

The University of Kent Sustainable Food Strategy 2018/2019

The University of Kent recognises its responsibility to carry out its procurement activities in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, and the considerable influence we have in using our buying power to encourage healthy and sustainable food production and consumption. We recognize that in order to continue to reduce our carbon emissions we must seek reduction in our Scope 3 emissions by changing the amount and way we buy. We recognise that it is our responsibility to encourage our suppliers and contractors to minimise negative environmental and social effects associated with the products and services they provide. We will strive to incorporate environmental and social considerations into our product and service selection process, and will also strive to ensure that local and smaller suppliers are not discriminated against in the procurement process and specifications and that they are encouraged to participate in tendering opportunities.

The University recognises food as a potential risk area in its supply chains. The University has zero tolerance to slavery and human trafficking and will not support or deal with any business or institution knowingly involved in modern slavery practices in any part of its operations.

Scope of the Strategy

The strategy applies to all aspects of sustainable food, including procurement, preparation, provision, food waste and waste management and education.

We will apply this food strategy to all of our catering outlets and food served for events. We will ensure this strategy is fully reflected in our catering tenders and contract(s) (if applicable). Kent Union will support this strategy and endeavor to meet as many of its objectives in accordance with the NUS.

Roles and responsibilities

The University has a responsibility to procure, prepare and dispose of food in accordance with the University's Environmental Management System. Commercial Services, including Kent Hospitality, Kent Sport and the Gulbenkian, have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Strategy within the services delivered, with support from the Sustainable Food Steering Group (SFSG). The Steering Group will also support Kent Union on meeting the strategy's objectives.

The SFSG is made up of staff from Commercial Services, the Estates Department, the Safety, Health and Environment Unit and Kent Union. Students are represented by the Ethics Officer and Environment Officer as well as a dedicated student rep and others from relevant interested groups. Terms of Reference for this group can be obtained from sustainability@kent.ac.uk.

The SFSG will actively seek to engage with all stakeholders and customers in the continued development of this strategy.

This strategy will be implemented, monitored and annually reviewed by the Sustainable Food Steering Group.



Establishing our baseline

In order to set SMART targets to improve the sustainability of our catering offering there are a number of areas that we need to establish baseline data for.

Target: To complete all baseline surveys by September 2019 and publish findings

Objectives:

- We will review all catering spend at the University and establish what percentage of fresh, seasonal orchard fruits (apples, pears, plums, etc) purchased between the months of August and March are grown to Farm Assured standards or equivalent.
- We will review all catering spend at the University and establish what percentage of fresh soft fruit (berries, currants, etc) purchased between the months of April to September are grown to Farm Assured standards or equivalent.
- We will review the amount of fruit and vegetables we purchase under the following schemes: Entry Level Stewardship or Higher Level Stewardship scheme; LEAF-Marque certification and Organic certification
- Review all catering spend at the University to establish what percentage of the livestock produce we purchase meets the Red Tractor Assured standards as a minimum.
- We will measure the number of Fairtrade products currently stocked across the University
- We will review the nutritional quality of our food and identify products and practices that can be changed to improve its nutritional value
- We will find out how much food we waste per week and continue to regularly monitor the amount whilst seeking to reduce it.
- Identify how many of our standard lines of stock contain palm oil
- We will assess how many food deliveries are made to the University of Kent catering departments per week and, working with suppliers, aim to reduce this number to an absolute minimum
- We will find out how much food we waste per week and continue to regularly monitor the amount whilst seeking to reduce it. For example, we will audit main sources of waste; implement more efficient ordering, storage and stock rotation; run customer surveys to ascertain why certain recipes are unpopular; separate wet waste from dry waste; re- audit our waste and ensure adequate and uniformed bins are available across the campus; and develop a plan for reducing waste to an absolute minimum
- Measure all current spend on disposables and set a target of reduction of the amount of disposables purchased

Our commitments

Environmental Impact

Target: To have zero non-conformances raised by our Environmental Management System. We will also seek a year on year absolute reduction in our use of single use plastics.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that dry waste (e.g. cardboard, paper, metal) is kept separate from wet waste (e.g. food), and send any unavoidable food waste (e.g. potato peelings) for composting or energy recovery
- Continuing to promote reusable products e.g. KeepCups, measuring the spend on these

- All delivered catering will supply fresh cow's milk for tea and coffee, rather than long life milk capsules with immediate effect
- All waste oil to be stored in accordance with the University's Environmental Management System and collected by approved contractor and recycled
- Working with caterers to create a minimum specification for all equipment as to guide future purchasing
- To continue our investigations into a viable and environmentally friendly responsible solution to composting our food waste. The waste team will update the sustainable food steering group quarterly

Engagement and community

Target: We will keep all stakeholders informed about what we are changing and why, and work to increase their knowledge around sustainable food

We will achieve this by:

- Communicating quarterly, our food policy and specific information about what we are doing to improve the sustainability of our food, to service users, visitors and staff via the staff intranet, newsletters and point of sale marketing to include menus and marketing screens
- Holding quarterly steering group meetings with all relevant stakeholders, including student representation
- Selecting three outlets to pursue The Bronze Award Soil Association Food for Life Served Here award and communicating at point of sale what this means
- Training all catering staff in food sustainability. As a minimum staff will be aware of best practice and the various certification systems and their relevance to food production and food products that the University serve
- Establishing long term relationships with local SMEs either directly or indirectly through our contract caterers or suppliers of food, communicating to the customer where their food has come from
- Seeking out partner public sector organisations in Canterbury and Medway with the option of pursuing Sustainable Food Cities recognition

Fruit and Vegetables

Target: To increase the proportion of fruit and veg in our meals. Increase the seasonality of the fruit and vegetables in our meals. Increase the environmental standard to which our fruit and veg is produced. Decrease the distance our fruit and vegetables travels to get to us.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring all our delivered catering, daily special and banqueting menus reflect the seasons - at least three items per menu will contain ingredients served in the season it is naturally abundant in this country
- Ensuring seasonal fruit is always stocked in preference to out of season fruit
- Stocking orchard fruit when in season and juice products all year due to their importance to biodiversity
- Increasing the amount of certified fruit and veg we stock and serve (e.g. Farm Assured, Organic, LEAF marque, Stewardship scheme)
- Incorporating food grown on campus into our meals



Meat and Dairy

Target: Reduce the amount of meat we serve due to the associated impacts on our climate and environment that meat production has. Where we do serve meat increase the welfare standard to which the livestock has been raised in. We also seek to increase the amount of organic dairy products we stock and serve.

We will achieve this by:

- Increasing the amount of livestock reared under the Red Tractor Assured by 10% a year
- Reviewing pricing on higher welfare standard meat and incorporating new targets for higher welfare standards annually
- Utilising cost neutral methods such as controlling portion sizes of meat and looking for value cuts to meet the costs of higher welfare standards
- Decreasing the number of menu items containing ruminant meats by 2 each year
- Investigating the cost of switching all milk to be certified organic
- Ensuring that all whole / liquid / dried eggs purchased are from, at minimum, a free-range production system

Fish

Target: We will only serve sustainable fish.

We will achieve this by:

- Eliminating any fish on the menu which are on the Marine Conservation Society's red list and promoting only fish that is on the Marine Conservation Society's 'fish to eat' list
- Investigating the cost of gaining MSC chain of custody certification for all outlets
- Only purchasing traceable farmed fish that is fed using sustainable feed. We will also investigate opportunities to serve Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) fish
- Ensuring all tinned tuna will be pole and line caught or MSC certified. We will not use tinned tuna where the tuna has been caught using purse seine nets with Fish Aggregation Devices (FADS)
- Promoting sustainable fish and seafood to customers

Ethical Procurement

Target: We will maintain our status as a Fairtrade University and we will keep up to date with national and international research on palm oil.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring all of our tea, coffee, bananas, orange juice and sugar is ethically traded by September 2019
- Measuring the number of Fairtrade products currently stocked across the University and target an increase of 3 lines per year

- Ensuring that 60% of the chocolate product lines stocked in our outlets are Fairtrade certified
- Not using palm oil in the preparation of food

Water

Target: To reduce our reliance on bottled water

We will achieve this by:

- Proactively encouraging, through marketing and availability, alternatives to purchased bottled water in all catering areas
- Investigating the use of either tap water in jugs, or purified still and sparkling tap water, bottled, using re-usable glass bottles in our hospitality services
- Ensuring tap water and reusable or recyclable drinking vessels and water fountains are freely available to all our service users, visitors and staff, choosing mains-fed systems instead of bottled water systems

Wellbeing

Target: To increase our offering of healthy balanced meals.

We will achieve this by:

- Working with our suppliers to introduce baked goods, including bread, which do not feature unnecessary ingredients and additives.
- Where possible, reviewing the nutritional quality of our food and identify products and practices that can be changed to improve its nutritional value. We will set out a plan to make these improvements by September 2019 and include specifications to support this in contracts, promote good nutritional practice and train catering staff to implement this commitment in food preparation. This may include: reducing salt, fat and saturated fat levels, in line with Department of Health guidance; removing hydrogenated fat and other unnecessary additives from all food and ingredients; using healthier cooking oils and cooking methods; promoting dishes containing a high proportion of wholegrain foods, fruit and vegetables; providing foods for children (where applicable) that suit their nutritional needs; limiting the provision and promotion of snacks that are high in fat, salt and/or sugar, and vigorously promoting healthier alternatives. We will also monitor and reduce, each year, the number and proportion of less healthy options provided.

To be reviewed and updated on an annual basis from 1st October 2018

Signed by:

Kevin Stuckey - Director of Commercial Services

Oliver Carruthers - Director of the Gulbenkian

Catherine Morris – Environmental Adviser

