

School and community outreach: Resources and experts

What are successful ways to teach students and the community about food and agriculture? The University of California and its Global Food Initiative offer examples and resources for outreach and community engagement.

PROMOTING FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS

From preK-12, students are learning important lessons about food, nutrition and life through school gardens and campus farms. Each year, nearly 2,000 school children visit the UC Davis Student Farm to learn about growing food, good nutrition and garden ecology. At UC Santa Cruz, some 3,600 preK-12 students visit the campus farm yearly for environmental education through Life Lab. UC researchers also work with school districts to encourage school gardening and help connect regional growers with school lunch programs.

More information:

www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/learning-ground,
<http://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=11806>,
<http://lifelab.org>

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EMPOWERING TEENS

UC Santa Cruz partners with FoodWhat, a youth empowerment and food justice organization that uses food as a tool to help low-income high school students in Santa Cruz County become strong, healthy and resilient teens. A GFI subcommittee is developing a toolkit to extend lessons from FoodWhat to other campuses.

More information:

www.santacruzsentinel.com/article/NE/20151029/NEWS/151029639,
<http://casfs.ucsc.edu/education/lifelab-garden-classroom.html>,
www.foodwhat.org

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SPREADING AWARENESS

GFI is creating a national dialogue around food issues, launching the UC Food Observer blog and Mark Bittman: California Matters video series. Also, as part of a GFI videography project, UCLA undergraduate students collaborated with the Urban School Food Alliance to create short videos aimed at improving K-12 school food and nutrition education.

More information:

www.ucfoodobserver.com, www.youtube.com/channel/UCI-FXGBB36Yd4xOFWSKc0Dg,
www.urbanschoolfoodalliance.org/leveling-the-eating-field-cn

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Rose Hayden-Smith, editor, UC Food Observer, rhsmith@ucop.edu; Mark Bittman, mbitty@gmail.com; Wendy Slusser, associate vice provost, UCLA Healthy Campus Initiative, wslusser@conet.ucla.edu

CONDUCTING NUTRITION, WELLNESS OUTREACH

UC ANR's nutrition education efforts help families make healthy food choices, stretch food dollars and increase consumption of California's agricultural products with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program and UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program. Campuses also are doing their part. UC San Diego's Center for Community Health has reached more than 40,000 San Diego County children by providing local schools and teachers with a blueprint to implement health and wellness topics such as nutrition education in class curriculums.

More information:

<http://efnep.ucanr.edu>, www.uccalfresh.org,
<http://ucsdcommunityhealth.org/work/school-wellness>

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NURTURING URBAN AGRICULTURE

UC ANR has launched a website to provide practical, science-based information for urban agriculture, with information on raising livestock, crop production, marketing and policies for farming in backyards, on a few acres, at a school or in a community setting. In southeastern San Diego, local residents are transforming a vacant urban lot into a thriving community garden and focal point for healthy living. Neighbors active at the Ocean View Growing Grounds are partnering with nonprofit groups, UC San Diego researchers and students to address public health problems from obesity to environmental degradation.

More information:

<http://ucanr.edu/sites/UrbanAg>,
<http://universityofcalifornia.edu/news/president-napolitano-visits-uc-san-diego-global-food-initiative-project>

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LAUNCHING A FOOD LAW CLINIC

The UCLA Resnick Program for Food Law and Policy – the first program of its kind at a top-tier law school – studies and advances breakthrough solutions for improving the modern food system. GFI is supporting UCLA Law's development of a food law clinic that will be dedicated to providing law and policy support to organizations working to advance healthy food access and sustainable food production.

More information:

<http://universityofcalifornia.edu/news/how-law-schools-can-improve-food-system-inequities>; <https://law.ucla.edu/centers/social-policy/resnick-program-for-food-law-and-policy/about>

Contact:

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LEVERAGING RESEARCH FOR POLICY

Looking for tips on how to leverage research for policy? A GFI subcommittee hosted a workshop on ways in which research is used to effectively influence or inform policy in food and agriculture systems. The subcommittee also published a report on case studies highlighting ways that UC research has been used to inform and affect policies in food and agriculture.

More information:

www.ucop.edu/global-food-initiative/files/research_to_policy_workshop_report.pdf

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RELATED REPORTS

Read more about best practices, case studies and lessons learned in GFI working group reports on experiential learning, food equity, K-12 schools, and leveraging research for food and agriculture policy.

www.ucop.edu/global-food-initiative/best-practices/index.html