



December 2015

OVERVIEW

The University of California Global Food Initiative (GFI) addresses one of the critical issues of our time: how to sustainably and nutritiously feed a world population expected to reach eight billion by 2025. The initiative aligns the university's research, outreach and operations in a sustained effort to develop, demonstrate and export solutions – throughout California, the United States and the world – for food security, health and sustainability.

UC President Janet Napolitano, together with UC's 10 chancellors, launched the UC Global Food Initiative in July 2014. Building on existing efforts and creating new collaborations among UC's 10 campuses, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and UC's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), the initiative draws on UC's leadership in the fields of agriculture, medicine, nutrition, climate science, public policy, social science, biological science, humanities, arts and law, among others. Its focus is both external, such as how UC translates research into policy and helps communities eat more sustainably, and internal, such as how UC leverages its collective buying power and dining practices to create desirable policies and outcomes.

BACKGROUND

The quest to establish global food security and address related challenges of nutrition and sustainability has never been so important. A billion people – most of them in the developing world – suffer from chronic hunger or serious nutritional deficiencies. More than half a billion – primarily in industrialized nations – are obese. Against this backdrop, climate change and population growth fuel additional uncertainty and urgency. Recognizing that UC is uniquely positioned to play a leading role in addressing the related challenges of nutrition and sustainability, President Napolitano and UC chancellors launched the UC Global Food Initiative.

WHY UC

- *Public commitment:* As the premier public research university in the world, UC is deeply engaged in the knowledge export business – rooted in California, but with global reach – a passion shared by students and faculty. UC's campuses also set examples as living laboratories for sustainable operations.
- *Multidisciplinary expertise:* UC is California's land-grant university and has played a key part in helping California become the nation's leading agricultural state. Its campuses, agricultural division and labs are equipped to tackle the food challenge across multiple disciplines.
- *Trusted convener:* Building on its intellectual and technical firepower, UC seeks to find common ground to help communities in California and around the world find their way to a sustainable food future.

HOW

Rally the broad UC community across a wide range of disciplines to work toward putting the world on a path to sustainably and nutritiously feed itself. The initiative aims to:

- Identify best practices and share widely within UC, California, the nation and the world;
- Use the power of UC research and extension to help individuals and communities access safe, affordable and nutritious food while sustaining our natural resources; and
- Deploy UC's research to shape, impact and drive policy discussions around food issues at the local, state, national and international levels.



ORGANIZATION

The UC Global Food Initiative involves all 10 UC campuses, UC's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, with guidance from a systemwide working group appointed by President Napolitano and the chancellors. More than 20 subcommittees and multicampus working groups are drawing on the efforts of faculty, students and staff, as well as engagement with the community on issues around food production, food access and security, food sourcing, food education and communication, and food policy and public impact.

GFI working groups encompass matters related to:

- **Curriculum:** How do we teach students about food and agricultural systems, and communicate that information with the public? Global Food Initiative curriculum subcommittees are helping prepare the next generation of science communicators, enhance experiential learning opportunities, increase food literacy, catalog existing food-related courses and develop new online introduction courses to food-related issues.
- **Operations:** How do we improve our operations so that we increase access to nutritious and sustainable food? Global Food Initiative operations subcommittees are working to ensure food security among UC students, facilitate small growers' ability to do business with UC, increase procurement of sustainable food, enhance the availability of healthy choices in campus vending machines, and reduce waste in both residential and retail dining.
- **Policy:** How do we raise awareness about food issues, help inform food policy and elevate food policy as a priority? Global Food Initiative policy subcommittees have created a clearinghouse and calendar of food-related activities at UC, launched two lecture series (on food equity and on healthy students/campuses/communities), collected policy success stories, and are mobilizing law schools to address food equity and ethics.
- **Research:** How do we raise awareness about UC's food-related research and explore new frontiers in food and agriculture? Global Food Initiative research subcommittees are working to survey UC students about food security, catalog UC research in sustainable agriculture, share success stories in fisheries and international food issues, explore the impact of climate change on agriculture, and examine urban agriculture's potential to reduce food disparities.
- **Service:** How do we improve nutrition at K-12 schools, expand farmers markets and increase student engagement in food issues? Global Food Initiative service subcommittees are working to help establish farmers markets on campuses, maximize the use of campus dining meals, develop healthy and sustainable dining options for K-12 students, and involve students in fellowship programs.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Program details: www.ucop.edu/global-food-initiative

Website: <http://universityofcalifornia.edu/global-food-initiative>

UC Food Observer blog: www.ucfoodobserver.com