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2020-2030 | VERSION 2 (UPDATED IN 20



**DALHOUSIE**  
UNIVERSITY



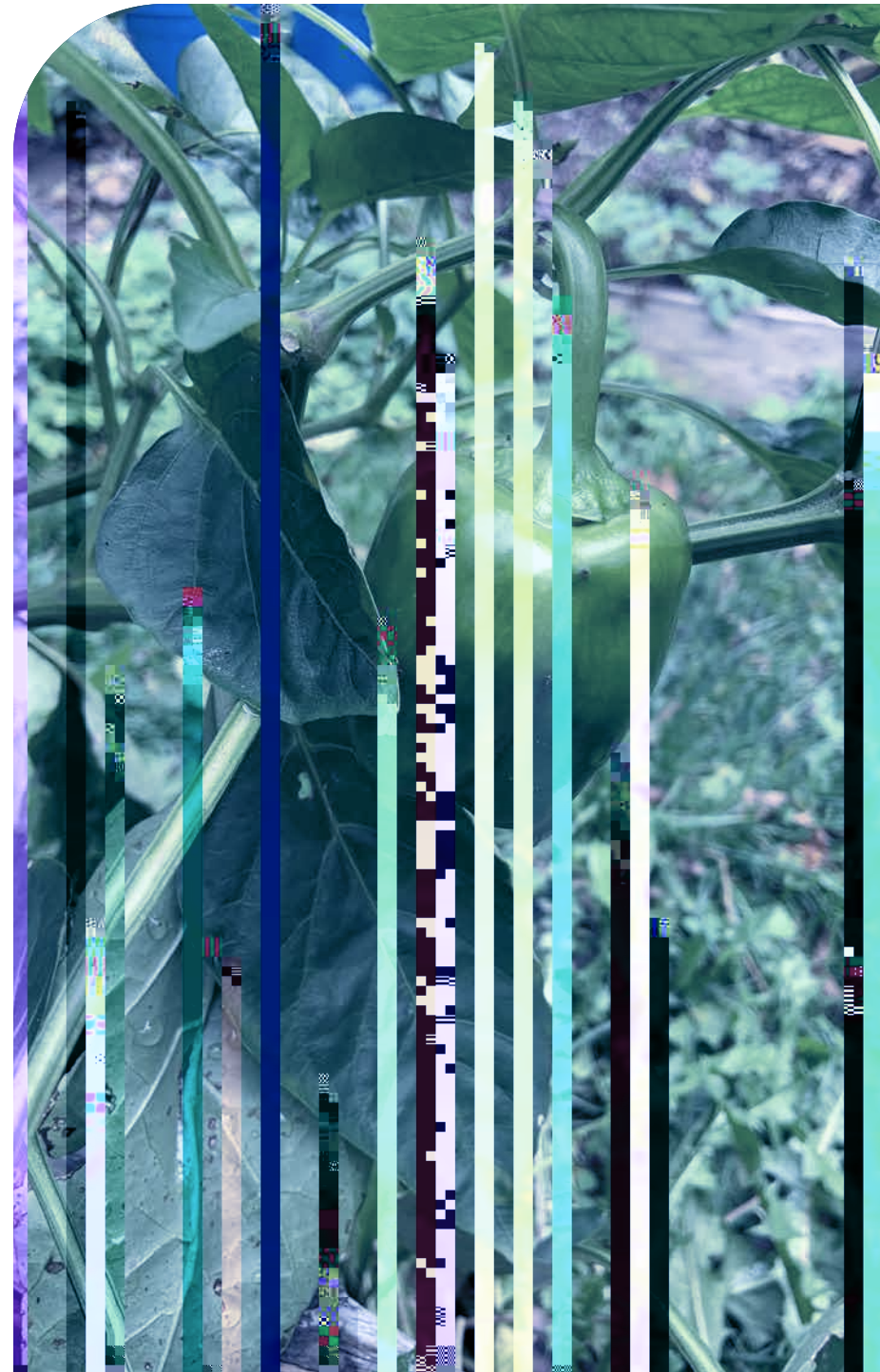
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Prepared by the Office of Sustainability with Food Services, Ancillary Services, and with feedback from students, faculty, staff, government, non-profit organizations, and published information. Between 2019 and 2022, focus groups, surveys, reporting frameworks, literature and plan reviews, and a new University Strategic Plan provided revised content for the plan. These processes engaged over 1,000 people on and off campus.

### Land Acknowledgment

Dalhousie sits on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people and recognizes the interconnectedness of all our relationships—to the environment and to each other—for generations to come.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.



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This document provides a planning framework for delivering campus food in a more sustainable and healthy manner. The document supports and adheres to the vision and principles identified in the Dalhousie University Operations Sustainability Plan and is primarily focused on, but not limited to food procurement, preparation, kitchen operation, and end-use.

Dalhousie recognizes and reports on the UN Sustainable Development Goals through reporting frameworks. This plan addresses Goal 2 Zero Hunger, Goal 3 Good Health and Well-Being, Goal 6 Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, Goal 13 Climate Action, Goal 14 Life Below Water, Goal 15 Life on Land, and connects to each of the other 9 goals.



## Executive

Vendors in contractual relationships with the University or Student Union deliver much of the campus food services. Levied student societies provide meals, run a food bank, gardens, and farm market. A number of sustainability initiatives have been implemented in the last decade and further actions are under development.

Key goals from literature and campus engagement include reducing pollution, including greenhouse gases, food waste and habitat loss, supporting workers and animal rights, and creating affordable, flexible, and healthy food options. Information for the framework was gathered through stakeholder focus groups, meetings, surveys, and literature reviews.

Key strategies include transition to more plant-based options, supporting ethical and sustainable purchasing, reducing energy, water, and waste, building awareness and creating a cultural of healthy and sustainable eating.





## 1.3 Public Engagement

The Office of Sustainability conducts an annual sustainability survey. Specific questions regarding food options and services were asked in 2015 and 2020. Between both surveys approximately 3,000 campus members provided comments. In addition, student and multi-stakeholder focus groups were also run in 2015 and 2020. Some key themes, highlighted in order of mention, are outlined below.

Food affordability, access, freshness. Students also discussed food security and issues of cost and convenience as impediments to sustainability.

Food and packaging waste. The widespread use of plastic disposables on campus through food services (e.g., cups, bottled water) is noted. Food waste is a concern environmentally as well given affordability, poverty, and access issues.

Ethical Purchasing. Investing in companies with environmental, social, and good governance records for goods and services on campus (e.g., fair trade coffee, local food). Animal welfare issues are important to many.

Local food was rated high importance, with organic rated of medium importance. Buying local supports local producers and vendors, and the rural economy in Nova Scotia. Local food travels less from the farm to the table and tends to be fresher; sometimes organic food is seen as conflicting with affordability.

As a result of key findings from the literature review, meetings, focus groups, and survey data, a Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan was developed to guide decision-making.

### Recommended strategies

The university should make healthy choices more affordable.

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Several new programs, pilots, reports, and initiatives have been developed over the last decade (Figure 1). At the Halifax dining halls, several awareness programs are offered, including seasonal menus and sourcing food from local farmers, growers, and distributors. As part of the educational programming the food services team meets with local farmers who are also invited to meet the Dalhousie community at the dining halls.

Figure 1. Timeline information.

2008–2009	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021
Trays removed in dining to save water and waste  On campus Chef's garden at the AC in existence, some food goes to dining halls and community  Purchasing items in bulk, 100% post-consumer paper products	Local farm programs expanded  Programs to reduce food waste in cooking launched  Adding more seasonal menus	Major auditing and upgrades to ENERGY STAR equipment started  DSU food related student societies like Loaded Ladle, Urban Gardens, Farm Market start up and or expand  Adding variable speed drives on fans, and adding low-flow water devices in kitchens	Offering fair trade products (coffee, tea and chocolate)  Purchasing more whole foods for preparation eliminating trans-fats, and on site preparation  MSC certification for Dalhousie Halifax dining halls	Updated and additional educational signage and posters  Sustainable and Healthy Food Plan launched  Guidelines for organics and disposable reduction	New local food items secured from berries to bakery  Launch of a reusable mug pilot program  More waste education training, reducing napkins in dining hall	Expansion of plant forward options throughout food services  Energy efficient upgrades to kitchen ventilation  Revising Food Plan and priorities
<b>ONGOING</b> Education programs connecting local farms, Dietician advice and support, menu changes supporting plant forward and healthy eating, ongoing assessment of purchases and programs in meeting targets						



Other programs include trayless dining, offering fair trade products (coffee, tea, chocolate), eliminating trans fats, and purchasing more whole foods for preparation on site. The Halifax dining halls are MSC certified, and partnerships are being made with local fishers. Dining halls offer plant-forward options at each meal and cultural menu items. Food products for retail that meet certain fat, sodium, fiber, caloric, vegetable, and dietary standards are marked. In vending, a fair-trade chocolate option is provided and snacks such as baked chips and granola bars are offered along with regular chocolate and snack options. Halifax Food Services has an onsite Registered Dietitian that manages local farm, food safety, health promotion programs, free private nutrition consults, group presentations, dining room tours, and menu reviews.

At the AC, several awareness programs are offered including regular dining promotions based on seasonal locally-produced items and vegetarian/vegan diet. Trayless dining is offered along with fair trade products (coffee, tea, chocolate). The on-campus Chef's Garden, provides an opportunity for students to work on curriculum and research objectives while producing food for campus dining halls.

Major energy, waste, and water efficiency upgrades were undertaken in all campus kitchens.



## 3.0

### Vision

Dalhousie University aims to provide campus foods and services that encourage healthy eating, support local food systems, are environmentally, socially, and ethically responsible, and celebrate learning through events and educational programs.

### Principles

#### ***Social, Personal and Ethical Responsibility***

Transitioning to ethically sound sources, fulfilling the university's social responsibility through its food provision and operation, encouraging individuals to take responsibility of assuring their health and nutritional status.

#### ***Education***

Achieving greater awareness by nurturing a culture of sustainable food and healthy eating.

#### ***Ecological Responsibility***

Minimizing negative ecological effects associated with food procurement, use, and operations.

#### ***Local Economics and Agriculture Support***

Working with current food providers and suppliers to source short supply chain, local, and sustainable options.

#### ***Well-being, Nutrition and Food Safety***

Reviewing and improving the nutritional values of the food products served by changing or adjusting the ingredients or the practices. Promoting healthy options and healthy eating habits, ensuring that foods served on campus meet the latest principles and regulations of food safety, promoting concepts of food security.

### Scope

The framework applies to all aspects of sustainable and healthy food on campus. Currently it is focused on but not limited to the following components:

#### ***Procurement***

Procurement encompasses not only food purchasing, but also cleaning products, packaging, and other commercial products used in food services.

#### ***Preparation***

In this context, preparation is not limited to cooking. It also (i)18.16 luds t gr

## 4.0 G , A

To meet the university's sustainable and healthy food plan vision key goals, objectives, actions, and targets have been re-confirmed and expanded based on recent literature reviews, campus surveys, focus groups, and meetings (Table 2).

Table 1: Goals, Actions and Targets

GOALS	ACTIONS	TARGETS
<b>Purchasing Goal 1</b> Transition to more plant-based climate friendly offerings	Increases in environmental and ethical plant-based dairy and meat alternatives in catering, residence meals.  Offer affordable options that are entirely plant-based.  Promote plant-based options in programs and services.  Explore and support partnerships with local producers using energy-efficient farming systems.	50% or more of food offerings plant based by 2030. Measure by weight, plate and/or \$ to compare differences.  New programs and initiatives.
<b>Purchasing Goal 2</b> Increase sustainably and ethically sourced products	Increase local, community-based, and third-party certified purchases that meet sustainable and ethical standards striving to meet goals in all commodities from sustainable seafood to humane standards for cage free eggs (e.g., Fair Trade, Ocean Wise, Organic, SPCA Certified).	% of purchase increase.
<b>Purchasing Goal 3</b> Reduce packaging and switch to greener packaging	Replace one-time-use packaging with reusable products, where possible.  Reduce to eliminate problematic packaging (e.g., certain plastics).  Bulk purchasing for non-perishable food items.	Increase reusable and/or environmental-friendly packaging.
<b>Preparation Goal 1</b> Maximize nutritional benefits of meals	Reduce sodium, sugar, and saturated fats in dining hall meal, retail, vending and catering offerings.  Increase fibre and produce.  Provide educational information in retail and dining halls.  Continue not to use trans-fat cooking oils.  Switch to healthier cooking methods.	Report on programs, products, and cooking methods that have reduced sodium, sugar, saturated fats and increased fibre.  Introduce new innovative healthy selections.

GOALS	ACTIONS	TARGETS
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**Preparation Goal 2**  
Support healthy eating and dietary diversity

Adjust portion sizes and offerings according to Canada’s Food Guide.

Reduce the percentage of meals that do not meet the Canada’s Food Guide recommendations from 13% in 2019 to 10% by 2025. (R) (1.3.1) (2.3) (3.1) (3.2) (3.3) (3.4) (3.5) (3.6) (3.7) (3.8) (3.9) (3.10) (3.11) (3.12) (3.13) (3.14) (3.15) (3.16) (3.17) (3.18) (3.19) (3.20) (3.21) (3.22) (3.23) (3.24) (3.25) (3.26) (3.27) (3.28) (3.29) (3.30) (3.31) (3.32) (3.33) (3.34) (3.35) (3.36) (3.37) (3.38) (3.39) (3.40) (3.41) (3.42) (3.43) (3.44) (3.45) (3.46) (3.47) (3.48) (3.49) (3.50) (3.51) (3.52) (3.53) (3.54) (3.55) (3.56) (3.57) (3.58) (3.59) (3.60) (3.61) (3.62) (3.63) (3.64) (3.65) (3.66) (3.67) (3.68) (3.69) (3.70) (3.71) (3.72) (3.73) (3.74) (3.75) (3.76) (3.77) (3.78) (3.79) (3.80) (3.81) (3.82) (3.83) (3.84) (3.85) (3.86) (3.87) (3.88) (3.89) (3.90) (3.91) (3.92) (3.93) (3.94) (3.95) (3.96) (3.97) (3.98) (3.99) (4.00)

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Dalhousie University Ancillary Services and Food Services have overall responsibility for the implementation of university food services on Dalhousie campuses. Other food groups on campus may choose to use the framework as a guidance tool. The Dalhousie Office of Sustainability provides advice on sustainability issues and assists in tracking information and measuring progress.

## 6.0 **Environment**

The Dalhousie University Sustainability Plan outlines “Sustainable food offerings” as one of its indicators. Every year the university releases a public report that identifies progress made. Dalhousie is a participant in the Sustainability Tracking Assessment Rating System (STARS). Every three years the university publicly reports under STARS.

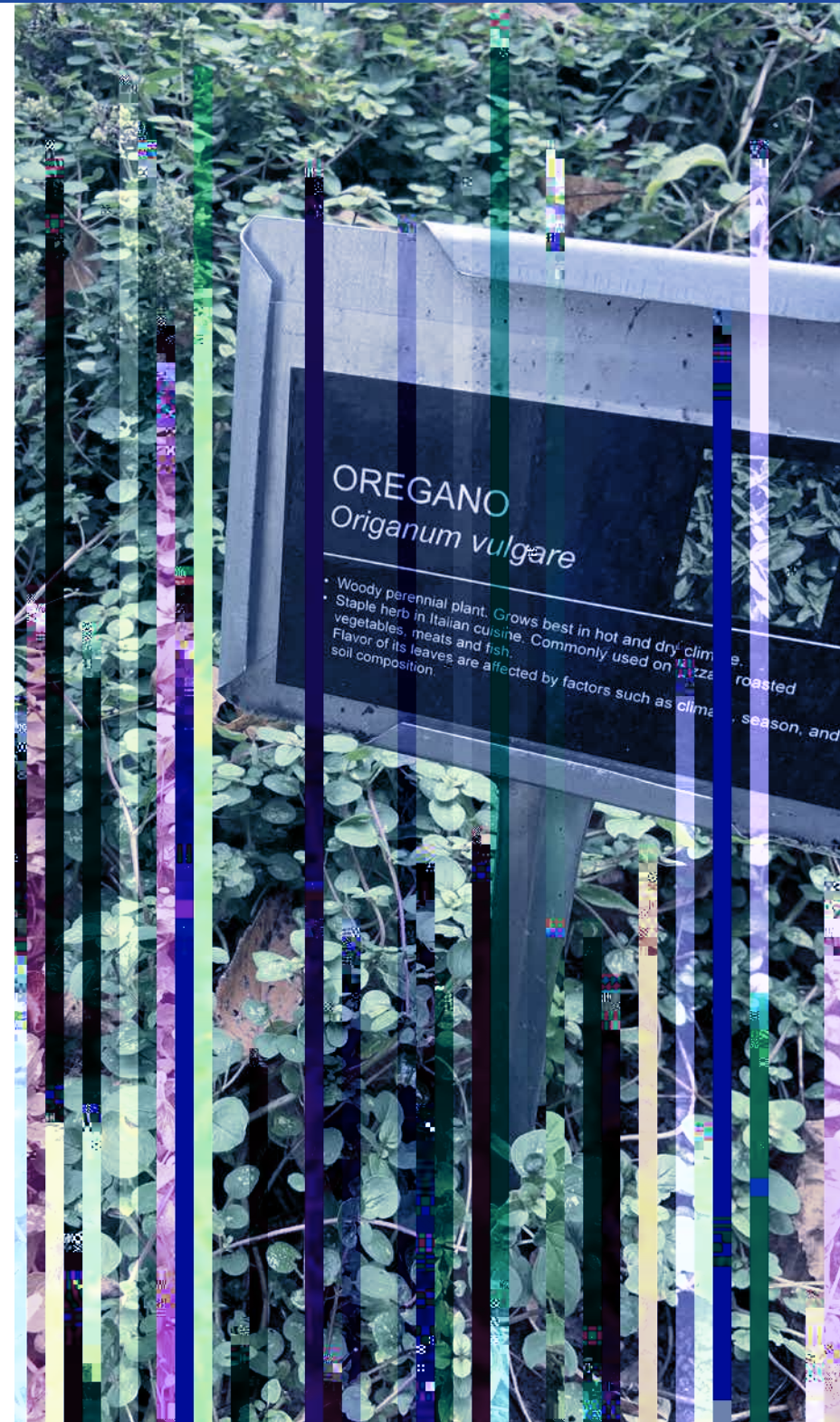
Food and dining services are a part of these assessment processes. Credits that are tracked are available on the STARS site. Each year, Food Services







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