



NOURISHING MINDS & BODIES: UCU'S COMMITMENT TO HEALTHY & AFFORDABLE CAMPUS FOOD ALIGNED WITH SDG 2

In the spirit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) which calls for ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture the Urdaneta City University (UCU) reaffirms its commitment to providing healthy, affordable and accessible food choices for all its students, faculty, and staff on campus.

Why this matters

Good nutrition is foundational. When students and university personnel have reliable access to wholesome meals, they are better able to learn, teach, innovate and serve. UCU as a publicly-operated local university in Urdaneta City, Pangasinan, Philippines is uniquely positioned to integrate this commitment into its mission of inclusive education and community service.

Key strategies UCU is implementing

1. Prioritising nutrition & variety

- Campus dining services and food vendors are encouraged to offer balanced meals: whole grains (e.g., brown rice, whole-wheat bread), plenty of vegetables and fruits, lean proteins, plant-based options, and low-added sugar/salt offerings.d choices.



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2 ZERO HUNGER





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2. Keeping it affordable

- By partnering with local government (since UCU is city-owned) and food suppliers, the university works to subsidize costs or maintain low prices for student meals.
- Bulk sourcing of local produce reduces procurement cost, savings that are passed on in meal pricing.
- Meal-plan options and voucher programmes ensure that lower-income students still have access to full-nutrition meals.

3. Sourcing locally & sustainably

- UCU encourages its food services to buy from nearby farmers and producers in Pangasinan and neighbouring areas, promoting local agriculture and shorter supply chains.
- This contributes to SDG 2's emphasis on sustainable agriculture, while also reducing transport-costs and pricing pressures.
- Educational campaigns on campus raise awareness of "farm to table" and seasonal produce, helping students appreciate local food systems.



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4. Minimising waste & optimising resources

- Food waste reduction programmes are in place: monitoring leftovers, donating surplus food where safe, composting organic waste, and using biodegradable or reusable tableware.
- When waste is lower, operating costs drop enabling the university to maintain lower meal prices and allocate savings to nutrition enhancement.

5. Integrating food access into broader student-well-being

- UCU leverages its extension services and community development programmes (e.g., via its Center for Community Development & Extension Services) to promote nutrition education, food security awareness and healthy-eating habits. ucu.edu.ph+1
- Workshops, seminars and campaigns on campus reinforce the message that healthy eating is part of academic and personal success.
- Food-access support is also tied into student welfare: ensuring that those facing financial hardship are not forced to skip meals or rely on unhealthy fast-food options.

How this aligns with SDG 2

- Access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food: UCU's strategy ensures all campus community members have access to balanced meals, irrespective of income.
- Sustainable food production and local agriculture: By sourcing locally and promoting sustainable practices, UCU is contributing to the local food-system resilience called for in SDG 2.
- Reducing food waste and improving resource efficiency: UCU's waste-reduction programmes align with the SDG target to reduce post-harvest losses and food waste.

Education and awareness: By integrating nutrition education, UCU advances the goal's focus on improved nutrition through knowledge and behaviour change.



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Why this matters for UCU and its community

- A well-fed student body translates into better concentration, academic performance, reduced absenteeism and overall wellness directly supporting the university's vision of producing competent, morally upright and globally competitive professionals. guninetwork.org+1
- By controlling food costs and ensuring affordability, the university supports inclusive education: students from all socioeconomic backgrounds can thrive.
- Strong food-systems and local-sourcing forge closer ties between UCU and surrounding communities in Urdaneta City and Pangasinan reinforcing the university's role as a catalyst for regional development.

Looking ahead

- UCU can aim to publish regular reports on campus meal nutrition, affordability metrics and food-waste volumes for transparency and continuous improvement.
- Further partnerships with local agricultural cooperatives, agritech startups and nutrition-science units can deepen the food-system integration.

Extending food-access initiatives beyond the campus for example, student-run vegetable gardens, community kitchens or food-vouchers for vulnerable neighbouring barangays would amplify the university's impact on SDG 2.

Conclusion

At Urdaneta City University, providing healthy and affordable food choices is not a peripheral initiative; it is central to the institution's mission of inclusive education, student welfare, community engagement and sustainable development. By aligning its food-system strategy with SDG 2, UCU demonstrates a holistic commitment: nourishing its students, supporting local agriculture, reducing waste and building a healthier campus ecosystem one meal at a time.