

UC Berkeley Sustainable Foodservices Working Group Annual Report, 2012-2013

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Summary

This annual report summarizes the work of multiple campus entities and stakeholders to comply with the UC “Policy on Sustainable Practices – Sustainable Foodservices.” **Campus vendors continue to show leadership in their percentage of purchases of sustainable food, and reported percentages this year have increased by several percentage points to 28%.** Data includes both Cal Dining and three other vendors who reported sustainable food purchases and represent the majority of food sales on campus. Interesting projects this past year included the expansion of a reusable takeout container to all dining halls (“Chews to Reuse”) and two additional cafes becoming Certified Green Businesses. One vendor reported using the Good Guide (developed by a UC Berkeley professor) to screen individual food products. In addition, the Berkeley Student Food Collective launched their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program.

Food At A Glance

- [Cal Dining](#) has four certified organic salad bars; offers pre- and post-consumer composting in its kitchens and dining halls; sells its waste oil to be converted to biodiesel; has trayless dining at all locations; offers compostable containers, kitchenware, and cups; serves Marine Stewardship Council certified seafood; offers a discount for reusable coffee cups; uses 100% organic milk in dining halls and 100% organic eggs in all facilities; ensures 75% of entrees are vegetarian; partners with Buy Fresh, Buy Local and Community Alliance with Family Farmers; and donates food to a non-profit family shelter.
- Cal Dining’s food is 99.9% free of trans fat and hydrogenated oils.
- The [Berkeley Student Food Collective](#) provides fresh, local, healthy, environmentally sustainable and ethically produced food at affordable prices to the Berkeley campus and greater community.
- The [ASUC Sustainability Team](#) runs The Local, an organic vegetable and fruit stand.
- The [Eat Well Berkeley Initiative](#) integrates sustainable food practices with nutrition guidelines for healthier meetings, vending machines, catering, and restaurants. Recent accomplishments include the launch of the Eat Well Berkeley Restaurant program at Pat Brown’s and Qualcomm Café, two Cal Dining Retail campus restaurants.

Achievements

Sustainable food purchases increase in FY12-13 The Office of Sustainability again asked all vendors to track and report the percentage of their food budget spent on sustainable food, with four having submitted data. The data on purchases is presented two ways. The first number includes purchases that are locally grown, organic, fair trade, or humane (in accordance with UCOP policy) – this percentage increased by four percentage points to 28%. The second number

also includes purchases produced by locally-owned businesses – this number also increased to 38%. Interestingly, 15-20% of the purchases meet the criteria for two different categories. The increase in purchasing is in part due to receiving more accurate numbers from distributors, as well as the growth in total food sales by the reporting vendors (allowing for greater purchases of some sustainable food). In addition, the purchases of Marine Stewardship Council certified seafood increased.

Sustainable Food Purchasing at UC Berkeley, 2008-2012

	2008	2010	2011	2012
Total sustainable purchases (%)	24%	25%/32%	24%/33%	28%/38%

Total Sustainable Food: Data for 2008 are from Cal Dining only, using the Real Food Challenge criteria. Data for 2011-2012 from Cal Dining and additional campus foodservice vendors. For 2010-2012: first number includes purchases that are locally grown, organic, fair trade, or humane. Second number also includes purchases produced by locally-owned businesses.

“Chews”-ing to Reuse! Patrons of Cal Dining’s residential eateries will have a new way to “go green” this spring. After a successful pilot in Foothill Dining Commons last semester, Cal Dining has decided to expand Chews to Reuse, their reusable to-go container program. The process is simple: pay a one-time fee of 3 meal points, grab a container, and take your meal to-go. When you’re ready for your next takeout meal, swap your rinsed container for a sanitized one at the register. Compostable containers will still be available for purchase at all Cal Dining facilities. Participating in the program helps the campus reach zero waste by 2020 and requires fewer meal points than single-use containers over a semester.



CACS Sustainability Award Winner **Monica Harnoto**, UC Berkeley B.S. Environmental Sciences, spring 2013. Monica is never merely content with the status quo and constantly inspires and motivates colleagues to think of new and innovative ways to improve sustainability in Cal Dining. One of Monica’s most notable projects has been Chews to Reuse -- a reusable to-go container program in dining halls. Before Monica created this program, the dining halls provided patrons with compostable to-go containers made from sugarcane plant fibers. Starting out as a pilot, the program has now been expanded to all dining commons, in large part due to Monica’s strategic implementation. Photo credit: Michael Drummond

Ninth Annual Higher Education Energy Efficiency and Sustainability Best Practice Awards (2013), Sustainable Food Service: UC Berkeley, LeanPath

UC Berkeley's LeanPath pre-consumer waste reduction system is a significant technological advance in the measurement of food waste. The program allows foodservice employees to use the LeanPath scale and touch-screen terminal to weigh and log information on food waste before discarding it. The tracker requests the following data: employee identification, food item, loss reason, container, service area, scale number, site name. Once a sufficient amount of data has been aggregated, the program provides Cal Dining operations with a summary of the recorded information. Each dining hall team uses the summaries to pinpoint five food categories with the highest disposal volume and discusses strategies to reduce food waste in these areas.

The program has enabled Cal Dining to cut down their pre-consumer food waste by 33% so far. Cal Dining also received a “Waste Reduction Excellence in Institutional Food Service” award from StopWaste.

On America Recycles Day, EPA recognizes campus food waste reduction UC Berkeley is doing such a good job of recycling that on Thursday, Nov. 15, America Recycles Day, the regional administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency came to campus to praise Cal Dining’s efforts to reduce the food waste stream — in particular, by cutting upstream food purchases to limit downstream waste. At a press conference on November 19 outside Crossroads, Jared Blumenfeld, who oversees the EPA’s Pacific Southwest region, which includes the West Coast and Hawaii, announced that UC Berkeley is one of 19 colleges and universities in the region to sign up for the Food Recovery Challenge. The voluntary program aims to limit wasted excess food nationwide through donations to charity, reducing consumption, and increasing composting¹. Picture of Cal Dining staff pose EPA regional administrator, Jared Blumenfeld; Photo by Jean Smith



Food Day at Cal—A Smashing Success! On October 24, 2012, UC Berkeley participated in a celebration of [Food Day](#), a national campaign for healthy, sustainable food. Students, staff and faculty on campus were encouraged to participate in the [UC Eats Real Pledge](#), vowing to eat real, healthy and sustainable food for the day, week or more. Environmental and food justice related clubs dominated Upper Sproul, encouraging passersby to stop by and learn about Food Day and their clubs. The day also included cooking demonstrations, snacks and coffee provided by vendors, and musical entertainment, all organized by the Cal Dining sustainability interns.

Got BOX? Berkeley Student Food Collective’s Weekly Produce

Program The Berkeley Student Food Collective (BSFC) has recently launched their new Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, the Box. The Box allows subscribers an easy way to pick-up an assortment of seasonal organic/local produce each Friday at the store. The Box is not just an ordinary CSA Program. Operations manager Gwen Von Klan explains that the cost, convenience, and multiple farming sources make it an ideal program. “Our produce box is more suitable for students, because it is smaller and cheaper (only \$15!). We are able to stock a wider variety of options, because we source from multiple local, organic farms, rather than only one farm as traditional CSA boxes do. We also plan to offer our boxes year-round, which is often not possible for CSA farms because they may not grow a variety of produce that is always in season.” And it’s not just for students, anyone can participate!



Journalism C103 - Edible Education: Telling Stories About Food and Agriculture As the costs of our industrialized food system become impossible to ignore, a national debate over the future of food and farming has begun. Telling stories about where food comes from, how it is produced (and might be produced differently) plays a critical role in bringing attention to the issues and shifting politics. Each week a prominent figure in this debate explores what can be done to make

¹ Robert Sanders, NewsCenter, “[On America Recycles Day, EPA recognizes campus food waste reduction](#),” November 15, 2012.

the food system healthier more equitable, more sustainable, and the role of storytelling in the process. Instructor: Michael Pollan.

Social justice over spring break This year, the [Alternative Breaks](#) program offered a wide range of service-learning opportunities, including two in the Bay area: [Environmental Justice: Examining Health, Building Community, Demanding Equity](#) and [Food for Thought: Food Justice & Sustainability](#).

Vending miser installation complete PowerSave Campus worked with Pepsi Co. to install vending misers – energy-saving devices that use motion sensors to power down vending machines when not in use – at ten locations around campus and in the residence halls.

Plans

The UC Berkeley Sustainable Foodservices working group did not complete the gap analysis planned for this past year (on current programs and on whether there are related guidelines for foodservice vendors). The working group will continue this effort and also work to develop standard language for foodservice operator contracts to codify policy and work with procurement staff to identify ways to offer Strategic Sourcing prices to the smaller food vendors.

Other upcoming projects include the launch of a contract with America To Go (which will include sustainability information for participating caterers). Cal Dining also plans to launch a sampling program in the dining halls. Students can receive a sample of the food before they take a whole portion so they don't end up throwing away their plate just because they don't like it. This will decrease the amount of post-consumer waste. Finally, the Cal Dining Student Sustainability Team is on track to have their second annual Food Day in October 2013 and plans to increase its impact by making it larger and improving the event advertising.