



# 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

- 1) The Commitment must be signed by at least two parties: (a) The most senior decision-maker at the college or university, usually the president or chancellor and, (b) A “Secondary Signatory” who will directly oversee and participate in the implementation process—a university staff person such as a Director of Auxiliary Services, Vice President of Campus Life, or equivalent. One or multiple student organizations must also be listed. This may include student government.
- 2) Institutions seeking to become Real Food Campus Commitment signatories must first fill out the “Real Food Campus Commitment Implementation Worksheet” to ensure basic requirements and processes for fulfilling the stipulations of the Commitment are in place.
- 3) A signed copy of the Real Food Campus Commitment must be submitted to the Real Food Challenge, both scanned and sent via email to [Commitment@realfoodchallenge.org](mailto:Commitment@realfoodchallenge.org) and sent via mail to Real Food Challenge c/o Nina Mukherji 30 Bow St, Cambridge MA 02138

## 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, which provide key templates and models, are available online at <http://realfoodchallenge.org/commitment> and <http://calculator.realfoodchallenge.org> or by request.

Real Food Campus Commitment Implementation Chart			
Commitment	Estimated Time Req.	Relevant Stakeholders	Supporting Documents
1. Within one month, complete the <b>Baseline Campus Food Survey</b>	2 hours	Student Leaders; Food Service Director	<i>Campus Food Baseline Survey @ calculator.realfoodchallenge.org</i>
2. Within 3 months, confirm with relevant parties that all contracts with distributors, food Rservice providers and on-campus vendors will be amended in future RFP or renewal processes to align with the <b>new real food policy</b> and <b>multi-year action plan</b>	20 hours	Contracted Food Service Provider Representative; Distributor Representatives; On-Campus Vendors; University Business Operations Manager; Student Leaders; Faculty Supporters	<i>Best Practice Policies for Campus Food Systems</i>
3. Within 6 months, initiate a student-led assessment of campus food procurement using the <b>Real Food Calculator</b>	70-90 hours	Student Researchers; Food Purchasing Director; Key Vendors & Distributors	All Calculator Guides Online @ calculator.realfoodchallenge.org - Real Food Criteria Guide, Appendix & Position Papers - Performing the Real Food Calculator (step-by-step process guide) - Navigating the Real Food Calculator Website - Tips for Assessing Dining Purchases
4. Within 12 months, adopt a comprehensive <b>real food policy</b> and begin executing a <b>multi-year action plan</b> 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 and are not otherwise disqualified 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 may be considered “Community-based/local.” A Fair Trade Certified beverage that is also Certified Organic may be considered “Fair” and “Ecologically Sound.” For more, see <http://calculator.realfoodchallenge.org>

## Support from Real Food Challenge

Real Food Challenge is committed to supporting your campus throughout the implementation process. Upon signing the Commitment, your *Food Systems Working Group* will be provided a packet of additional implementation resources. Our network of Field Organizer, National Coordinators and expert advisors will also be made available to you. Additionally, we can connect you with peer institutions that are also Real Food Campus Commitment Signatories. For more, please visit <http://realfoodchallenge.org/commitment> or contact [commitment@realfoodchallenge.org](mailto: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 at peer institutions, 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 implementation of the Real Food Campus Commitment. RFP and contract renewal processes are therefore important mechanisms for aligning an institution’s procurement criteria and expectations with the transparency, purchasing and educational targets mandated by the Real Food Campus Commitment. Real food language in contracts further establishes accountability measures and a way for real food policies to be institutionalized over five- and ten-year time horizons.

## Student Involvement

The Real Food Campus Commitment has been designed to engage a wide variety of stakeholders at the decision-making table while also providing a forum for continued student leadership in campus food systems change. Students’ 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 may be publicly honored each year as part of a Real Food Awards program. Awards are given to student groups, dining staff, food producers, food service workers and others who demonstrate an exemplary commitment to their real food initiatives. More at <http://realfoodchallenge.org/programs/awards>



# Real Food Campus Commitment

## *Campus Implementation Plan*

**This Campus Implementation Guide ensures that institutions seeking to become Real Food Campus Commitment signatories have met basic requirements for fulfilling the stipulations of the Commitment. Institutions must fill out this Guide and it must be reviewed by representatives of Real Food Challenge before a school may be considered an official signatory of the Real Food Campus Commitment.**

**Use this guide to clarify the processes and practices of your institution's commitment to real food. Many of the answers below will be more extensively developed, with greater detail and campus specificity, as part of an institution's Real Food Policy. Please answer them in as much detail as you can, here.**

**Please specify the target percentage and date (equal to or greater than 20% real food by 2020) that your institution will commit to.**

**Please included any commitments your institution will make in addition to increasing your real food purchasing.**

*Ex. specific food sourcing commitments (e.g. % local, % fair trade), food waste reduction programs, campus garden initiatives, etc.*

**Please specify the mechanism through which the Real Food Calculator will be institutionalize and run by students on an annual basis. Popular options include (but are not limited to) integration into academic curriculum or paid student internships. Please describe in as much detail as possible.**

*Note: Assessments should not be exclusively funded by and supervised by the contracted food service vendor being assessed, even if completed by a student employee. This may present a conflict of interest for researchers and cannot be considered fair or impartial. Alternatives include: university-contractor co-funding, supervision by university sustainability staff person or faculty member."*

**Please list (a) the founding members of the Food Systems Working Group and (b) its structure and position within the institution. For (a), please list names and titles where possible. For (b), please describe, at minimum, the senior-most administrator to whom the Working Group will directly report.**

*Note: Working Groups are encouraged to maintain a student Co-Chair and 50% student membership.*

**(a) Founding Food Systems Working Group, proposed membership:**

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**(b) Working Group structure and reporting mechanism:**

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**Please list both a student leader and a non-student official who will serve as a liaison to Real Food Challenge and be responsible for ensuring the annual Real Food Campus Commitment reporting requirements are met.**

<b>Student leader:</b> <b>Phone #:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
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<b>Non-student official:</b> <b>Phone #:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
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**Please list some examples of new co-curricular activities or initiatives the institution will commit to undertake as part of this educational endeavor. These activities should also be included in the required multi-year action plan.**

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**Please contact [commitment@realfoodchallenge.org](mailto:commitment@realfoodchallenge.org) to review this Guide.**