

Sustainable Food Working Group

Terms of Reference

I. Purpose

The Sustainable Food Working Group (SFWG) advances the university’s social, economic and environmental sustainability performance as it relates to sustainable food, primarily by making progress on food-related goals identified in the 2016-2020 Sustainability Plan.

II. Background

The University of Alberta (UAlberta) can be likened to a city of nearly 65,000 people, all of whom need to eat. Whether bought from a campus dining location, cooked in a residence or brought from home, food is a large part of the everyday culture of students, staff and faculty on our campuses and it has a considerable impact on campus sustainability.

In recent years, concerns have been raised around the environmental, economic, and social sustainability of conventional food systems in North America and beyond. In particular, issues related to increasing demand for food, natural resource scarcity, environmental degradation, economic considerations, food security and community health have become part of the discussion around food systems. The identification of these challenges has led to a renewed focus on strategies for ensuring the sustainability of each step of the food system, from production to waste recovery.

There is a growing sustainability movement at the University of Alberta, with more and more organizations and units working on food-related issues. Their efforts and interests demonstrate an appetite and renewed commitment for developing a more sustainable food system on our campuses. The SFWG was identified as an opportunity to coordinate and collaborate on our work on these issues at an institution-wide scale.

III. Acronyms & Definitions (alphabetical)

AS	Ancillary Services
EMSO	Energy Management and Sustainable Operations
FO	Facilities and Operations
Food System	A food system is the cycle of farming/growing, processing, transporting, distributing, celebrating, and recovering food waste in the context of larger natural, social, political, and economic driving forces (from Urban Food Strategies and the SFSOA, 2014)
OS	Office of Sustainability

SFWG	(University of Alberta) Sustainable Food Working Group
SFSOA	(University of Alberta) Sustainable Food System Opportunity Assessment (2014)
STARS	Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System
SU	Students' Union
Sustainability	Sustainability is the process of living within the limits of available physical, natural and social resources in ways that allow the living systems in which humans are embedded to thrive in perpetuity. (developed by the Office of Sustainability Academic Advisory Committee)
TOR	Terms of Reference
UAlberta	University of Alberta

IV. **Scope & Outcomes**

There are many food-related initiatives already in place on University of Alberta campuses, each with distinct outcomes and areas of focus. The SFWG seeks to advance the sustainability of the whole UAlberta food system in several ways, including but not limited to:

- providing leadership and accountability to sustainable food system initiatives;
- focusing the efforts of its membership on common goals and projects;
- collaborating with other food-related groups;
- providing project management guidance and resources;
- supporting sustainable food initiatives;
- establishing annual work plans to continuously advance food system sustainability and achieve the food-related goals and strategies identified in the Sustainability Plan;
- measuring, recording, and reporting annual progress; and
- facilitating the collection of data for STARS, the Sustainability Plan and other reports;

V. **Goals and Guiding Documents**

The [University of Alberta Sustainability Plan \(2016-2020\)](#) is an institution-wide plan that seeks to articulate our university's vision and goals for social, economic and environmental sustainability on campus. This guiding document facilitates the coordination and measurement of our sustainability-related performance and sets the direction for the work of the SFWG. The food-related Goals and Strategies from the current draft of the 2016-2020 Sustainability Plan are as follows. They will be updated to align with the governance reviewed final version of the Sustainability Plan to be launched in early 2016.

Please note that the titles and numeration are taken directly from the Sustainability Plan for easy cross-reference. The Sustainability Plan can be found online in its entirety at sustainability.ualberta.ca/plan. These goals and strategies reflect the FINAL DRAFT of the plan, dated June 27, 2016.

Leadership

Goal 1.3: Foster growth of sustainability initiatives and problem-solving on all campuses.

- b. Create and increase participation in working groups that foster collaboration and address sustainability challenges with particular attention to: waste diversion, sustainable purchasing and sustainable food.
- d. Mitigate environmental impact of the university's major events and communicate these measures to participants.

Education & Research

Goal 2.1: Encourage the campus community and the public to learn about sustainability.

- a. Create awareness of resources, research findings, demonstration projects and expertise.
- b. Promote sustainability-related programs.
- c. Encourage diverse educational approaches for teaching about sustainability.

Goal 2.2: Encourage exposure to interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary teaching and research connected to sustainability.

- c. Create opportunities to connect faculty and staff with common interests and to promote interdisciplinary and engaged scholarship.
- d. Promote opportunities for students and faculty to participate in sustainability initiatives. Encourage departments and faculties to develop long-range sustainability plans encompassing operational practices, teaching, research and degree programs.

Goal 2.3: Support faculty members to integrate sustainability into their teaching.

- a. Develop initiatives to integrate sustainability into curriculum and academic program.
- b. Build on existing community-based teaching and research partnerships and internships.

Operations & Infrastructure

Goal 3.1: Embed social, economic and environmental sustainability into the development and care of the university's indoor and outdoor spaces.

- b. Maximize preservation of green space on campus, pilot projects with native species and use university campuses as living labs.
- e. Explore and implement low impact methods for grounds management.

Goal 3.4: Advance a sustainable food system that provides fresh and healthy food in collaboration with the university community.

- a. Establish the Sustainable Food Working Group to advance sustainable food initiatives.

July 28, 2017 (*membership list updated*)

- b. Work with local authorities to develop a safe system for recovering and donating leftover food from dining and catering operations to increase recovery of usable food and reduce food waste.
- c. Work with interested groups to explore opportunities to grow food in underutilized spaces.
- d. Encourage food providers to increase, where feasible, access to healthy food, including options for specialty diets.

Goal 3.5: Encourage vendors and primary dining contractor to increase the purchase of food produced in Alberta and/or food with recognized sustainability certifications.

- a. Collaborate with existing on-campus gardens to explore opportunities to supply produce to food vendors, campus and local community.
- b. Continue to work with external partners to find Alberta food producers to supply food vendors.

Goal 3.8: By 2020, divert 90% of waste from landfill and continue to reduce waste per campus user.

- a. Increase source-separation and collection of organics to 1,500 tonnes per year by 2017.
- c. Elevate awareness of the university's waste diversion goal and engage campus community in ambition to become a "Zero Waste" campus.
- h. Expand Reusable Dish Program to include more food vendors across North Campus.
- i. Work with food vendors to eliminate polystyrene food service ware and replace it with recyclable or compostable alternatives.

Community & Culture

Goal 4.5: Promote healthy eating and explore the use of edible landscapes as an inherent part of the university's sustainable food system.

- a. Educate the campus community about participating in a sustainable food system.
- b. Explore opportunities to create a community garden network to enhance collaboration between campus community gardens.
- c. Explore additional opportunities to implement community gardens on campuses accessible to university and community.

In addition to the Sustainability Plan, the [University of Alberta Sustainable Food System Opportunity Assessment](#) (December 2014) provides comprehensive background research and will be used as a guiding document and as a source of possible projects and actionable initiatives for the SFWG.

The work of the SFWG will be connected to the contents of both of these guiding documents, but not limited to them.

VI. Working Group Organizational Structure

a. Project Sponsors

The SFWG is accountable to two project sponsors. The sponsors provide oversight to the SFWG by approving Terms of Reference, annual work plans and membership. They also provide strategic guidance and decision-making necessary to aid the SFWG. The project sponsors are:

- i. Chief Sustainability Officer
- ii. Associate Vice President , Ancillary Services

b. Working Group

The SFWG formulates work plans, researches, implements and reports on projects and engages the Project Sponsors. The SFWG provides day-to-day project management and facilitation to ensure completion of initiatives within the annual work plan and continued alignment with Sustainability Plan goals and strategies.

c. Stakeholders

The SFWG will consult with people or groups who have a strong stake or expertise in food systems to aid direction setting and inform decision making.

d. Existing Initiatives

The SFWG recognizes that there are many examples of sustainable food programs and projects already underway at the university. The SFWG does not exist to replace these initiatives but rather to support them and enhance and complement their work. The SFWG will work to promote collaboration and coordination among existing initiatives where appropriate to advance the university's food system as a whole.

VII. Procedures

a. Establishing the SFWG

The SFWG Co-Chairs are responsible for establishing the SFWG upon approval of a draft TOR and SFWG Composition by the Project Sponsors, and for ensuring that membership is complete. The Co-Chairs will facilitate the recruitment of members as appropriate from the groups identified in the SFWG Composition, and as may be required to further the goals of the initiative. Once formed, the SFWG will update and finalize these terms of reference.

b. SFWG Co-Chairs

To establish the SFWG, two Co-Chairs have been approved by the Project Sponsors: one coordinator from each of the Office of Sustainability and Energy Management and Sustainable Operations. In the long term it is anticipated leadership of the SFWG will transition to Ancillary Services.

c. SFWG Composition

To accomplish the work of meaningfully advancing the sustainability of the UAlberta food system, members of the SFWG need to be in positions that require or allow them to manage, influence, make decisions about or otherwise meaningfully contribute to the advancement of the university food system. Members also need to recognize and reflect the diversity of stakeholders involved in the campus food system.

The SFWG will seek representatives from the following groups:

- Ancillary Services
 - Hospitality Services / Dining Services
 - Major Foodservice Contractor (ARAMARK)
 - Real Estate Services
 - Residence Services
- Augustana Dining Services
- Buildings and Grounds Services
- Campus Food Bank
- Energy Management and Sustainable Operations (**Co-Chair**)
- Office of Sustainability (**Co-Chair**)
- Students' Union – Food Services
- Students' Union – Sustain SU
- Office of the Dean of Students, Healthy Campus Unit
- Student Leaders (up to 6 positions available)
- Faculty Representative (up to 3 positions available)
 - This member should be a university faculty member who is knowledgeable in the field of food systems. This member also provides an important link to faculty and students to help create and support opportunities for experiential learning projects for students.

A full membership list is kept up to date as **Appendix A**.

d. Terms of Appointment and Attendance

Staff and faculty membership will last for two years from the date of appointment with opportunity for renewal. Students will hold one year terms with opportunity for renewal. The Co-Chairs reserve the right to request a replacement if a SFWG

Member fails to show continuous engagement in the group (e.g. meeting attendance, engagement in group documents or tasks, etc.).

If a SFWG Member is occasionally unable to attend a meeting, they may send a delegate in their place. If a delegate is to attend a meeting, the delegate shall be prepared to fully represent their delegator at the meeting and fully brief the delegator following the meeting. Renewal of a term is possible with the approval of the Co-Chairs.

e. Record-keeping

The Co-Chairs will provide or act as a resource person(s) for each meeting to record and prepare minutes. Minutes will be distributed via email and all relevant SFWG documents will be shared and stored via a Google Drive folder. Back-up documents will also be housed on the UAlberta Facilities and Operations server. Public facing documents will be located online on the Campus Sustainability Initiative website, here: sustainability.ualberta.ca/CampusInitiatives/Food.

f. Annual Plan of Work

The SFWG will establish an annual plan of work that clearly outlines specific projects and tasks that will continuously advance the sustainability of the UAlberta food system. This plan will be presented to and approved by the Project Sponsors at the beginning of each fiscal year.

g. Reporting

The SFWG will provide a final report to close each annual work plan that aligns with the fiscal year, which will be presented to and approved by the Project Sponsors. This report will form the basis for the SFWG's contribution to other periodic reports, including for the Sustainability Plan and STARS and should therefore seek to provide the necessary data points for each reporting requirement, in addition to highlighting successes, challenges, and key accomplishments from the past year.

h. Frequency of Meetings

The SFWG will meet no less than once a quarter (once every three months), but can meet more frequently if deemed necessary by the Co-Chairs. Project-specific meetings and/or sub-committee work may also happen more frequently as required.

July 28, 2017 (membership list updated)

Appendix A. Sustainable Food Working Group (SFWG) Members

Co-Sponsors		
Chief Sustainability Officer	Trina Innes	
Associate Vice President, Ancillary Services	Katherine Huising	
Co-Chairs		
Energy Management and Sustainable Operations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainability Coordinator 	Shannon Leblanc	
Office of Sustainability		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Planner - Engagement 	Maja Osmanagic	
Members		Member Since
Ancillary Services / Hospitality Services		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate Director or Support Services Coordinator, Support Contract Services 	Lorraine Huntley	March 2016
Ancillary Services / ARAMARK		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Manager Director of Operations 	Troy Bender Shilpi Gupta	July 2016 March 2016
Ancillary Services / Real Estate Services		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property Management Coordinator 	Gail Harvey	March 2016
Augustana Food Services		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisor 	Lilas Bielotopocky	March 2016
Campus Saint-Jean		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chef des services administratifs (Executive Service Head, Administrative Services) 	Christian Tremblay	November 2016
Campus Food Bank Society		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director 	Cory Hodgson	March 2017
Buildings and Grounds Services		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate Director or Manager of Landscape Services 	Ray Dumouchel	March 2016
Office of the Dean of Students – Healthy Campus Unit		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Lead 	Melissa Visconti	March 2016
Students' Union		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Lead – Involvement Operations Coordinator, Sustain SU Senior Manager, Food & Beverage Services 	Christopher Avelar Destyni Deluca Jerry Daley	April 2016 November 2016 March 2016
Student Leaders		

July 28, 2017 (*membership list updated*)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be student leaders with a passion for making the food system more sustainable; activity in one or more food-related student groups at UAlberta is considered an asset. Mixture of graduate and undergraduate students preferred. 	<p>Juanita Gnanapragasam (GRAD) Nirwair Singh Bajwa (GRAD) Stephanie Le (GRAD) Hana Ambury (URGD) Stephanie Kerik (UGRD) Fatme Elkadry (UGRD)</p>	<p>March 2016 March 2017 March 2017 March 2017 March 2017 March 2017</p>
<p>Faculty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 3 positions available This member should be a university faculty member who is knowledgeable in the field of food systems. This member also provides an important link to faculty and students to help create and support opportunities for experiential learning projects for students. 	<p>Brent Swallow Helen Vallianatos Mary Beckie</p>	<p>March 2016 March 2016 March 2016</p>

Appendix B. Food Related Groups at UAlberta

In order to acknowledge and compliment the sustainable food programming already happening on campus, here is a list of current initiatives and groups. These groups will serve as potential collaborators and audiences for the initiatives of the SFWG.

Please note that this is an evolving list. If you notice anything missing from this list, please contact one of the Co-Chairs of the SFWG.

Student Groups

Healthnuts
Health Busters
Healthy in a Hurry
Health and Wellness Movement
Engineers Without Borders
Speaking of Healthy Eating
Nutrition and Food Sciences Student Association (NUFSSA)
Sustainable Food Initiative
Vegetarians & Vegans at the U of A

University Groups

Heritage Chickens
Adopt a Planter Program
Healthy Campus Unit and The Wellness Project
Food for Health (ALES research program)

Community Gardens

Edmonton Organics Growers' Guild
Prairie Urban Farm
Green & Gold Community Garden
Sustain SU Community Garden & Naturalization Site
Sustain SU Farmers' Market
Augustana Community Garden
Jardin Communautaire Campus Saint-Jean Community Garden

Other

Campus Food Bank Society (operating out of the UAlberta Students' Union Building)