

The EatWell Pod strives to enhance food literacy, reduce food insecurity, and offer nutritious and sustainable food choices to everyone at UCLA.



THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF FOOD

The human diet is a significant environmental burden that is destroying the Earth, and dietary changes will be critical to mitigate climate change. Livestock production alone contributes to 14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions (Springmann et al, *Nature*, 2018). To reduce the environmental impact of food choices on UCLA's campus, we are educating students through curricular and extracurricular efforts.

- EATWELL co-lead Amy Rowat is a co-PI on the **NSF-funded graduate training grant**, Innovations at the Nexus of Food, Energy, and Water Systems.
- EATWELL members are **integrating environmental education into courses**, which are having significant positive impact to reduce student consumption of animal products (Jay et al, *Climatic Change*, 2019).
- We generate content and events to **raise awareness of the environmental impact of food**. For example, we recently hosted the first *UCLA Sustainable Recipe Contest* (Nov 12, 2019), which generated much interest and enthusiasm among undergraduate and graduate students to cook alongside UCLA chefs. The winning recipe was a butternut squash and black bean taco with pico de gallo called "Taco 'bout Sustainable", which has over 100x less kg CO₂ emitted compared to beef tacos. This recipe will be served by UCLA Dining in B-Plate starting in January 2020.
- To **ensure sustainable food options are readily available and accessible** to students, UCLA Dining now serves *Impossible Beef* in dishes served on the hill, as well as by-catch fish and meat patties blended with plant-based alternatives. EATWELL graduate student member Hannah Malan is currently investigating the impact of labeling on student food choices.



Senior Director of Dining Services, Al Ferrone at UCLA Dining's vertical tower garden.

FOOD LITERACY

We are more broadly working to advance knowledge of food.

- Through our **research into food literacy**, we recognize that a multidisciplinary approach is critical to achieve the highest impact; such a multidisciplinary framework guides the design of informational campaigns, as well as programming that will be offered through the UCLA Teaching Kitchen (Rowat et al, *J Am College Health*, 2019; Malan et al, *J Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 2019).
- We are also **partnering with local schools to develop a food science curriculum** that aims to teach science concepts through the lens of food. A pilot study with the Geffen Academy is being conducted and assessed starting December 1st, 2019.

FOOD SECURITY

Recent data reveals a significant proportion of UCLA students experience food insecurity, meaning that lack of money or other resources limits their access to adequate food: 17% of students surveyed indicated having “very low” food security, while another 20% had “low” food security (University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey Data Tables, 2018). We are taking a multi-prong approach to ensure students and staff have access to good food:

- Through our recently launched **Teaching Kitchen**, we will be offering **programming** to teach students and staff how to cook whole foods on a budget.
- Our ongoing efforts advance **research into basic needs and effective interventions** (e.g. Watson et al, *California Agriculture*, 2017).
- Launched Bruin Dine, a **program serving FREE leftover hot food** from the UCLA Dining halls to all UCLA students in need of a meal, in January 2018
- We support **UCLA Community Programs Office**, which oversees the CalFresh Initiative and campus food closet.

FOOD EDUCATION MINOR

In response to student demand, UCLA now offers:

- A **Food Studies Minor**, which uses food—its production, preparation, sharing, consumption, and disposal—as a lens for understanding individual, socio-cultural, and global issues. Classes in the minor span the humanities, environment and sustainability, law, science, public health, and more.
- At the graduate level, a **Food Studies Graduate Certificate Program** (which will soon be a concentration in the Fielding School of Public Health) offers UCLA PhD, MA, MS, and professional school students the opportunity to investigate this growing field through an interdisciplinary curriculum. The program will prepare students from diverse disciplines to address complex topics in food cultures and histories, nutrition and public health, food policy and food justice, and urban planning and the environment.

POD CO-LEADERS



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