

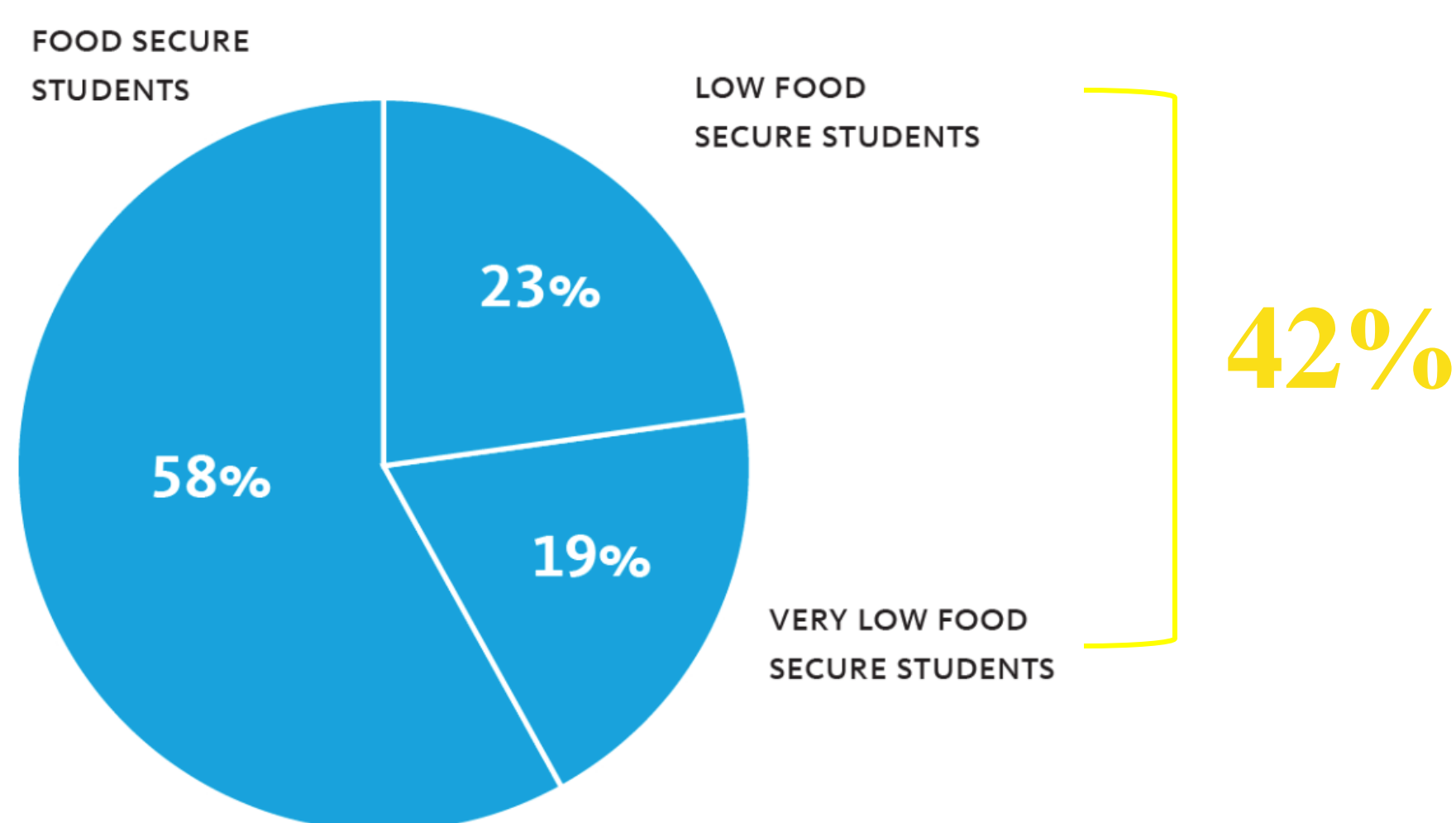
Expanding Food Recovery to Address Student Food Insecurity at UCLA

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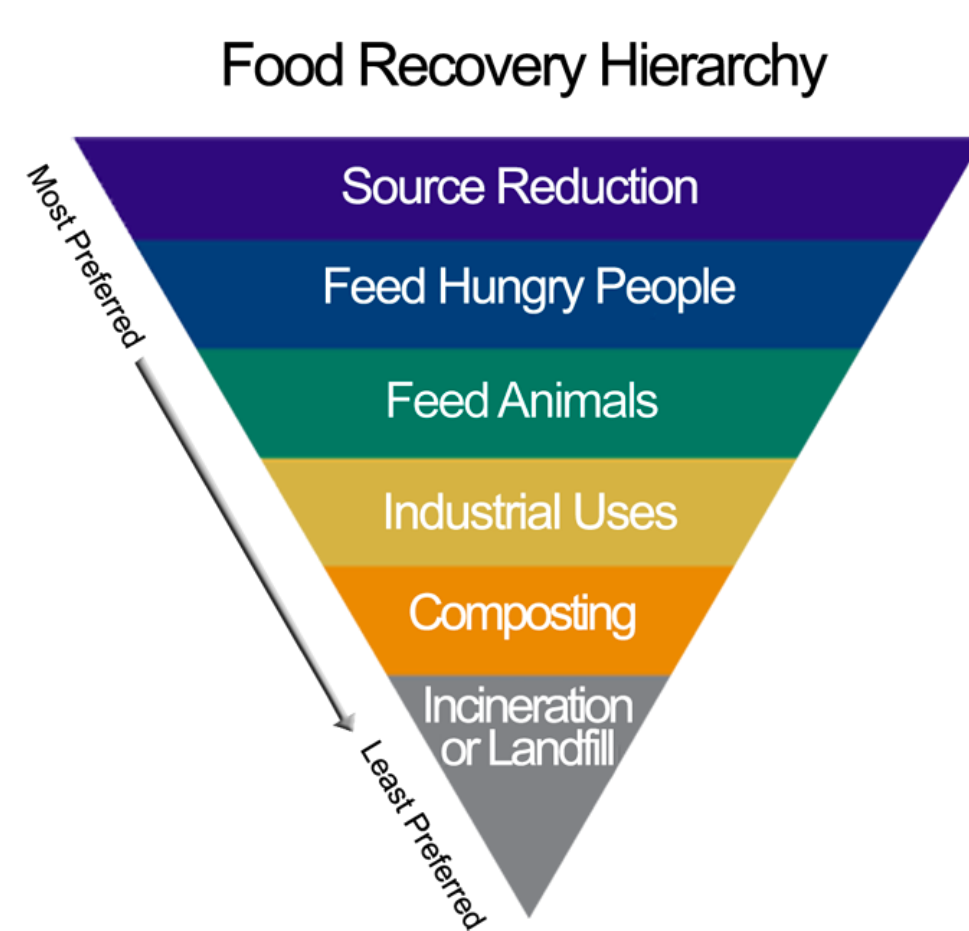
University of California Global Food Initiative Fellowship

Motivation

- 1 in 7 Americans experiences food insecurity (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2016).
- About 4 in 10 UC students experience food insecurity (Martinez et al., 2016)



- 30-40% of food is wasted in the United States (Gunders, 2012).
- If 30% of edible food waste was recovered, it could feed the 48m food insecure Americans (Gunders, 2012).
- After source reduction, feeding people is the preferred use of edible food waste (EPA, 2017).



Project Goals

This project was a continuation and modification from last year. Goals included the following:

- Revise asset mapping
- Integrate efforts with UCLA Food Security Working Group
- Improve data collection and reporting
- Initiate a pilot campus food recovery system
- Meet with key campus food recovery stakeholders
- Plan for program transition and continuation, and potential for expansion

Asset Mapping

Campus stakeholder groups were utilized to identify existing food recovery efforts and resources, barriers, and potential new solutions. Efforts from other UC campuses were also identified. Barriers included concerns about liability, inconsistency, and lack of communication. In addition, students perceived a lot of food waste in campus dining halls and restaurants. The following five broad campus efforts were identified, as well as several ideas for future expansion.



Farmers Market Gleaning Program

Initiated with GFI Fellow Savannah Gardner in October 2015, UCLA students from Swipe Out Hunger volunteer with Food Forward to glean produce from a farmers market in West Los Angeles. We receive a portion of the gleaned produce and deliver to students in need through three locations. The primary distribution occurs at University Village graduate student housing, where it is distributed for free by additional volunteers from the University Apartments South Resident Association (UASRA).



Key Program Changes 2016-2017:

- Primary drop-offs at University Village changed location to an outdoor space on the other side of the housing community adjacent to the community center. This made the drop-offs more accessible for some people, but less accessible for others.
- Data and reporting became more streamlined and consistent with produce reports from Food Forward and attendance from the UASRA Sustainability Coordinator and volunteers. The volunteers also conducted the survey this year (see results).
- Instead of hosting full cooking classes with uncertain attendance, we worked with the Public Health Nutrition Club (PHNC) to implement quarterly "pop up" demonstrations to show simple recipes and distribute samples to students waiting in line for the produce drop-off at University Village.

Selected Results and Outcomes

Produce Deliveries

- Average of **400 lbs.** delivered each week
- Average of **30-35 individuals** picking up at University Village each week (range of 18-58)
- To date, over 26,000 lbs. delivered

Participant Survey (n=55)

- Most of the individuals picking up produce are spouses of students or doctoral students, and female
- About half of respondents have at least one dependent
- Most people hear about the program through the UASRA Facebook page
- About half of respondents pick up monthly, and about one third pick up 3-4 times per month
- About 75% of respondents agree that the program increases their personal and family produce consumption
- About 75% of respondents agree that the program has a positive impact on their family's finances

Future Goals for Farmers Market Program

- Expand volunteer base to include program recipients
- Distribute resources through weekly drop-offs including CalFresh awareness
- Share best practices with other local universities and colleges
- Work with the Graduate Student Association (GSA) to implement a second drop-off site in graduate housing

Food Recovery on Campus

Asset mapping revealed that food recovery has occurred on campus in various forms:

1. CPO Food Closet: Multiple food security coordinators can be deployed to pick up extra food from campus eateries and events.
2. ASUCLA Facilities Commission: Picks up unsold pastries from campus cafes and delivers to the food closet.
3. Pilot programs in schools and departments: several small scale and informal efforts are underway across campus. The Fielding School of Public Health has initiated both a produce stand to give away produce from home gardens and a system to collect extra food from events (shown below).



Future Goals for Campus Food Recovery

- Create a campus wide food recovery policy that includes all major food distributors and caterers: UCLA Dining (residential), ASUCLA (restaurants/cafés), UCLA Health System.
- Create awareness campaign for campus event food donations to CPO Food Closet
- Pilot a crowd sourced food recovery notification map on the new UCLA food security website.
- Conduct waste audits of UCLA Dining to identify opportunities for additional food recovery and source reduction in the dining halls.
- Explore the potential of including compostable and/or reusable "to go" containers at all campus events.

Lessons Learned

- Identify existing efforts and potential collaborations
- Stay consistent especially with communications
- Large projects are going to take time, find small victories and stay persistent
- Huge interest in food recovery, but also huge need for innovation

References

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- Gunders, D. 2012. Wasted: How America is losing up to 40 percent its food from farm to fork to landfill. NRDC Issue Paper.
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