

UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Student Report

**Benchmarking Transitions towards a Local and Sustainable UBC Food System**

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The University of British Columbia  
Food System Collaborative Project V  
Scenario 7:  
**Benchmarking Transitions towards a Local and Sustainable  
UBC Food System**

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**Abstract:**

Scenario 7 of the UBC Food System Project seeks to apply benchmarks to previously established indicators in order to gauge progress towards conforming to the model of sustainability of the project. It involves 28 indicators from previous AGSC 450 coursework, and several new indicators that came to light during our work. The indicators focus on progress by the four major partners of the UBCFS, outlined below. Work was divided among three research groups, and results were shared. We approached the four partners to find specific data pertaining to the indicators, attempting to find historical data from 2000, current data, and realistic goals for 2010. We created a model to incorporate the indicators and benchmarks into the currently defined model of sustainability. Finally we make suggestions on how to streamline the benchmarking process in the future.

**PART I**

**Introduction:**

UBC is on its' way to becoming a beacon of a sustainable food system. Thanks to the research of Alejandro Rojas and Liska Richer and their work with the AGSC 450 classes from 2000 to 2005, every year small changes are being made to develop a sustainable food system at UBC. However, there is nothing to measure the success of the strides made by previous years and the partners that have collaborated with the UBC Food Systems Project. For the past five years, our colleagues of previous AGSC 450 classes have made numerous recommendations and have posed many solutions to make a sustainable UBC Food System. Professionals that work within UBC, either at the Farm, in Food Services, or in the AMS have listened to our colleagues and have tried to incorporate as many of the recommendations as possible. There is no doubt that there is still a lot of work left to be done, however, we do need to see how far we have come over the past 5 years so that we can determine how much more work still needs to be done.

**Problem Definition:**

The problem for scenario 7 is to track the overall success of the UBC Food System Project. This is a complex issue as there are many players and organizations involved in the food system including: UBC Food Services, AMSFBD, UBC farm, as well as many students on campus. In previous years, students have identified successful indicators for the UBC Food System Project, and it is our task to determine how to set goals using these indicators to determine that success of the project.

This scenario is an attempt to quantify movements towards sustainability; it also reflects the underlying importance of indicators and benchmarking in our society as a whole. We are a progress-oriented society, and we tend to rely on numbers to validate our progress in a number of areas. Topics such as GDP, foreign trade balance, literacy, and child mortality are all indicators that allow us to track our progress. Many would argue that the indicators used predominantly in our society do not track sustainable progress, nor do they indicate a healthy society. The challenge for sustainability advocates is to incorporate solid goals and numbers into their belief systems, in order to be able to convince the general populace of not only the attainability of sustainable goals, but of the return to society for doing so. It could be said that sustainability advocates are as uncomfortable with numbers as society at large is uncomfortable with implementing sustainable initiatives. This scenario's mandate is to bridge that gap, to determine if the initiatives of this project are realistic and attainable, and to provide honest indication of real progress.

**Reflections of the Vision Statement for a Sustainable UBC Food System**  
**2002-2005 Academic and Plain Language Versions (8 Guiding Principles):**

In the context of the Vision Statement's intent to describe the attributes of a sustainable food system, group 11 felt that the current version successfully captures all of the major components of sustainability. Our major concern with the Vision Statement was in line with the reviews from previous years that raised concern over the nature of the writing. We felt that the principles are far too wordy and

pretentious to be widely accepted outside of the faculty and strongly feel that the ideals and the vision will only be attainable if they are clearly articulated. The UBCFSP 2005 Summary Report noted that the “guiding principles are by definition theoretical and are *intended* to be idealistic since they are those attributes that are supposed to guide us towards our *ideal* world” but we believe that more importantly these principles should function to convey the message of sustainability well beyond the project partners and Land and Food Systems community to everyone in the UBC food system (Richer 27).

We struggled to justify having two versions and concluded that the academic version does not enhance our credibility in any way, but rather distracts us from finding ways to reach our ideals. Meanwhile, the plain language version is far too brief to capture the true essence of our mission statement. We felt it unnecessary to continue with two versions of the Vision Statement, and would suggest that any future collaborations work towards amalgamating the ideal portrayal of our goals found in the academic version with the accessibility and concise nature of the plain language version. We see the vision statement not only as our own banner but also as a conduit to deliver our goals to the community, where *one* statement, *one* goal for everyone unites us in our efforts.

The essence of the 8 guiding principles is apparent, and addresses the foundations of our ongoing work on food security. The guiding principles should serve to provide depth to our vision, and as a group we feel that the key to where we are going and the success of the project will depend on our ability to balance all of these principles together.

### **Identification of Value Assumptions:**

As a group we discussed how our value assumptions influenced our views. Although we all come from different disciplines within the realm of Land and Food Systems, we unanimously possess a vested interest in food and the UBC food system. We believe that food is an integral part of our lives and we have a broad knowledge base that encompasses everything from food production at the farm level, to the nutritional quality and benefits of a healthy diet. In addition, our group agreed that the Faculty of Land and

Food Systems and particularly the Land, Food and Community courses (1, 2 & 3) have shaped our values. Before entering the faculty we all came from various cultural backgrounds and individual environments that may or may not have coincided with the ideals of the faculty. Throughout our four years in the faculty we feel that our values and belief system have been molded to promote sustainability, food security, local and organic food procurement as well as human and environmental health. These ideals are all consistent with the current vision statement for a sustainable UBC food system.

## **PART II**

### **Methodology:**

Benchmarking transitions towards a local and sustainable UBC food system is undoubtedly a very daunting task. In order to make this task more attainable and time efficient we decided to collaborate with the 2 other groups working on scenario 7. Collectively, all groups assigned to this scenario decided it would be best to split up the indicators of sustainability according to their partner organization. To ensure that there would be equal representation for each 'partner' group, 2-3 members from group 11, group 18 and group 25 were either assigned to 1) UBC Food Services (UBCFS) 2) Alma Matter Society Food and Beverage Department (AMSFBD) or 3) UBC Farm and other miscellaneous indicators with no partner organization.

### **UBC Food Services (UBCFS):**

UBCFS is a self-funded campus food service operation that employs over 400 staff in 25 outlets. Its' mission states that "UBC Food Services will promote and support the University and the greater community by providing good food, friendly service and value while maintaining financial integrity through sustainable business practices and dedicated, skilled employees." This statement encompasses the overarching goals of the organization. UBCFS is also very progressive in terms of adopting sustainability initiatives. Currently UBCFS is working on a sustainable seafood project, Sustainability Street, expanding their recycling and organic waste programs as well as incorporating fairly traded coffee into many outlets.

According to the director of the UBCFS, Andrew Parr, the estimated revenue generated for the 2005/2006 year is 19.1 million. This revenue is segmented into 4 main areas: 1) residence dining 2) catering 3) non-franchise cash operations 4) franchise cash operations. (See Table 1.0 for a summary of the UBCFS outlets). In order to determine benchmarks for the sustainability indicators, it was necessary to seek out current information regarding the status of each indicator. To achieve this, each group member reviewed secondary sources from the sustainability office and 2 group members met with Andrew Parr to discuss each indicator in detail.

**Table 1.0: Outlets within UBCFS**

Full Service Cafeterias & Restaurants	Snack Bars	Coffee Bars	Mini Marts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trek Express</li> <li>• 99 Chairs</li> <li>• Bread Garden at Forest Sciences</li> <li>• Cafe Perugia at Life Sciences Centre</li> <li>• Pacific Spirit Place at S.U.B.</li> <li>• Sage Bistro at the University Centre</li> <li>• Vanier's Dining Room</li> <li>• Totem Park Dining Room</li> <li>• Yum Yum's at the Old Auditorium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SUBWAY at S.U.B.</li> <li>• Pizza Pizza at S.U.B. and Trek Express</li> <li>• Arts 200 at Buchanan A</li> <li>• The Barn Coffee Shop on Main Mall</li> <li>• Edibles Snack Bar at Lower Level Scarfe</li> <li>• IRC Snack Bar at IRC / Woodward Library</li> <li>• MOA Cafe inside the Museum of Anthropology (May to September only)</li> <li>• Reboot Cafe at ICICS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steamies at UBC Bookstore</li> <li>• Starbucks - Full Service at Fred Kaiser on Main Mall</li> <li>• Starbucks - Full Service at S.U.B</li> <li>• Tim Hortons at Trek Express</li> <li>• Pond Cafe at the Ponderosa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hubbards inside Place Vanier Commons</li> <li>• Magda's inside Totem Park Commons</li> <li>• Gage Mini-mart at Walter Gage Towers</li> </ul>

**The Alma Mater Society Food and Beverage Department (AMSFBD):**

The Alma Mater Society of UBC represents 42,000 UBC students. In its efforts to improve the quality of the educational, social, and personal lives of the students, through the AMS, the students of UBC own and operate student services, resource groups and clubs, and student owned businesses including 12 food service outlets (AMS).

The AMSFBD is managed by Nancy Toogood, who clearly answers priorities of the AMS' student members. The AMSFBD provides services such as catering and the annual welcome back BBQ on the first day of classes, in addition to its Student Union Building (SUB) food outlets. The AMSFBD employs over 250 UBC students and is a central partner in the UBC food system (Toogood, 2006).



### **Farm and Other partners:**

The UBC farm is a student driven teaching, research and community farm located in the south campus. It is UBC's most direct connection with the production side of the food system, and strives to produce in the most sustainable manner possible. The farm integrates volunteer programs, coursework, research, and an intensive organic vegetable production. It provides a basis for many of the concepts taught in Land and Food Systems. UBC Waste Management provides both waste management services and waste reduction education to the UBC campus community through the coordination of recycling, composting and litter reduction initiatives. The exceptional in-Vessel Composter located in South Campus provides a shortcut for waste recycling, and closes the loop by providing high quality compost to the UBC Farm.

### **Findings, Discussion, Recommendations:**

#### **ECONOMIC INDICATORS:**

- **Profitability of UBCFS: amount of profit/money generated in 2005**

#### **Current Status:**

Revenue: \$19.1 Mil

Cost of Sales: \$6.4 Mil

Salaries & Benefits: \$8.0 Mil

Net Income: 3.7% of Revenue (\$700,000)

**Benchmark:** Net income: ~ \$700,000 (does not reflect inflation)

**Rationale:** It is not the intention of UBCFS to profit significantly at the expense of students. Three percent net profit out of the total revenue is the minimum that the board of governors would accept without signifying the need for a change in business. If net profit were to exceed one million dollars, it would also suggest the need for an adjustment in the delegation of revenues. This would likely result in increased investment in capital and upgrades in unit maintenance (Parr, 2006).

- **Profitability of AMSFBD**

**Current Status:** 14.2% Profit margin for 2005

**Table 1.1: Profit and Revenue For AMSFBD**

Year	Revenue (\$)	Profit (\$)	Profit/Revenue (%)	Profit margin over previous year (%)
2000	4,446,887	586,967	13.2	
2005	5,286,306	753,029	14.2	+0.5
2010	6,132,313	901,450	14.7	+0.5

(Financial Reports 2000-2005)

**Benchmark:** Over the next two years, we foresee decreased profit to 13.7% in 2006 and 13.3% in 2007, to a gain of 14.2% afterwards.

**Rationale:** We feel that with increased competition from new outlets, and the incorporation of more local and organic products, menu changes, and shifting to fair trade and ethically procured products, there may be both an initial increase in cost and a decrease in sales for AMSFBD. Over the long-term we expect new marketing strategies will have a positive impact on the AMSFBD's business. As the ideals of our Vision Statement spread campus wide and the goals of Trek 2010 begin to materialize, we hope to see a renewed interest in AMSFBD products over the long term and, in turn, higher returns.

- **Profitability of the UBC Farm**

**Current Status:** Losses equal to 10% of revenue.      **Benchmark:** To break even

**Rationale:** The main point of the farm is to expand operations and production, not make a profit.

Although profit could be used to fund student research projects, within the next five years it will be more positive to simply break even and put increased revenues into expanding production

### SOCIAL-ECONOMIC INDICATORS

- **Percent of UBCFS revenue that gets returned to the UBC community**

**Current Status:** \$1.9 Mil

**Benchmark:** \$1.2-1.6 Mil

**Rationale:** Approximately \$400,000 is returned to U.B.C. in the form of general revenues. The remainder of the \$1 Mil is returned to U.B.C. in the form of property taxes (called General Municipal Services Levy), utility costs, custodial and facility maintenance (Parr, 2006). 2006 was a large year for

investments in capital with the renovations of Totem Park and Place Vanier cafeteria thus the extra high investment in capital (\$1.9 Mil). Andrew Parr expects that the annual capital investment will be roughly \$1.2-1.6 Mil, which is quite generous.

- **Percent of AMSFBD revenue that gets returned to the UBC community**

**Current Status:** 14.2% of total gross revenue (13.2% in 2000)

All excess revenue that the AMSFBD earns is returned to students, which we consider to be the university community, through various services such as JobLink, Tutoring, and Safe Walk, as well as building maintenance. In 2005, the AMSFBD returned 14.2% of its revenue. (Toogood, 2006).

**Benchmark:** To reflect our profitability expectations for the next five years, we anticipate marginal increases in returns if any, in the next two years. By the end of 2009, we hope to recover any profit margin losses and begin to increase the profit/revenue ratio at a rate equal to 2004–2005 at 0.5% per year.

**Percent of AMSFBD units offering Fair Trade products**

**Current Status:** 50%

**Benchmark:** 83.3%

**Rationale:** We use the benchmarks set out by the Fair Trade Foundation (Fair Trade University Guide, 2006). The second goal requires that Fair Trade foods are made available for sale in all campus shops, cafés, and restaurants on campus. Currently coffee is the only Fair Trade food/beverage item available from the AMSFBD. We suggest having at least one Fair Trade item in each outlet to make a positive statement about economic justice for producers in the developing world. Under this mandate we would expect all twelve of the outlets to offer at least one Fair Trade item on their menu. We do however see the limitations set by the menu and nature of certain operations. Therefore our benchmark has excluded the AMS Outdoor barbeque, due to its extremely small menu, and the Pit Pub, due to their limited bar menu. The Pit Pub shares its kitchen with the Burger Bar, which will be part of the campaign and would sufficiently represent our goal.

- **Percent of UBCFS units offering Fair Trade products**

**Current Status:** 20% of Units (coffee only)      **Benchmark:** 5 years: 40%, ultimately: 100% (coffee)  
**Rationale:** Three years ago there were zero units that sold fair trade products at U.B.C. and now

six of the thirty units employed by UBCFS sell fair trade coffee. But further improvement is limited due to contract restraints. Talks are currently being held with Pura Vida Coffee to help fully integrate fair trade coffee products in UBCFS units (Parr, 2006).

- **Percent of Fair Trade products sold at AMSFBD outlets**

**Current Status:** -      **Benchmark:** 100% of targeted items  
**Rationale:** The AMSFBD offers 100% Fair Trade coffee in all venues. However, coffee is the only Fair Trade product offered. Instead of trying to focus on shifting large portions of menus to Fair Trade as implied by an indicator using a percentage, we suggest focusing our attention on specific “target items”. That is, we should target certain items and strive to make them available 100% fairly traded, similar to the current practice for coffee in the SUB. In this way we would implement certain target items that would have the greatest impact on outlet sales and represent items of major economic value to developing countries. We would recommend introducing one new fair trade target item per year, which could be developed into a marketing campaign. Target items may include: tea, chocolate/ cocoa, sugar, rice, citrus fruits, bananas, nuts and avocados.

- **Percent of Fair Trade products sold at UBCFS outlets**

**Current Status:** Coffee at 99 Chairs, Edibles, Reboot, Arts, Vanier, Totem.  
**Benchmark:** Gradual Increase in variety of fair trade products  
**Rationale:** UBCFS are very willing to switch to fair trade products except most units will not be able to sell fair trade products until their current contracts expire (Parr, 2006). It will be a very slow and gradual process ultimately moving to increased sales of fair trade products and eventually expanding beyond selling just coffees.

- **Percent of students employed at UBCFS**

**Current Status:** 200 students, 340 unionized employees, and 6 unionized students

**Benchmark:** Increased unionized students

**Rationale:** Union regulations limit the ability of UBCFS to hire more students because they would essentially be taking a job away from a union worker (Parr, 2006). This could be remedied by having the student employees pay union dues and join the union.

- **Percent of UBC students employed at AMSFBD**

**Current Status:** 90%

**Benchmark:** 90%

**Rationale:** Currently 250-290 students are employed by the AMSFBD compared to 35 non-student staff members. These non-student employees are full time positions; held by specialized individuals such as chefs, prep cooks and managers. It would be unrealistic to assume that the entire AMS could function on part time students, merely due to their inexperience and scheduling needs.

- **Average wage of UBC students employed at UBCFS**

**Current Status:** \$8.00/hour

**Benchmark:** \$8.50/hour

**Rationale:** It is not realistic for UBCFS to pay their student workers union wages. The base wage for a unionized employee is \$12.48/hour and goes up to a max of \$22.00/hour (Parr, 2006). There are also other stipulations placed upon student workers that are not part of the union (CUPE 166). Students can only work for 2.5 hours at a time and they are not allowed to work back to back shifts as this would be seen as displacing a union worker (Parr, 2006). Any more than a \$0.50 cent wage increase would lead to decreased students employed and decreased revenue for UBCFS due to union regulations. UBCFS must make a compromise between cutting services (students employed) or cutting into their gross revenue.

- **Average wage of UBC students employed at AMSFBD**

**Current Status:** Average \$9.35/ hour for a student employed for 1 year, \$9.60/ hour for a student employed for 2 years

**Benchmark:** Average \$9.35/ hour for a student employed for 1 year. Raised based on performance and length of employment and with respect to provincial minimum wage adjustments.

**Rationale:** According to the Employment Standards Act and Regulation, minimum wage in British Columbia is \$8/hour (Employment Standards Act and Regulation). The AMSFBD's average student wage

exceeds the provincial minimum, and students are offered free meal vouchers, which translates into about 1\$/ hour on extra (Toogood, 2006). Moreover, the AMS offers shift flexibility for students, in which exam and school schedules are accommodated.

- **Percent of student's income used to afford a nutritious, safe and appropriate foods sold within UBC**

**Current Status:** 24% of a student's expenditure is spent on food (Student Financial Aid, BC)

**Benchmark:** - No benchmark can be identified

**Rationale:** This indicator is reworded because 'income used' reflects a choice to spend versus 'income afforded' reflects limited funds to spend. The words in this indicator need to be defined in the way that everyone can agree upon what nutritious, safe and appropriate foods are. This indicator also assumes that students buy all their food at UBC campus, which is also unrealistic.

#### **ECOLOGICAL INDICATORS:**

- **Percent of food used by UBCFS that *can* be obtained locally**

**Current Status:** 30% to 95% depending on the season (SEED Report, 2004)

**Benchmark:** cannot be determined at this time

**Rationale:** Although UBCFS currently has respectable local food procurement practices, we still believe there is room for improvement. According the UBCFS Manager of Retail Operation, Purchasing and Project Coordination, Dorothy Yip, any foods that can be obtained locally are purchased. "If the suppliers can provide the quantity and quality we need then we buy the product" (Yip, 2006). The 2004 SEED Report suggests that 30% to a max of 95% of the food used by UBCFS can be obtained in BC alone. It's unfortunate that BC's primary growing season is inversely related to the predominant fall and winter school terms when UBCFS needs to purchase food in the highest quantities. This is a huge barrier to the amount of food the can be purchased locally. In addition, many of the franchise cash-operations are not flexible in terms of food sourcing, as they need to maintain very specific standards in their outlets. However, in the outlets that do have some flexibility in terms of food sourcing, UBCFS can increase the amount of local

food through purchasing more seasonal products. In order for this to be successful, UBCFS must tailor some of their menu offerings to match the local food available in that particular season (scenario 2). The reasoning behind not developing a benchmark for this indicator will be further explained in the next section.

- **Percent of food used by AMSFBD that *can* be obtained locally**

**Current Status:** about 54% can of food on average per month throughout the year (group 2 2004 summer).  
**Benchmark:** A benchmark cannot be set unless we work on changing the menus and what food is offered from AMSFBD outlets.

**Rational:** This number will only change if we look into new suppliers for the AMS; that is what Scenario 1 is doing, we don't think that we should be duplicating that research. We could possible adjust the menus to incorporate more seasonal foods, which is scenario 2. However, if we work with the current menu and that menu does not change, we cannot change this number. If we leave this number are 54% and aspire to maximize the local foods purchased within that range then maybe when the concept of extending local food purchasing starts to materialize more we can adjust the number. However, a benchmark for this will not be reasonable to set, especially since we cannot change what is available locally. Unfortunately, we could not take into account volume yet and this may drive down the current status of available food since local suppliers may not be able to keep up with the volume that the AMSFBD needs. Previous years have suggested that volume does need to be looked at, however, with the task of coming up with indicators, we did not have the time to delve into that aspect of research and it needs to be done to add more credibility to the benchmarks proposed here.

- **Percent of disposable products consumers use at campus residencies and outlets**

**Current Status:** 40% of the waste generated from campus food outlets is disposable containers

**Benchmark:** 30%

**Rationale:** The disposable containers can be replaced by recyclable or compostable containers. This would limit the amount of garbage waste generated by food outlets on campus. This will also decrease the amount of trips to the Vancouver Transit Station.

- **Distance that UBC consumer waste travels to end disposal/composting**

**Current Status:** Garbage and non-recyclable waste travels 8.84km from UBC to the Vancouver Transfer Station. Material to be recycled travel 14.05km from UBC to Metro Materials Recovery Inc. Compost goes to the In-Vessel composting facility located at UBC. Metal scraps, fluorescent bulbs, electronic waste, clean wood and mattresses go to the Richmond Steel Recycling Ltd., Nu-life Industries Inc., Genesis Recycling Ltd. and Urban Wood Waste Recyclers Ltd., respectively. (UBC Waste Management)

**Benchmark:** Reduce the amount of waste that travels by composting as much as possible

**Rationale:** 70% of UBC's waste stream is compostable material, including food waste, residual paper products, animal bedding, animal waste, wood, yard waste and sawdust (UBC Waste Management).

If all of the 70% makes its way to a composting container, the amount of trips made to the waste management sites would decrease. Composting reduces the number of trips made out to the Vancouver Transfer Station, Urban Wood Waste and Richmond biorecovery by 54% (UBC Waste Management).

Since the In-Vessel Composting is located at UBC, the distance that the compost 'waste' will travel a very short distance. There is no way of reducing the travel distance between any of the local waste management sites.

#### **ECOLOGICAL-ECONOMIC INDICATORS:**

- **Percent of local food bought by AMSFBD**

**Current Status:** 23% of produce is bought locally (Brown 2001, pages 12 and 13, Summer group 2 2004). AMSFBD purchases 100% of shelled eggs from a BC source, 100% of liquid egg products from a Quebec based company, 100% of poultry products from BC and Canadian sources, 100% local BC bakeries (2005 group 6 scenario 2a).

**Benchmark:** About 80% of all food purchased locally and 20% non-local. Due to seasonal variance, for produce – 43% produce purchased locally (80% of currently available 54% of produce on average available locally per month).

**Rationale:** In one of the Sauder School of Business papers, the students along with Nancy Toogood (2006) believed that purchasing 80% of foods locally and 20% non-locally was a realistic goal. We wanted to keep with what Nancy and the Sauder School of business proposed since Nancy already agrees with the plan the Sauder group came up with. The time line was not clear, but if the AMS moves the way it has moved in the last five years and take small steps, then a 20% increase in local foods bought by the AMSFBD is reasonable. We do not see many canned products changing sources in the next 5 years so most of the increase will come from fruits and vegetable because they have much more flexibility. However,



we did not talk about volume and this may pose a problem since many local producers also sell their produce to other companies and wholesale operations. As a result, some local producers may not be able to give the volume of produce required and that may decrease the amount of available local produce, thereby driving how much the AMSFBD can obtain.

- **Percent of local food sold by AMSFBD**

This indicator is unclear because it was difficult to determine if we are looking at the percent of local foods sold out of all the food at UBC or if its just out of the amount of local foods bought. We took it to mean local foods sold by AMS difference from purchased. As such then we would have look at foods used in recipes and foods sold out of all the local food bought by the AMSFBD. With recipes, it will be difficult to pick through each ingredient, and there are so many prepared foods with varying ingredients. The sheer mass of this task would require an entire group of its own. We think this task would be feasible in coming years if just this one indicator was assigned to a group of about 2 or 3 for the project.

- **Percent of local food bought by UBCFS**

**Current Status:** 45% (Yip, 2006)

**Benchmark:** 50%

**Rationale:** Currently UBCFS purchases local poultry, dairy, eggs and seasonal fresh produce through the following suppliers: J&K Poultry, Saputo, Vandepoule via Neptune Food Services as well as Allied Food Services. It would be feasible to increase the amount of local food purchased by 5% over 5 years. The ability for UBCFS to increase local food purchases will depend on the quantity and quality of food available (Yip, 2006). UBCFS has no control over the food purchases for all of the franchises since they negotiate their own contracts with suppliers.

- **Percent of local food sold by UBCFS**

**Current Status:** Overall the exact percentage is unknown.

**Benchmark:** Each non-franchise outlet should have at least 1 menu item that can be classified and labeled as 'local'.

**Rationale:** Without going through each menu item or recipe offered by UBCFS, it is incredibly difficult to determine the percentage of local food sold by UBCFS. Currently there are no labeling practices in place to decipher which menu items are local and which are not. Given that so many of the menu items are mixed foods that may contain both local and non-local products, there needs to be a framework in place to determine what constitutes a local menu item. For example, if 50% of the ingredients are locally sourced, should this be considered a local food item? This adds another layer of complexity to an already complicated situation. For these reasons, we did not obtain the recipes or menu items from UBCFS outlets.

- **Percent of UBC Farm products that are sold to UBCFS**

**Current Status:** small, approximately \$3500 worth of products

**Benchmark:** \$4000 worth of products

**Rationale:** Currently UBC farm provides various herbs, mixed greens and some root vegetables for the Sage Bistro (Parr, 2006). The primary barrier that prevents UBCFS from purchasing more food produced at the farm is quantity. UBC farm is somewhat limited in its production and it is simply no viable for the farm to produce food in the quantities required by UBCFS. However, a \$500 increase over 5 years is realistic for both UBC farm and UBCFS.

- **Percent of UBC Farm product sold to AMSFBD**

**Current status:** > 1 % from farm (Toogood, 2006).

**Benchmark:** Like to see ~2-3% of produce purchased from the farm

**Rationale:** An increase of about 2% from the farm sounds reasonable. This input would be for special catered events and specific products, such as a “farm pizza” offered by some outlets like Pie R Squared. The Farm cannot sustain a level of production of commodities at a high enough volume to sustain any business in the AMSFBD continually (Toogood, 2006). The AMSFBD makes an effort to buy UBC Farm produce whenever it can but that only accounted for one percent of total food used by the AMSFBD. Due to the continued effort by AMSFBD and the introduction of special products and catered events, an increase in 2-3% in the next five years is a reasonable benchmark.

- **Percent of Food produced at UBC**

Again we were unclear on what this indicator actually means. We came up with several ideas. One idea was, the amount of food, such as sandwiches and soups and cookies, produced at UBC versus the amount of those types of food bought pre-packaged from large-scale food services. It could also mean food that is grown at UBC but this would only count food from the UBC farm but this is covered in another indicator. However, even the food that was produced was made from raw ingredients counted as part local food bought by AMS so we did not think it was necessary to investigate.

### **SOCIAL INDICATORS:**

- **Percent of UBC students who volunteer in activities related to food security and food system sustainability on campus**

**Current Status:** 0.7% of the UBC student population for 2005/2006

**Benchmark:** 350 volunteers for the UBC Farm; <50 volunteers for Agora; 50 volunteers for AMSFBD

**Rationale:** There is a total of 296 volunteers at the UBC Farm, Sprouts, and Agora. The total number of students, including graduate students, for the 2005/2006 year is 43, 540. Since 2001, the number of volunteers on the UBC Farm has gone up from 70 to 170. There are 55 volunteers at Agora and up to 10 volunteers for the Wednesday night dinners. As of 2004, there were 22 individuals volunteering for Sprouts. The AMSFBD currently has no volunteers. The UBC Farm would like to see an increase between 10-25% per year for the next 5 years. At a rate of a 15% increase on the UBC Farm, Mark Bomford would like to see approximately 350 individuals volunteering at the UBC Farm. Gavin Wright, the UBC Farm volunteer co-coordinator, expressed the importance about a solid volunteer program, where volunteers are recognized with accreditation programs and potential for paid employment.

Ashley Wan, the manager of Agora, would like to decrease the numbers of volunteers while increasing the number of hours for each individual. Decreasing the number of volunteers would ensure effective communication between the employees.

We believe that with this many students it would not be unreasonable to set a benchmark of getting 50 students for AMSFBD. The composting program is quite significant on campus so we would like to focus on getting more volunteers here.

Awareness could be increased by putting up flyers around campus (bus stops, bathrooms, bulletin boards etc.), sending out a mass e-mail to every single student, having volunteers go to large classes to verbally promote awareness, informing students they can really make a difference by helping out and by reminding students that it always looks good on resumes to have volunteer experience.

- **Percent of fresh foods available on campus**

**Current Status:** 4%

**Benchmark:** 21%

**Rationale:** The current status of this indicator was determined by going to the 7 major AMSFBD outlets, counting the number of menu items, and then counting how many fresh options there were (please refer to Table 1.2 for the breakdown). By fresh we mean fresh produce (both fruits and vegetables) that is available and sold alone. Please note that only permanent menu items were counted, not daily features or specials. There is an unequal distribution of fresh items among the various outlets. For example, the Pendulum offers three fresh choice items while the Honour Roll, Moon, and Pie R Squared offer none.

As our proposed benchmark, we would like to see the availability of fresh items increase from 4% to 21% and we would like to see a more even distribution among the outlets. Creating a benchmark of 21% would only require that each of these major outlets carry three fresh produce items. The types of produce we feel would do well include ready-made fruit salads and regular salads, as well as single whole pieces of fruit.

- **Percent of vegetarian and/or vegan options at campus food outlets**

**Current Status:** Vegetarian 44%, Vegan 13%

**Benchmarks:** Vegetarian 55%, Vegan 15%

**Rationale:** The current status of this indicator was determined the same way the % fresh food available were (please refer to Table 1.2 for the breakdown). Currently about 44% of the items sold through the seven major outlets are vegetarian and 13% are vegan. This number is skewed due to an uneven distribution of the number of vegetarian and vegan options available at different locations. For example, Blue Chip Cookies, which sells mostly baked goods and coffee, does not carry any non-vegetarian products. Outlets which carry a smaller number of vegan/vegetarian options relative to their overall menu size include the Honour Roll and the Pendulum. All other outlets aside from these two have menus comprised of at least 33% vegetarian options.

The proposed benchmark for this indicator would be to have vegetarian options make up 55% of the menu items. This would require asking each outlet that is not already doing so, to have 40% of their menu comprised of vegetarian options. This would simply require an extra 6 veggie options at the Honour Roll and 10 more veggie options at the Pendulum (The Pendulum currently only offers 5/37 vegetarian options). We would like to benchmark the vegan component at 15%. This would only require that outlets who only carry one vegan option to increase it to two.

**Table 1.2: Breakdown of Veggie/Vegan/Fresh Offerings at AMSFBD Outlets**

AMS Outlet	# Menu Items	# Veggie	# Vegan	# Fresh
Bernoulli's Bagel's	28	12	1 (2)	1 (3)
Blue Chip Cookies	28	28	1 (2)	1 (3)
The Honour Roll	39	10 (16)	9	0 (3)
The Moon	8	4	2	0 (3)
The Pendulum	37	5 (15)	2	3
Pie R Squared	3	2	1 (2)	0 (3)
Snack Attack	17	10	6	1 (3)
Total # Menu Items	160	74	22	6
Current %		44%	13%	4%
Benchmark %		55%	15%	21%

(Brackets) indicate number of items needed to reach benchmark

**SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL INDICATORS:**

- **Percent of UBC Courses offered about food security and food system sustainability (a)**

**Current Status:** Courses with sustainability component 24%

**Benchmark:** More descriptive course outlines,

We think it would be important to have more specific course outlines/objectives to make it clear what the course is offering with respect to the food system and sustainability. We feel that the quantity of course offerings is not as important as the quality of the course.

**Rationale:** The current status of this indicator was determined by going through the descriptions of all the 2 719 courses offered at UBC and finding those that have sustainability components (PIR and SENSE). It was discovered that about 653 courses, 24%, have a sustainability component. However, not all the courses are about specifically about the food system and sustainability alone.

- **Percent of UBC courses offered about food security and food system sustainability (b)**

**Current Status:** 24%

**Benchmark:** To have 10% of UBC students take part in Community Service-Learning (CSL). To have 45 courses offered involving the UBC Farm.

**Rationale:** This percentage is given by the sustainability office and it represents UBC courses that touch on the topic of sustainability. There is no indication of whether these courses cover food security and food system sustainability.

Since 2001, the courses on the UBC Farm increased from 4 courses to 37 courses. The UBC Learning exchange offers courses involving Community Service-Learning (CSL), often involving food security and food system sustainability. Courses that are included in this indicator are ones that that define food security and food system sustainability. These courses require students to use these concepts in assignments or for exams and involve practical applications of these concepts such as PBL. All Land and Food Systems course are relevant to this indicator. The underlying issue with this indicator is that the only way to find the exact number of courses is to look up every course offered at UBC, contact coordinators and interview them on whether they offer material on food sustainability. Another problem with this is that we cannot judge the degree of involvement on these two issues.

The Trek 2010 strategic plan is to engage 10% of UBC students in CSL. The UBC Farm looks toward to increasing the number of courses involving the UBC Farm by 10-25% over the next five years.

**Materials / Activities for next year:**

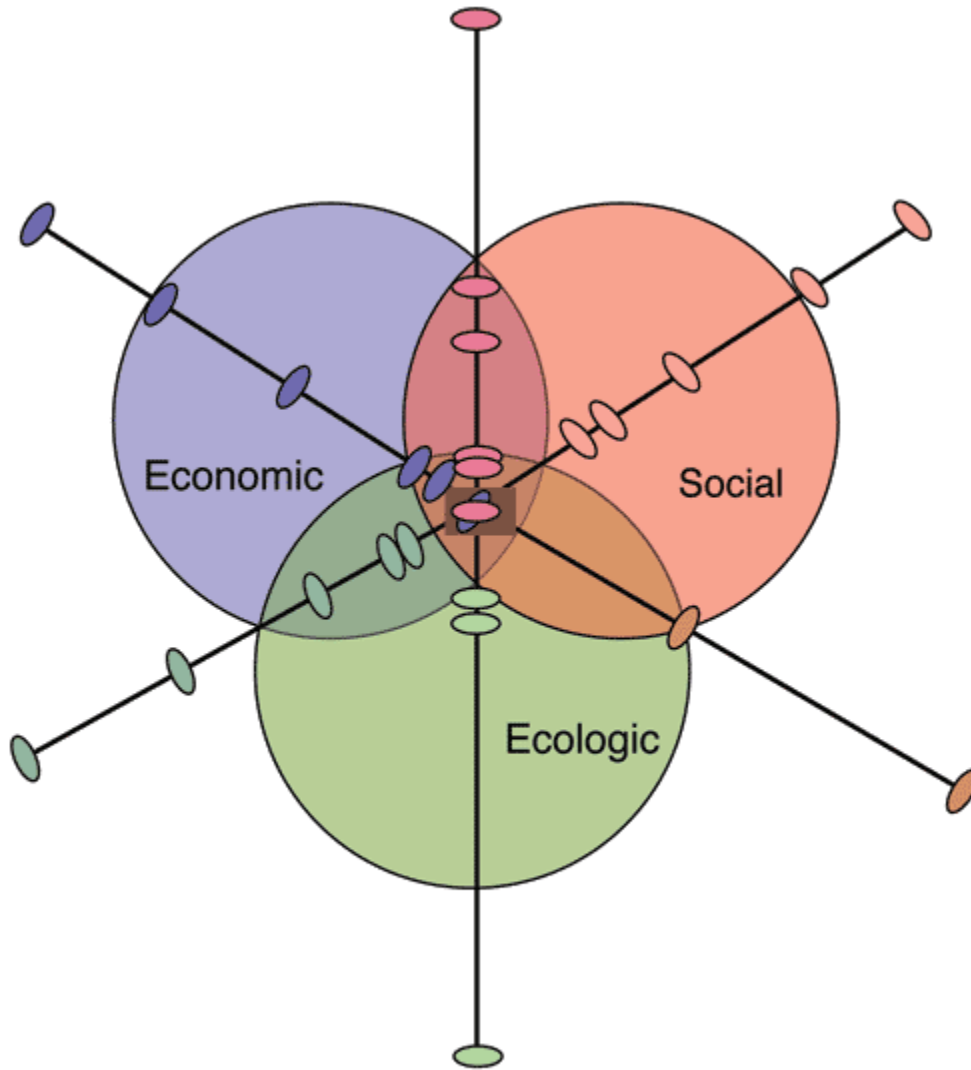
Establishing a consistent methodology for receiving the data and manipulating it into a readable and visually pleasing model is essential if the benchmarking is to be relevant to anyone but the most ardent economist. The model we have developed is a step in this direction. Taking up just a single webpage, the model takes the "stool" model and adds interactive functionality, providing a visual "stub" for each indicator, which pops up detailed information in the right-hand frame. The limitation of this method is that it requires excessive work to modify the original diagram. A more sophisticated approach would be a relational database to which indicators, benchmarks and progress reports could be added through a user-friendly web interface, which could then dynamically produce an interactive model that would display a system wide visual of how sustainability is being implemented into the system. Part of this would be deciding on a set of benchmarks that the partners commit to reporting on over the next five years and beyond. Then, they would have a simple system by which to enter the data, such as a web interface, in order to maintain the model. Refer to page 24 for the revised UBCFSP Benchmarking to 2010 Model.

**Conclusion:**

Although the UBCFS is a microcosm of the greater global food system, the efforts taken to involve students and partners in evolving a more sustainable holistic vision for this system are rare. On the face of it, the UBCFS seems much like any other food system, incorporating franchises, cafeterias and unique providers. Under the skin, the differences show in the higher wages, efforts to compost and recycle, and dedication to "non-profit" agendas that further sustainability. It is essential to bring the reality of the efforts being made to the University administration and public, in order to encourage support and acknowledgment for the program - both moral and financial. Benchmarking is the key to this. It provides interested parties with a concise view of the efforts and goals of the UBCFS to date. The model is key. A more user-friendly version will encourage more interest, which will help sustain the momentum of the program. It is important to maintain the user-friendly aspect of the model, as it has the potential to be a deterrent to interest in the

program rather attracting it. The nature and quantity of the information does not lend itself well to the attention span of the casual observer, or even a dedicated participant.





**University of British Columbia Food System Project  
Benchmarking to 2010**

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The full interactive version of this model can be found online at [www.spokeshave.ca/UBCmodel](http://www.spokeshave.ca/UBCmodel)

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