

## Lancaster University

### Food and Drink

#### Grow it, eat it, live it!

Health, sustainability and culture of food at Lancaster University

#### About the project

##### Summary

Lancaster University leads the HE sector in respect of its integrated, cutting edge sustainable food projects such as 'Edible Campus'. Together, Lancaster University and Lancaster University Students Union (LUSU) have developed and implemented a range of complementary sustainable food projects and strategies designed to encourage healthy eating, facilitate and teach growing and cooking skills, encourage student and staff participation and learning.

##### Project partners

The projects comprising Grow it, eat it, live it! were delivered jointly by Lancaster University Facilities Dept and Lancaster University Students Union. Within Facilities Division the Environmental management, Catering and Landscape and Grounds worked together. External partners included the NUS who funded the Edible Campus element of the project and the Soil Association Food who instigated and jointly managed the Food for life Partnership project.

#### The results

##### The problem

Historically Lancaster University Catering had a very different approach (cheap price, adequate quality). Departments requiring higher quality would outsource catering. In addition students were not engaged at any level in relation to sustainability, food and growing and there were no linkages with researchers, or the landscape and Grounds team.

##### The approach

Lancaster University and LUSU have developed an extensive and diverse range of complimentary and integrated projects, activities and operations designed to encourage and facilitate consumption and enjoyment of sustainable and healthy food on campus and enable and inspire food related activities. 'Grow it, eat it, live it!' captures the essence of the project, linking food production, preparation and consumption with the student experience and life on campus.

##### Our goals

- To encourage healthy and sustainable eating
- Facilitate and teach growing and cooking skills
- Encourage staff and student participation and learning



##### Profile

- HEI
- 12,500 FTE students
- 2,250 staff
- Urban edge campus University

Category supported by



## Obstacles and solutions

• Funding	• £140k grant from NUS for Edible Campus/Ecohub Project. Partial funding from Lancaster University Facilities Division.
• Growing Locations	• Close working with LU Facilities operations and Landscape teams to identify and agree suitable sites that would be able to be utilized in the long term.
• Catering Dept interest	• Facilities Catering were transformed by new management into putting quality, sustainability and local sourcing as priorities and were keen to get involved the Edible Campus and other sustainable food projects

## Performance and results

- An integrated attitude to sustainable food has been established with a 'whole campus approach'.
- Lancaster University has been used by the Soil Association to develop a 'framework' for sustainable food for the HE/FE sector.
- 22 growing sites have been established on campus including an orchard and the 1,500M2 Ecohub.
- Over 3,000 staff and students have been engaged in this integrated suite of projects.
- Catering awarded 7 Food for Life Catering Marks for campus outlets (2 gold, 2 silver, 3 bronze).
- Teaching and research have become integrated with aspects of sustainability practice on site.

## The future

### Lessons learned

- Consider what is possible – this project has many elements and is supremely scalable.
- Think about the legacy – how can you build a project to last in the longer term, when resources change?
- Food is great for drawing in students – This is a fantastic project for attracting student interest and encouraging involvement, limited practical/language skills are required and you can meet other students.

### Sharing your project

This has included hosting the 2015 NUS Student Eats Conference, which was able to showcase the facilities and sites, as well as enabling papers to be given on implementation of the project and the lessons learnt to a broad sector audience. The project is also being disseminated by the Soil Association, who are using the site as an example of how it is possible to apply the Food for Life partnership Framework to an HE site. Regular site tours and presentations are organized for a wide range of audiences ranging from HEFCE senior management, specialist staff from other HE/FE institutions to school visits hosted by Edible Campus staff, Landscape & Grounds manager and Executive Chef (depending on area of interest).

### What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

Lancaster University is delighted to be a Green Gown 2015 Finalist. This recognizes the high quality integrated sustainable food projects we have undertaken and the exceptional work put in by a wide range of staff at Lancaster University.

### Further information

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