
Food Sustainability Policy

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Consultation: Sustainability Action Group

Approving Body: VCAG

Executive Lead (Risk Owner): Chief Operating Officer

Policy Owner (Risk Updater): Associate Director of Commercial Services

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Policy Statement

The RAU aims to be the UK's global university for sustainable farming and land management, enabling communities locally, nationally and across the world to thrive in harmony with nature.

As an agricultural university, we have a major role to play in ensuring we equip our students and future generations to respond to global challenges through all that we do.

The RAU recognises its responsibility to provide healthy and sustainable food to our staff, students, and visitors. This policy sets out the RAU's intentions to minimise the impact of its catering provision on the environment, and to promote sustainable practices and consumption.

Aims

- To work towards the Soil Association Food for Life Silver Award.
- To provide information and educate consumers on good nutrition, provenance and sustainable choices.
- Provide an affordable, value for money, nutritious and well sourced food offering. We take care that our food is healthy, ethical, and uses local ingredients and we use a minimum of 5% organic ingredients in our menus.
- Build and enhance the university reputation as a sustainable organisation.
- Illustrate commitment to achieving ever improving delivery of socially responsible catering by way of Food for Life and other industry food accreditations.

Food Sustainability Policy

- Promote the consumption of more plant-based foods.
- Ensuring all catering offerings are sourced with higher welfare, ethically produced ingredients, such as Free Range, organic, MSC, Fairtrade, Leaf marque and RSPCA assured.
- Ensuring all food is sourced locally (where possible) and from the UK.
- We ensure all of our milk and yoghurt is organic, fish is sustainable, only use free-range eggs and 10% British Red Tractor meats, and we do not purchase GM products.
- Our catering, dining halls and bars only use compostable disposables and from Summer 2023, all food disposables will be removed from campus and replaced with reusable plastics.
- Use long-life deep fryer oil from local firm (Cotswold Gold), that a company collects the waste oil and turns into biodiesel.
- All food waste is weighed, so that we can try to reduce this, and then collected for composting.

Objectives

- Commitment to seek and source locally produced and seasonal produce.
- Enhance information available to consumer, with info graphics, signage and third-party applications.
- Monitor and reduce food waste, seek reuse/repurposing options and increase recycling taking into consideration entire life cycle of products.
- Taking due care and attention to all environmental factors when assessing new contract specifications and reviewing of existing.
- Ensure procurement has minimal negative environmental impact and marketing and utilisation of produce that has a positive social or environmental impact.
- Utilise alumni network or promote produce sourced from our extensive networks, where viable.
- Improve links between food, sourcing and methods and the benefits are clearly visible to all.

Scope of the Policy

- This policy applies to our catering, dining halls and bars run by the RAU.
- All suppliers will be expected to assist the University in meeting the Sustainable Food Policy.
- The policy applies to all aspects of sustainable food, including procurement, preparation, provision, food waste and waste management and education.