding separating compostable and recyclable items from trash.
  o R’Talk - Ran slides in digital screens at the residential restaurants about HDRS sustainability initiatives.

• Dining Services created a vegan and vegetarian service line for lunch and dinner at the two residential restaurants.

• 27% of all entrees served in the residential restaurants are vegan or vegetarian

• UCR Dining Services offers a “Lighten Up” Menu at the following locations on campus: The Barn, Habaneros, and Honor Roll. Items featured as part of the Lighten Up menu meet the CA Dept. of Public Health’s Healthy Entrée Guidelines for CALORIES and FAT.

C. Engagement With External Stakeholders
Policy guideline: Campus and medical center departments, organizations, groups and individuals shall engage in activities within their surrounding communities which support common goals regarding sustainable food systems. Here are some accomplishments during FY 2011/12:

• Dining Services actively collaborates with the Campus Wellness Program for Faculty & Staff by attending the monthly Campus Wellness Oversight Committee (CWOC) meetings to help shape programs that promote health and wellness. Some of the notable accomplishments of CWOC are:
  o Housing, Dining & Residential Services helped CWOC create a Health Dining Guide, as well as a Healthy Meetings brochure.
    • http://wellness.ucr.edu/healthy_eating_on_campus.html
- http://wellness.ucr.edu/UCR%20Healthy%20Meeting%20and%20Events%20Guide.PDF
  - Dining Services partnered with CWOC to launch the Wellness Works in Dining program to provide Dining career employees with a six month lifestyle management program designed to provide awareness, education, support and motivation to improve health and productivity.
  - Partnered with First Class Vending to produce the Well Within Reach program to stock 25% of the vending machine product space with healthy snack choices.
  - Launched the Color Your Health campaign in March to encourage students, faculty and staff to eat more fruits and vegetables. Dining Services provided marketing support for the campaign.
  - Dining Services encourages employees to participate in the Mobile Fit program, an on-campus program for stretching and exercising.

- Reached out to Redlands Foothill Groves and Family Tree Produce to supply Dining Services with citrus fruit from the UCR Agricultural Operations.

- Dining Services Chef, Robert Grider, conducted two popular cooking classes featuring local citrus themed vegan and vegetarian fare during Homecoming.

- In May 2012, UCR Dining held the first annual Vendor Food Fair, where students tasted and rated items from multiple vendors to help select the next year’s menu.

- Partnered with Sustainable UCR, a student organization, to educate guests about separating compostable and recyclable items from trash during the Food Waste Separation Challenge. This was part of a student Campus Compost initiative.

- Supplied food waste for a student composting workshop.

- Worked with UCR’s paper supplier to replace many plastic disposable products with compostable items.

- Worked with Athens Services to compost more than 238 tons of food waste.

- Panda Restaurant Group continues to collaborate with UCR Dining Services to eliminate styrofoam containers from the Panda Express restaurant at the Highlander Union Building.

- Completed the Dining Services portion of the Association for the Advancement of Higher Education’s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS). Dining Services completed the initial survey, claiming 3.57 out of 8.50 points available for this category.
In 2009, Dining Services partnered with the campus to create the *Community Garden* program and provided temporary support until a permanent site was procured.

Worked with the Highlander Union Building management to provide hydration stations for students, faculty, and staff as a sustainable alternative to bottled water.

### D. Sustainable Operations
Campus and medical center foodservice operations shall strive to earn third-party “green business” certifications for sustainable dining operations. UCR Dining Services currently does not have a third-party certified green restaurant operation, but it has established best practices in the areas of solid waste reduction, energy savings, water conservation, employee training, and customer engagement. Dining Services continues to build on the following endeavors:

- Implemented a food waste diversion program and educational campaign. In Fall 2009, the campus partnered with Athens Services to divert food waste from the landfill at the three largest dining operations, the two residential restaurants and the Highlander Union restaurants. The food waste collected from these locations is estimated to be 75-80% of all the food waste generated by Dining Services operations. In FY 2011/12, over 238 tons of food waste was processed into compost.

- Dining Services is testing a food waste dehydrator as a means of reducing the costs and carbon footprint associated with the handling of food waste. The plan is to supply the dehydrated waste to the College of Engineering’s Center for Environmental Research and Technology, for their use as feedstock for the campus hydrogasification project, to produce clean burning fuel. Additionally, the department is investigating food waste digesters and pulpers to improve the ergonomics associated with handling of the food waste, to prevent employee injuries.

- Explored the use of third-party “green business” certifications for sustainable dining operations. Dining Services strives to meet the goal of certifying Scotty’s Convenience Store and Grill as a green business. Due to lack of local county or city-based certification programs, Dining Services is using the National Restaurant Association’s *Greener Restaurants Sustainability Education* program to take an inventory of best practices and identify opportunities for improvement. Additionally, Dining Services is working with the Office of Sustainability to obtain LEED-EBOM certification for Glen Mor Apartments, where the restaurant is located.

- Replaced the aging dishwashing machine at the Aberdeen-Inverness Residential Restaurant. The new dishwashing machine was purchased and installed in April, 2011 and it is estimated to save UCR more than 500,000 gallons of water annually.
Additionally, the water savings translates into a corresponding reduction of approximately 40% in usage of ware-washing detergents.

- Worked with leased tenant food service operators educating them regarding the Sustainable Foodservice Practices Goals for those operations. In 2010 Dining Services encouraged the Panda Express on campus to eliminate styrofoam containers by switching to compostable products. Dining Services will be working with the Campus Real Estate Office to build sustainability language into future Tenant Lease Agreements.

- UCR Dining Services makes a considerable effort to practice environmentally-preferable purchasing for disposable paper products, utensils, and food packaging supplies. Additionally, Dining Services uses unbleached napkins made from 100% recycled fiber. Napkins are placed into tabletop dispensers, which have been shown to reduce napkin usage by at least 25%, when compared to using centrally located dispensers.

- Expanded the use of sustainable cleaning chemicals, ware-washing detergent, and hand soaps in all dining operations. In the past year, 35% of all the surface cleaning chemicals purchased were Green Seal certified.

- Dining Services began using the Ecolab Apex ware-washing system at all locations in February 2009.

- To reduce water consumption, all kitchens are outfitted with low-flow, pre-rinse spray valves and faucets, which also minimize water heating energy.

- Not using service trays has impacted water usage, as well as reduced the amount of solid waste produced in the kitchens. Water savings are approximately 8,000 gallons each week and post-consumer food waste has dropped from approximately 12 oz. per-person-per-meal to 3.7 oz., as a result.

- The campus recycles approximately 15,000 lbs. of used cooking oil per year.

- Surplus food is donated to Inland Harvest, an organization which distributes donated food to local homeless shelters.

- Dining Services actively works towards improving energy efficiency in the kitchens. Energy Star rated equipment is sourced, when suitable, for new construction, renovations and product replacement. Some of the Energy Star certified kitchen appliances purchased recently includes fryers, ovens, steamers, ice makers and dishwashing machines.
Green Seal certified product purchasing report.

**Additional UCR Dining Services Goals (2-10 years)**

Dining Services has adopted additional goals with the intent to meet or exceed the UC Sustainable Foodservices policy goals:

**Procurement**

- Create a culinary herb garden. A culinary herb garden will be built as part of the Glen Mor II Student Apartments, currently under construction.

- Procure sustainable foods for 30 percent of total food purchases.

- Work with suppliers to create seasonal menus in the residential restaurants in order to increase purchases of regionally-sourced, in-season fruits and vegetables and other local products while maintaining affordability and value to our patrons.
Operations Goals (2-10 years)

- Dining Services will work to divert 100 percent of food waste through educating and engaging with our patrons. This will be facilitated by partnering with the campus facilities management, the Office of Sustainability, as well as paper product suppliers and waste haulers to develop a bin signage system and educational materials.

- Dining Services will target energy and water use in the kitchen by creating guidelines for new construction and equipment upgrades/replacements, and purchasing Energy Star appliances exclusively, when suitable for the operation. Dining Services will use the Food Service Technology Center for cost calculations and rebate program information to help evaluate kitchen equipment and guide efficient purchasing decisions.

Education and External Outreach Intermediate Goals (2-10 years)

- Foster collaboration on sustainable food systems by engaging with faculty, staff and students, as well as contract and third-party food service providers. UCR Dining will restart the Sustainable Food Systems Workgroup and involve additional individuals to help facilitate communication efforts between all parties to achieve the University’s sustainability goals.

- Continue to educate diners regarding the carbon footprint associated with food choices. Use available programs and tools to measure the amount of carbon dioxide associated with the products purchases and develop programs to educate students regarding the environmental impact of food choices.

- Create the “R’Garden”. Dining Services will partner with the Office of Sustainability to help to build the garden at its new location.
Definitions

Local food (LEED) – food grown and harvested within 100 miles

Local food (STARS) – food grown and harvested within 150 miles

Local food (UCR) – food grown and harvested within 250 miles

Sustainable food (UC Systemwide) – food that meets one or more of the following criteria per UC Policy:

- Locally Grown
- Locally Raised, Handled and Distributed
- Fair Trade Certified
- Domestic Fair Trade Certified
- Shade-Grown or Bird Friendly Coffee
- Rainforest Alliance Certified
- Food Alliance Certified
- USDA Organic
- AGA Grass-Fed
- Pasture Raised
- Grass-Finished/100% Grass-Fed
- Certified Humane Raised & Handled
- Cage-Free
- Protected Harvest Certified
- Marine Stewardship Council
- Seafood Watch Guide “Best Choices” or “Good Alternatives”
- Farm/business is a cooperative or has profit sharing with all employees.
- Farm/business social responsibility policy includes (1) union or prevailing wages, (2) transportation and/or housing support, and (3) health care benefits.
- Other practices or certified processes, as determined by the campus, and brought to the Sustainable Foodservices Working Group for review and possible addition in future policy updates.


Biodegradable product – a product which is broken down completely by microorganisms, becoming carbon dioxide, water, and biomass (no food service industry standard for this term exists at this time).