GOOD FOOD ENVIRONMENT GUIDE

Approval Authority: Executive Group

Established: 2024 10 03

Amendments: n/a

Category: Administration

1. Purpose

This Guide is established to set out our approach to supporting food systems that are environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable. It contributes to a range of university commitments:

- **Strategic Plan** that identifies the commitment by NOSM University to "become a leader in internal practices that address climate change and environmental health" (Strategic Enabler 3, Investing in our Infrastructure)
- Social Accountability mandate – that leads through a lens of health equity,
- Okanagan Charter agreement with a focus on "the health and sustainability of current and future societies with a shared vision to strengthen communities and contribute to the well-being of people, places and the planet."
- **Global Consortium on Climate Change and Health Education**, agreement which recognizes our commitment to furthering climate and planetary health education in our field of practice and provides numerous benefits, resources and opportunities for collaboration.
- Procurement of Goods and Services Policy and strategies.
- AFMC Declaration of Planetary Health

A Good Food Environment is respectful of traditional diets, while emphasizing healthfulness, sustainability, and local sourcing where feasible. It extends beyond education to the implementation of a supportive, comprehensive approach to food and catering that protects and enhances the health of both people and the planet.

2. Responsibility and Scope

This guide has been developed by the NOSM U Action Committee on Climate Change (ACCC). It applies to ordering or purchasing food and beverages for university events, including in-house and community events where the University has a hosting, planning, or funding role. All NOSM U community, including

staff, faculty, learners, and guests are encouraged to embrace its principles and uphold the policy. The ACCC will collaborate with the Finance and the Procurement Office to support effective implementation.

3. **Principles**

   a. **Be Environmentally Friendly**

• Assess the necessity of providing food or beverages based on meeting duration and timing. NOSM University has existing guidelines and policies for this purpose that should be consulted during planning.

• Emphasize sustainably sourced foods with a lower carbon footprint and environmental impact: see Appendix A.

• Minimize food waste: Plan food quantities with care and manage leftovers responsibly

• Strive for zero waste: Avoid single-serving beverages; consider what utensils/dishes may be available in staff/student lounge spaces.

• Make recycling the obvious option; encourage composting where available.

• Request/suggest at events or meetings that guests bring their own water bottles, mugs, utensils, containers, and dishes, if practical.

   b. **Recognize Cultural Diversity and Dietary Restrictions**

• Inquire about and accommodate dietary restrictions and allergies; offer allergen-friendly options and clearly label menu items to accommodate individuals with food allergies or intolerances.

• Seek feedback from diverse communities and other programs to ensure that food offerings are inclusive and respectful. Ensure that they include culturally relevant foods, acknowledging the links between food, wellness, traditions and culture.

   c. **Promote Healthy Eating**

• Align food selections with Canada's Food Guide (2019): Two key features to consider are the balance between food groups with a rich contribution from fruits and especially vegetables, and the wide array of plant-based proteins.

• Prioritize whole and less processed foods; provide a variety of nutritious options.

- Serve non-bottled water as the primary beverage; limit pop, juices, and sports drinks, including those with non-caloric sweeteners; minimize or eliminate single-serving options i.e., bottled water/juice etc.

- Share recipes, meal prep tips, and resources to inspire and support BYOL participants in making healthy and sustainable food choices.

- Collaborate with other programs, health professionals, nutrition experts, and wellness organizations to develop and implement evidence-based strategies for promoting healthy eating behaviors.

4. Our Commitment

NOSM University's commitment to planetary health includes supporting a good food environment through ordering and providing good value, high quality, healthful and sustainable food that meets dietary needs and enhances the wellbeing of NOSM U community.

Everyone is encouraged to raise awareness of healthy, sustainable choices and helping others make informed decisions by highlighting the provenance, seasonality and other sustainability and health aspects when served.

Consistent with the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy at NOSM University, the Good Food Environment Guide is developed "to raise awareness of environmental stewardship and sustainability in the procurement of goods and services, including procurement decisions that contribute towards a positive social impact and promote "healthy communities".[1]

5. Implementation and Review

This guide will be displayed for the NOSM University community and visitors for meetings, events on the University website and distributed accordingly for events and event planning at NOSM University. The ACCC or designate will coordinate a guide review every 3 years to respond to new developments and meet evolving best practices. Progress, updates, and any reporting data will be reported by the ACCC as applicable.

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[1] Procurement of Goods and Services Policy

6. **Reference Documents**

- Procurement of Goods and Services Policy

- Catering and applicable Hospitality Policies

- Appendix A: The carbon footprint of food and references

7. **Resources**

- https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-eating-and-the-environment/

- https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guide/about/history-food-guide/eating-well-canada-food-guide-first-nations-inuit-metis.html

- https://www.fnha.ca/documents/healthy_food_guidelines_for_first_nations_communities.pdf

Review and Revision History

Review Period: 3 years or as required.

Date for Next Review: 2027 01 01

Appendix A: The carbon footprint of food
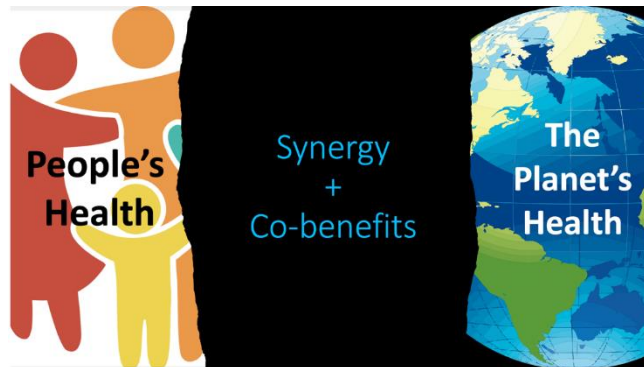
A Good Food Environment will promote both health and sustainability, while maintaining respect for food traditions. The global agro-industrial food system has many environmental impacts. Regarding climate change, this sector is estimated to be responsible for 25-33% of greenhouse gas emissions. However, some foods have a much higher carbon footprint than others, and beef leads the pack.

Canada's Food Guide assigns ¼ of its plate to protein sources. Here are the carbon footprints of some of the common options, in CO_{2eq} per kilogram. Note that these numbers are *not* per serving; one kilogram of beans or lentils offers many more servings than one kilogram of meat.

- Beef: 60*
- Cheese: 21
- Pork: 7.0
- Chicken: 6
- Farmed fish: 5
- Eggs: 4.5
- Milk: 3
- Peanuts: 2.5
- Dried beans: 2
- Lentils: 0.9** (about 20 servings)
- Tree nuts: 0.3

*A typical 8 ounce steak weighs 240 gm; thus 1 kg of beef would provide 4 servings; a so-called "standard serving" is about 100 gm, thus 10 servings
** One kilogram of lentils provides about 20 standard servings

Recent references on the intersects between food systems, food environments, sustainability, and health.

1) Godfray HC et al. Food security: the challenge of feeding 9 billion people. Science. 2010 Feb 12;327(5967):812-8. doi: 10.1126/science.1185383. Epub 2010 Jan 28. PMID: 20110467.

2) Alsaffar AA. Sustainable diets: The interaction between food industry, nutrition, health and the environment. Food Sci Technol Int. 2016 Mar;22(2):102-11. doi: 10.1177/1082013215572029. Epub 2015 Feb 13. PMID: 25680370.

3) Meybeck A et al. Sustainable diets within sustainable food systems. Proc Nutr Soc. 2017 Feb;76(1):1-11. doi: 10.1017/S0029665116000653. PMID: 28195528.

4) Pereira LM et al. Food System Transformation: Integrating a Political-Economy and Social-Ecological Approach to Regime Shifts. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2020 Feb 18;17(4):1313. doi: 10.3390/ijerph17041313. PMID: 32085576; PMCID: PMC7068403.

5) Anderson, M. D et al. (2021). Food system narratives to end hunger: Extractive versus regenerative. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 49, 18–25. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2020.12.002

6) Beaumier, M. C. et al. (2010). Food Insecurity among Inuit Women Exacerbated by Socio-economic Stresses and Climate Change. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 101(3), 196–201. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03404373

7) Holt-Giménez, E. (2015). Racism and Capitalism: Dual Challenges for the Food Movement. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 23–25. https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2015.052.014

8) Springmann, M et al. (2016). Global and regional health effects of future food production under climate change: A modelling study. *The Lancet*, 387(10031), 1937–1946. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)01156-3

9) Wheeler, T et al. (2013). Climate Change Impacts on Global Food Security. *Science*, 341(6145), 508–513. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1239402