



# Food Strategy and Vision



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# Welcome Message



Humber and the University of Guelph-Humber are committed to fostering an environment that is equitable, diverse, inclusive and contributes to a sense of belonging for all students and employees.

Our work to create this environment takes many forms, including this Food Strategy, which will help guide on-campus food offerings going forward. This work is also part of Humber's Well-Being Strategy which sets out the principles, framework, and goals to support health and well-being of its students, employees and community.

Consultations were undertaken to help us understand what is important to our community and what changes could be made to increase satisfaction with food on campus. This invaluable feedback has shaped this strategy.

Food brings people together and can contribute to a sense of well-being and belonging. It is also an embodiment of our focus on sustainability and our understanding of the sharp increase in food insecurity experienced by many members of our community. Together, we will work to address these challenges through ambitious goals and commitments and ongoing collaboration across the campus community.

We would like to acknowledge the work of the Food Strategy Working Group, as well as all those who shared their experiences and suggestions throughout the consultation phase for this strategy.

This is important work, and we couldn't do it without your input.



**Ann Marie Vaughan**  
President and CEO  
Humber College



**Melanie Spence-Ariemma**  
Vice-Provost and Chief  
Academic Officer  
University of Guelph-Humber

# Context



Food is a fundamental part of any community and is intrinsic to the sense of belonging that people feel when on campus. This Food Strategy and Vision is a guiding document which contains immediate changes and stretch goals that we are committed to striving to achieve.



Humber College's most recent strategic plan named specific priorities connected to promoting a healthy and inclusive campus. To propel these priorities forward, included in the plan were specific goals related to sustainability, health, decolonization, and equity, diversity, and inclusion.

During the development of the associated plans, frameworks, and implementation strategies a core theme connected to food emerged. For example, in September 2022, the Campus Culture working group of Humber's EDI Taskforce finalized a report with recommendations connected to Humber's culture around food and the role food plays in equity, community, and belonging.

Additionally, the development of a holistic and strategic approach to food at Humber College and the University of Guelph-Humber marks a pivotal and central point to the implementation of the Humber Well-being strategy, and broader commitments related to the Okanagan Charter. This strategy provides a road map to align the various aspects of food that are connected to an individual's experience at the college, whether studying, working, or visiting and ensures an ongoing commitment to holistic balance and well-being.

# Process



A working group was established featuring members of Humber College, the University of Guelph-Humber, and the IGNITE student union. The working group, through an environmental scan and existing data, developed a set of guiding principles to facilitate the development of this campus food strategy.

Given the importance of food to the well-being and success of Humber and Guelph-Humber community members, the college engaged in an extensive consultation process. As part of the community consultation, the college conducted 12 open houses at each of Humber's campuses and eight focus groups with the following stakeholders:

- Food and Wellness Committee
- Sustainability Department
- International & Diversity Representatives
- IGNITE Student Union
- Residence Council and Students (at each campus)
- Staff and Faculty Members (at each campus)
- Catering and Conference Users

These consultations resulted in 1,321 individual comments and suggestions. Additionally, a food service survey was distributed to the College and University communities, resulting in 2,597 responses. The result was a rich collection of ideas, experiences, comments, and reflections that were used to refine the guiding principles and establish the supporting actions contained within the strategy.



# Findings



The following are key highlights from the community consultation that the College and University communities seek:

- Positive healthy eating/dining environment with diverse high-quality, affordable and nutritious food options
- Create a sense of belonging at the college and university through food
- Balance of branded and non-branded concepts on campus; opportunities for local businesses
- Cultural food variety within food venues reflective of campus demographic, while being inclusive of dietary preferences and allergens
- Friendly customer service experience with consistent delicious high-quality food
- Hours of operation to reflect community needs, including evenings and weekends
- Resources available for individuals experiencing food insecurity (including staff & faculty)
- Minimization of food and packaging waste in alignment with our sustainability commitments

Stemming from the community consultation, the following guiding principles were derived to collectively represent the college's and university's Food Service values.

- **Health and Well-being** – Diverse food options that follow Canada's Food Guide with transparent nutritional information for the College and University community members to make dietary choices based on preferences.
- **Sustainability** – Providing food with sustainable environmental, social and economic practices.
- **Quality** – Commitment to high-level food quality, health and safety and positive customer service.
- **Inclusion and Belonging** – Food offering aligned with cultural diversity and dietary preferences of the campus community to create a sense of belonging and connection. Recognizing and celebrating the unique diversity of the Humber and Guelph-Humber community through food to create memorable experiences.
- **Availability and Accessibility** – access to dining areas with diverse supply of nourishing food offerings.
- **Food Equity and Affordability** – A multidimensional pillar which should be linked to other Humber departments and strategic priorities. For example, daily value price points options and support resources available for individuals to make food choices that support their well-being.

Stemming from the guiding principles, the following core pillars will support creating a campus-wide food service strategy.



# Strategy

The following tables describe initial supporting actions as part of the overall food strategy. The timelines noted within the document describe the timing of anticipated impact on the community, however, actions will require immediate initiation or prioritization. The strategy itself, beyond the guiding principles, is fluid and subject to change as community needs evolve and new opportunities emerge.



## Nutrition, Health and Wellness

Initiatives	Target	Immediately	Short Term (1-2 years)	Long Term (2-5 years)
Menu dietary icons and nutritional information to promote dietary preferences (e.g., vegan, Halal)	All venues	✓		
Nutritious foods and beverages are promoted and placed within high traffic and noticeable locations	Annual	✓		
Nutritious foods and beverages are competitively priced compared to highly processed products	Annual	✓		
Colour coded serving utensils for allergens - transparency and avoid cross-contamination	All venues	✓		
Access to nutritious snacks within vending machines (e.g., granola, veggie straws, nuts, baked snacks/chips)	25% of machine, assess annually	✓		
Marketing campaign to amplify Canada Food Guide recommendations (e.g. mindful eating, budget shopping and cooking.)	Annual	✓		
Ongoing staff customer service training	Annual	✓		
Introduction of allergen friendly station and/or concept	By Fall 2024	✓		
Access to dietitian and/or culinary support for dietary preferences and allergens	Onset of Food Service Agreement Humber to internally evaluate annually		✓	
Explore collaborating with Humber's Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyle Promotion diploma program			✓	
Collaborate with public health agencies to support the implementation of Food Guide Friendly on campus			✓	



## Variety and Availability

Initiatives	Target	Immediately	Short Term (1-2 years)	Long Term (2-5 years)
Review current food concepts and see if they align with community consultation findings	By Fall 2023	✓		
Adjust hours of operation to reflect community needs (including Ramadan)	Annual	✓		
Access to international snacks within vending machines (e.g., seaweed, banana crisp, spicy chips)	10% of machine, access annually	✓		
Celebrating cultural events with authentic cuisine (e.g., Chinese New Year, Diwali)	Annual	✓		
External partnerships with local business	Establish base number of partnerships with targeted growth over time		✓	
Align meal plan dollars comparable to other Colleges (ongoing evaluation of residence dining program, considering all-you-care-to-eat model)	Annual		✓	
Marketing benefits of meal plans (inclusive of voluntary)	Onset of Academic Year		✓	
Offer non-exclusive catering with pre-approved catering list – opportunities for BIPOC, Humber alumni etc.	Annual		✓	
Strategic capital investment in the dining program	Annual		✓	





## Sustainability

Initiatives	Target	Immediately	Short Term (1-2 years)	Long Term (2-5 years)
Minimize single use packaging and items throughout food services whenever possible	100%	✓		
Partner with external organizations to implement food waste prevention and food rescue programs.		✓		
Highlight local and/or seasonal ingredients within meals.		✓		
Must use local food that is grown, raised or processed within the province of Ontario including Humber Arboretum. Humber College will partner with ethical local farmers/suppliers.	40% with annual >5% increase (non-branded)	✓		
Purchase and replace at end of life all old equipment with energy star certification.	100%	✓		
Implement mug discount with marketing	Minimum 15%	✓		
Expansion of Low Waste Events and Spaces		✓		
Commit to Food Forward in partnership with Humane Society International	35% with annual increase of min 5%		✓	
Commit to reporting to STARS and GHG emissions inventory and potentially other Sustainability certification programs (e.g., Cool Food, SPE, Green Restaurant)	Annual	✓		
Adopt a program for reusable utensils		✓		
Fair trade ingredients and products to maintain Humber's Fairtrade commitment	Annual	✓		
Prioritize well-being and good food awareness across the institution	Included in food service contractor annual marketing plans	✓		
Overall reduction of Pre-Consumer Waste generated from all back of house areas supporting the residence dining, retail venues and catering production	55% reduction of pre-consumer waste in the first year of Agreement compared to baseline (2022 waste audit), followed by 5% annual increases. The desire for 90%.		✓	



## Food Equity and Affordability

Initiatives	Target	Immediately	Short Term (1-2 years)	Long Term (2-5 years)
Food Programs – providing affordable access to meals	value meals at all meal periods, evaluated annually	✓		
Donations – partnership with food rescue organization (e.g., Too Good To Go, Second Harvest)	Annual		✓	
Enhance and build upon meal voucher programs (e.g., grocery store)	Annual	✓		
On-campus accessible food item – individuals may pick up items with pay-what-you-can model	Annual	✓		
Offer and promote student employment opportunities	15% dedicated student employment within food services	✓		
Resource Awareness – all campuses to have food equity resources available and supported with marketing	Annual		✓	
Bursaries and scholarships – seek sponsors to support initiative	Annual		✓	
Implement program to allow reusable container deposits to be donated to food insecurity initiatives	Annual	✓		
Commitment to explore food insecurity initiatives to support learners within their communities	Annual		✓	



## Innovation

Initiatives	Target	Immediately	Short Term (1-2 years)	Long Term (2-5 years)
Real time feedback technology (e.g., Touchwork, QR code)	Annual	✓		
Speed of service technology (ordering apps)	Annual		✓	
Partner with delivery services	By Fall of 2024		✓	
Food trucks	Establish set number of food trucks by demand, reevaluate annually		✓	
Pop-up concepts	Establish set number of pop-up by demand, reevaluate annually		✓	
Micro Market				✓

## Supportive Community Hubs

This group will be established to overlook the ongoing establishment and implementation of these pillars and create partnerships as warranted. Part of the role of the committee is to implement food equality initiatives. The committee should include diverse College and University representation (e.g., IGNITE, sustainability, international department) and food service contractors to create a cohesive approach for each year.

## Milestones/Goals



# Final Thoughts

Food plays an important role in the health, sustainability, well-being and success of individuals and communities. A community's relationship and approach to food must also be flexible enough to respond to changes in the internal and external environment. Through this food strategy, Humber and the University of Guelph-Humber commit to prioritizing and promoting the positive impacts that food can have on our community. We will work to achieve this through ongoing feedback loops and other forms of consultation continuing to evolve the institutional approach to support the health, well-being, sustainability, and inclusivity of our communities.

