



C H A L L E N G E

Real Food Campus Commitment

We, the undersigned representatives of _____, are committed to improving our nation’s food system to prevent adverse health, social, economic and ecological outcomes.

We believe colleges and universities must exercise leadership in our communities and throughout society by modeling ways to support ecologically sustainable, humane and socially equitable food systems.

We further recognize that investing in the use of local/regional, ecologically sustainable, humane and fair foods benefits not only the daily lives of current students, but the recruitment and retention of new students; fosters university-community relations by supporting the livelihoods of family farmers and food chain workers; and places our institution in alignment with leading colleges and universities across the country.

Accordingly, we commit our institution to taking the following steps in pursuit of ‘real food’ on campus:

1. Commit to annually increasing procurement of ‘real food’—defined as local/community-based, fair, ecologically sound, and/or humane by the *Real Food Calculator*—so as to meet or exceed 20% of food purchases by 2020
2. Commit to establishing a transparent reporting system, including the *Real Food Calculator*, to assess food procurement and commit to compiling these assessment results in an *annual progress report*
3. Commit to forming a *food systems working group* (comprised of students, staff, faculty, food service managers, food service workers and relevant local stakeholders) responsible for developing and coordinating the implementation of an official *real food policy* and *multi-year action plan*
4. Commit to making the *real food policy*, *multi-year action plan* and *annual progress reports* publicly available online and through the Real Food Challenge
5. Commit to increasing awareness about ecologically sustainable, humane and socially equitable food systems on campus through co-curricular activities, cafeteria-based education and other appropriate means

Upon signing the Commitment, we further commit to the following tasks:

1. Within 1 month, complete the *Baseline Campus Food Survey*
2. Within 3 months, confirm with relevant parties that all contracts with distributors, food service providers and on-campus vendors will be amended in future RFP or renewal processes to align with the new *real food policy* and *multi-year action plan*
3. Within 6 months, initiate a student-led assessment of campus food procurement using the *Real Food Calculator*
4. Within 12 months, adopt a comprehensive *real food policy* and begin executing a *multi-year action plan* with annual benchmarks
5. Within 12 months, produce one substantive communications piece covering the ongoing real food commitment efforts

In recognition of the need to build support for this effort among college and university administrators across the United States, we will encourage our colleagues at peer institutions to join this effort and adopt the Real Food Campus Commitment.

Signed,

President / Chancellor Signature

Secondary Signatory Signature

Title

Title

Partner Student Organization(s)

Date

Additional Information on the Real Food Campus Commitment

Signing the Commitment

The Commitment must be signed by at least two parties: 1) The most senior decision-maker at the college or university, usually the president or chancellor and, 2) A “Secondary Signatory” who will directly oversee and participate in the execution process—usually an administrator or staff person responsible for dining or sustainability initiatives

We request that a signed copy of the Real Food Campus Commitment be submitted to the Real Food Challenge, either scanned and sent via email to Commitment@realfoodchallenge.org or by mail to Real Food Challenge c/o Nina Mukherji 555 Dudley St. Boston, MA 02125

Executing the Commitment

The following chart outlines the key tasks contained in the Real Food Campus Commitment, along with additional information to guide the implementation process. Note that additional documents listed in the right-hand column of the chart below, which provide key templates and models, are available to support your campus process. All will be posted online October 24th, 2011 at <http://realfoodchallenge.org/commitment>.

Real Food Campus Commitment Execution Chart			
Commitment	Time Req.	Key Stakeholders	Supporting Documents*
1. Within one month, complete the Baseline Campus Food Survey	2 hours	Student Leaders; Food Service Director	<i>Campus Food Baseline Survey</i>
2. Within 3 months, confirm with relevant parties that all contracts with distributors, food service providers and on-campus vendors will be amended in future RFP or renewal processes to align with the new real food policy and multi-year action plan	20 hours	Contracted Food Service Provider Representative; Distributor Representatives; On-Campus Vendors; University Business Operations Manager; Student Leaders; Faculty Mentor	<i>Best Practice Policies for Campus Food Systems</i> <i>Best Practices for Food Distribution to Colleges and Universities</i>
3. Within 6 months, initiate a student-led assessment of campus food procurement using the Real Food Calculator	70-90 hours	Student Researchers; Food Purchasing Director; Key Vendors & Distributors	Real Food Calculator Package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Food Guide + Appendix • Calculator Process Guide • Calculator Template • Sample Results (Available by request upon completion of the “Campus Food Baseline Assessment”)
4. Within 12 months, adopt a comprehensive real food policy and begin executing a multi-year action plan with annual benchmarks	50-60 hours	<i>Food systems working group</i> members, including: Student Leaders; Food Service Staff; Food Service Workers / Union Representatives; Local NGO Leaders & Farmers; Faculty Members; Administrators	<i>Best Practice Policies for Campus Food Systems</i> <i>Food Systems Working Group: Process and Structure Template</i> <i>Multi-Year Action Plan Examples</i> <i>Annual Progress Report Examples</i>
5. Within 12 months, produce one substantive communications piece covering the ongoing real food commitment efforts	20 hours	University Communications and Public Relations Staff; Students; Food Service Staff	“Communications pieces” may include: feature story in alumni magazine; article in local/regional newspaper; online feature news story, etc.

Defining ‘Real Food’

For the purposes of assessment and tracking, ‘real food’ is defined by a particular set of third-party certifications and other independently verifiable criteria. The Real Food Calculator organizes these criteria into four categories: community-based/local, fair, ecologically sound and humane. Items that fit any one of the four categories are counted. Items that fit two or more categories receive special status. For example, produce from an independently owned farm within 250 miles of the institution is considered “Community-based/local.” A Fair Trade Certified beverage that is also Certified Organic would be considered “Fair” and “Ecologically Sound.” For more, see <http://realfoodchallenge.org/calculator>

Working with Real Food Challenge

Real Food Challenge is committed to supporting your campus throughout the execution process. Our network of Regional Field Organizers, National Coordinators and Expert Advisors will be made available to you. Additionally, we will connect you with peer institutions that have also made a commitment to real food on their campus. For more, please visit <http://realfoodchallenge.org/commitment> or contact commitment@realfoodchallenge.org with any comments, questions or requests.

Working with Peer Institutions

Upon signing this Commitment, signatories are expected to reach out to their colleagues—college and university presidents, sustainability officers, and dining and business managers at peer institutions—to invite them to sign the Real Food Campus Commitment. Collaboration between schools, especially on a regional level, can provide additional benefits in cost reduction and efficiency when it comes to working with broad-line distributors and key vendors.

Reforming Contracts

Broad-line distributors and food service management companies are essential partners in the successful execution of the Real Food Campus Commitment. RFP and contract renewal processes are therefore important mechanisms for aligning an institution’s real food goals with clear procurement standards and expectations. These processes also allow for fair accountability measures to be established and for real food policies to be institutionalized over time.

Student Involvement

The Real Food Campus Commitment has been designed to engage a wide variety of stakeholders at the decision-making table and to empower them throughout the process. Students are one such group of stakeholders whose active participation is critical to the successful implementation of the Commitment. Students are uniquely positioned to educate the campus community about real food and to rally support around new campus initiatives. Furthermore, by employing students to conduct the Real Food Calculator assessment, schools can complete an essential step in the Commitment process while also giving students an opportunity to conduct research on sustainable food systems. Food Systems Working Groups present additional opportunities to students for long-term engagement, leadership development, and opportunities for innovation.

Recognition and Publicity

Signatory schools will be publicly honored each year as part of a Real Food Awards program. Additional awards will be given to student groups, dining staff, food producers and others who demonstrate an exemplary commitment to their real food initiatives. More at <http://realfoodchallenge.org/programs/awards>