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Inspiration and insight to change
minds and policy

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June 2019

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'Ruminating on Ruminants'

The Cambridge Sustainable Food Policy

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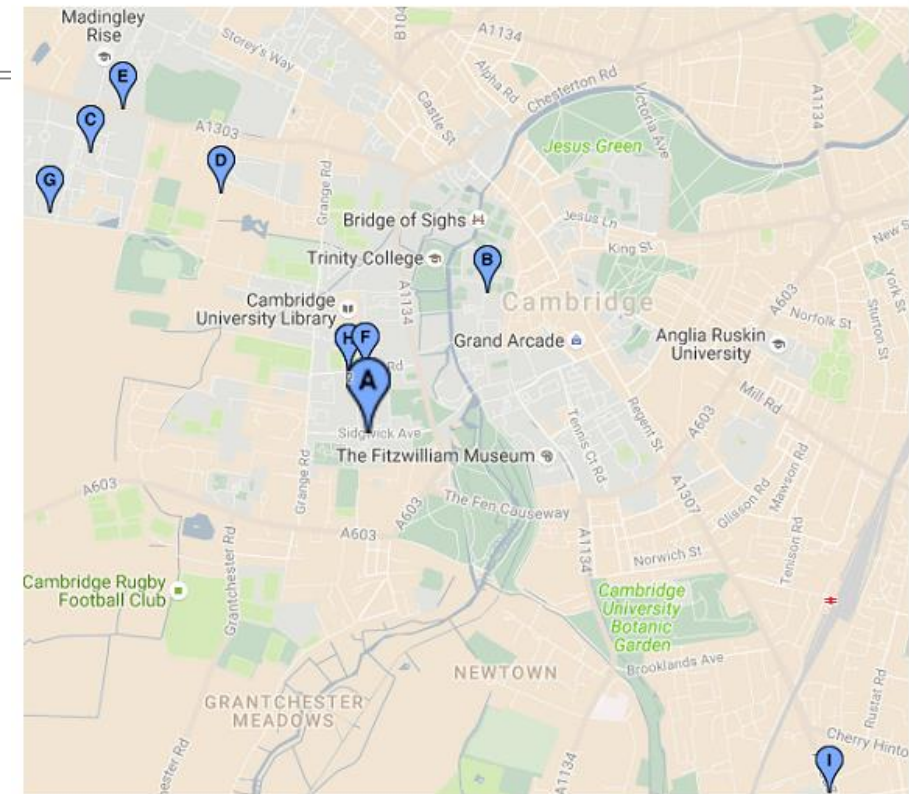
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Cambridge Context

- University Catering Service – part of Estates Management
- *10 Cafes, mostly embedded in University departments*
- *+ University Centre (café, dining hall, Riverside Restaurant)*
- *No halls – Colleges separate*

University Cafes



A The Buttery

B Combination Room

C Computer Laboratory Café

D Mathematical Sciences Café

E Greenwich House Café

F University Library Tea Room

G West Café

H Arc Café

I Faculty of Education Café

J Faculty of Law Café

Where the policy came from

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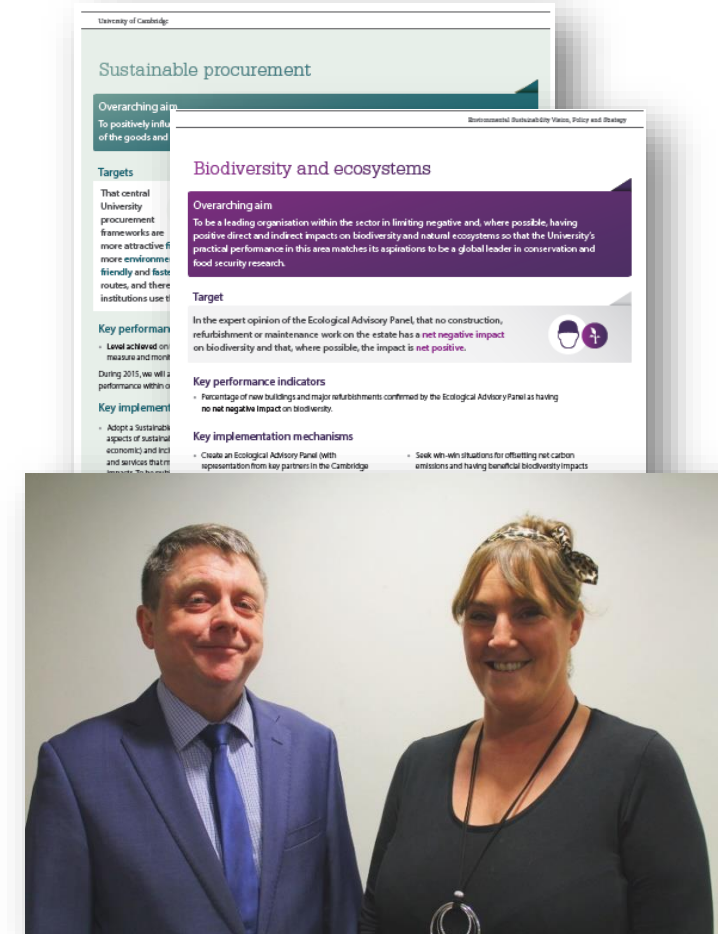
Several relevant policy aims:

*“Positively influence **sustainability performance of suppliers, and sustainability credentials of goods & services we purchase**”*

*“Match our aspirations to be a global leader in conservation and food security research, with **sector leading practical performance**”*

Nick and Paula White: (Head of Catering & Catering Manager)

*“It’s the **right thing to do!**”*

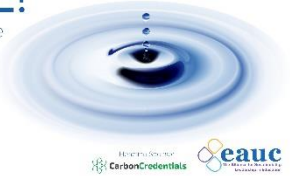


“Sustainable” Food?

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Developing the Policy

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Engaged with academics from **Zoology** and **Geography** and the **Behaviour and Health Research Unit** leading to a focus on 4 key areas:

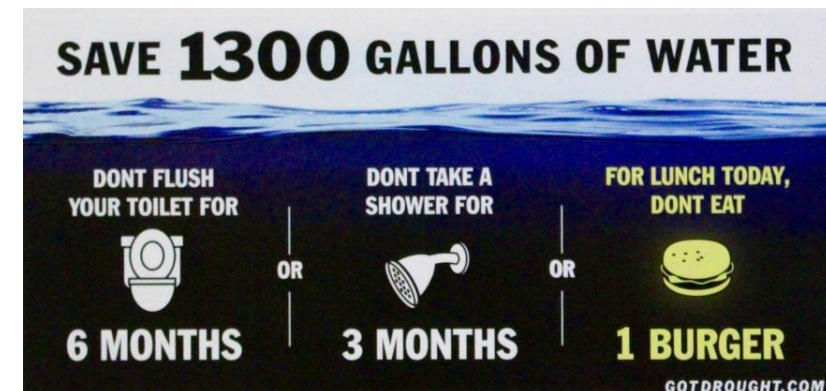
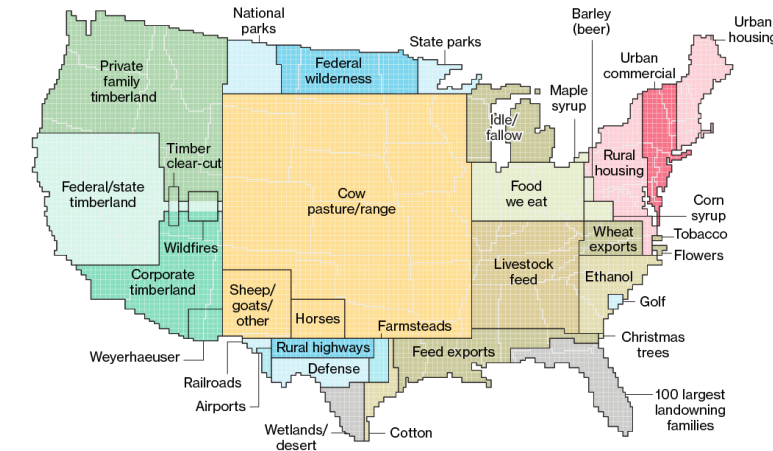
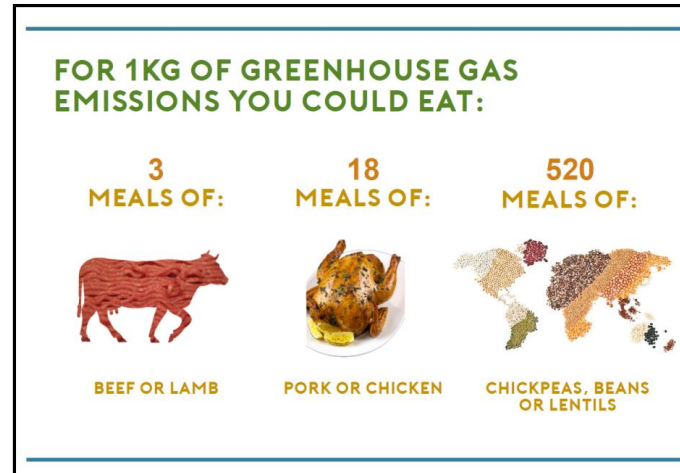
1. Improve vegetarian/vegan choices and actively promote
2. Reduce ruminant meat
3. Increase sustainably sourced fish
4. Cut food waste



1. Reducing ruminant meat

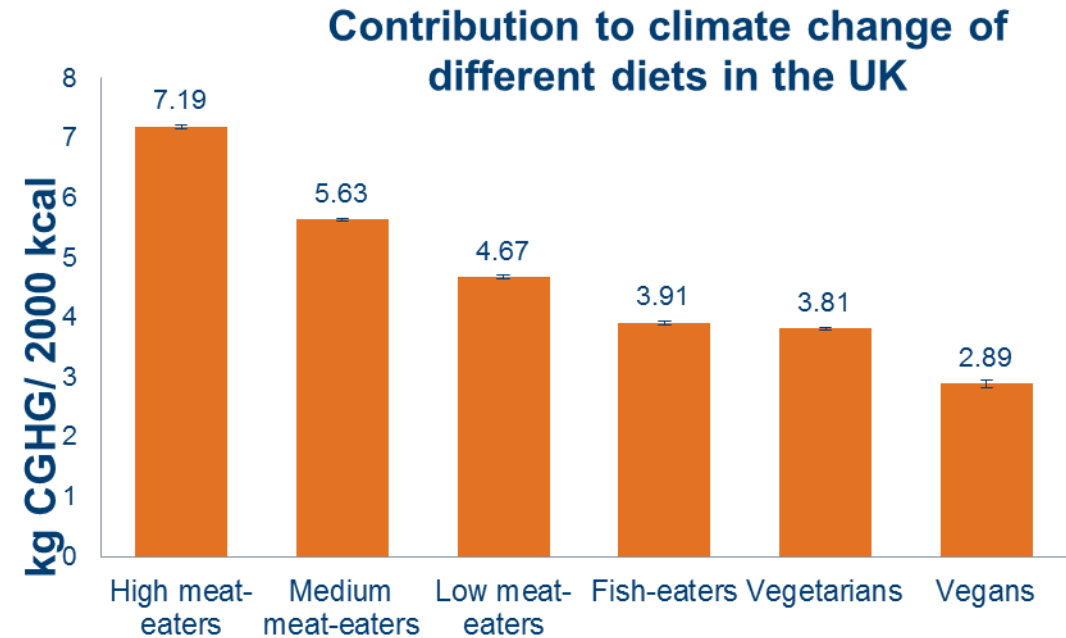
- The livestock sector accounts for 14% of global GHG emissions – more even than transport!
- 39% of this is from beef and lamb.
- “Shifting less than one day per week’s calories from red meat and dairy products to chicken, fish, eggs, or vegetables achieves GHG reduction greater than buying all locally sourced food.” Weber and Matthews (2008)

Environmental Science and Technology



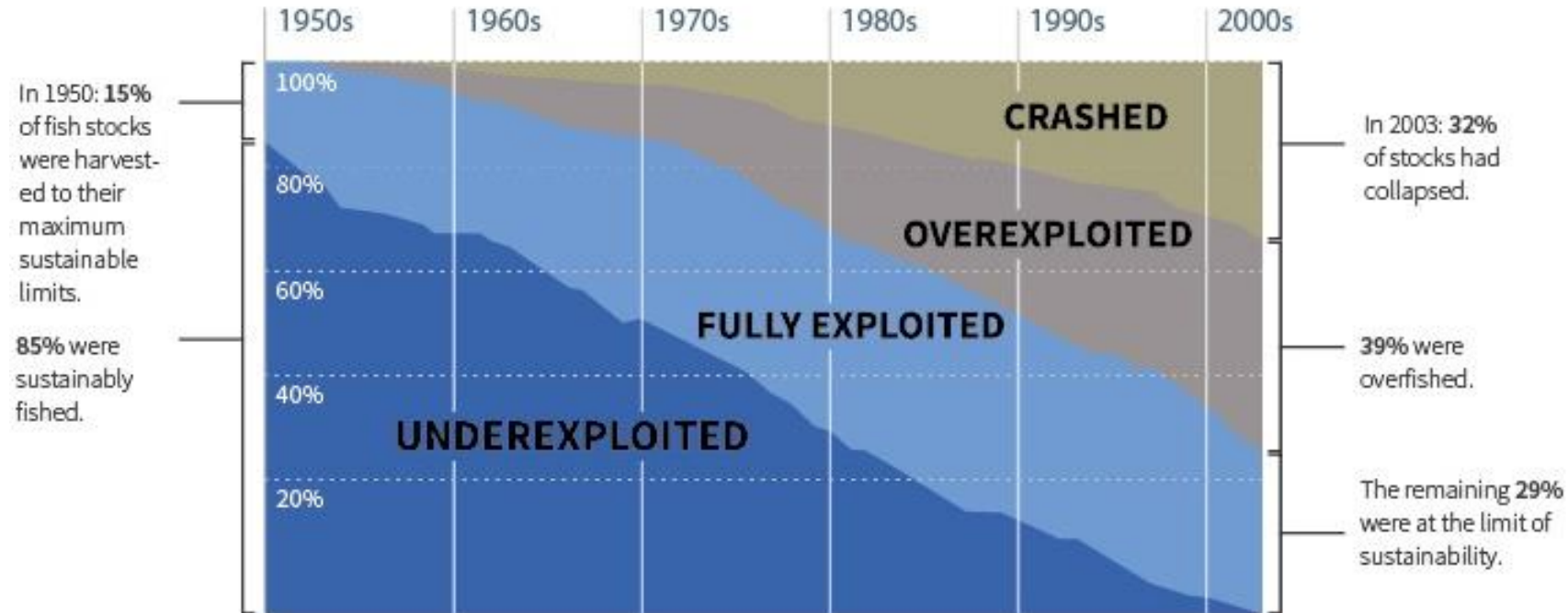
2. Promoting plant-based options

- What you eat more important than where it comes from! “Food miles” only 11% of total GHG emissions from food production.
- Switching from high meat eater to vegan reduces diet’s GHG footprint by 60%
- High meat eater to low meat eater, still reduces it by 35%
- Processed and red meat also have links with bowel cancer and heart disease.



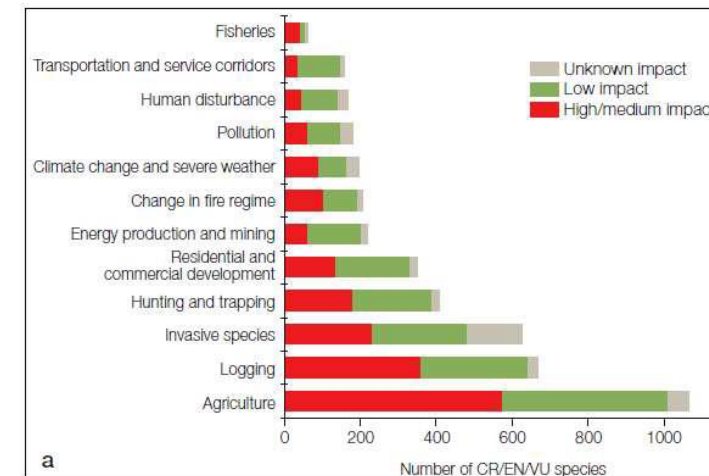
3. Only sustainable fish

- UN FAO estimates that 81% of monitored fish stocks are over-exploited or fully exploited



4. Cutting food waste

- One third of food produced globally is wasted
- In developed countries this amounts to 95 to 115 kg per person per year
- Agriculture already occupies 38% of Earth's ice free land, and is **the** leading threat to endangered species.



Trialling the Policy and building an evidence base (2015/16) – Ruminant Meat Reductions

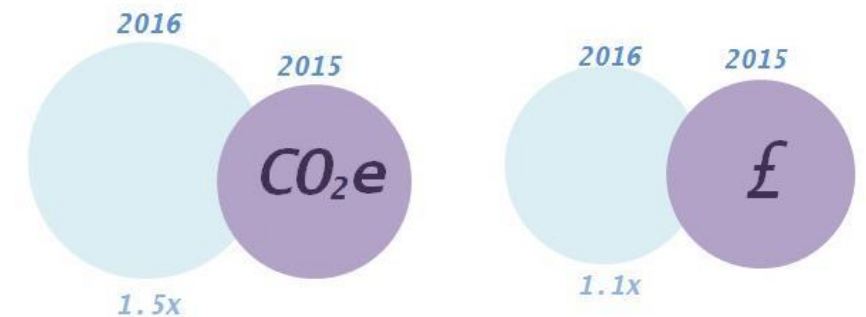
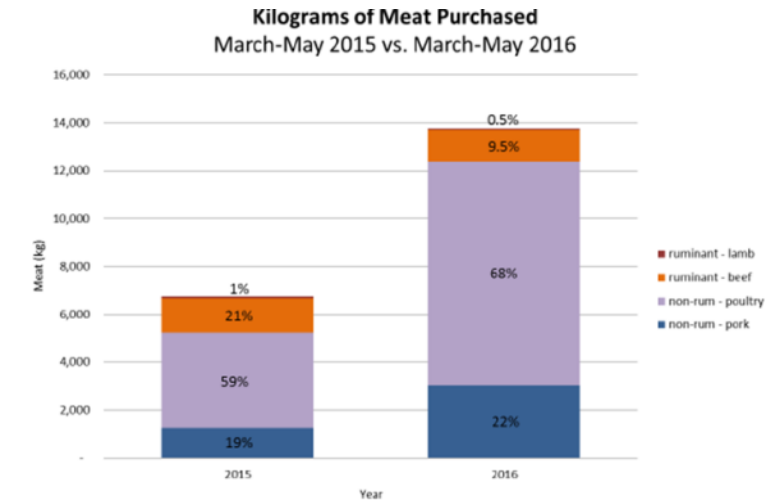
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- More vegetarian/vegan food, better promotion of choices, move from ruminant to non-ruminant meat (cut from all menus except restaurant)
- From 2015 – 2016:
 - ✓ Ruminant meat purchases decreased by 54%
 - ✓ 28% reduction in CO2 emissions from meat
 - ✓ 16% reduction in cost from meat
- Engaged with our customers via a survey:
 1. 68% UCS customers actively seek sustainable options
 2. 64% are open to reducing their meat consumption



Influencing staff

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- Presentations, meetings and inductions for staff to explain policy and empower them to speak to customers
- Café managers – green events
- Vegan cookery classes
- Trips to Borough Market

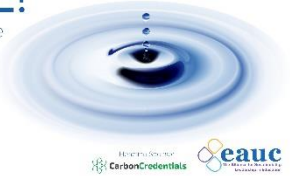


Influencing customers – the high-profile...

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- Posters & table talkers in cafes
- Green days & events
- Vegan food pop ups
- Recipe competition
- 'Spotlight on Sustainable Food Month' in February – range of events including insect tasting, panel discussions, film screenings
- Recipe competition – winner's recipe was cooked and served in University Centre
- Taking it on the road – 'Earth Optimism' event
- Vegan Pop up events



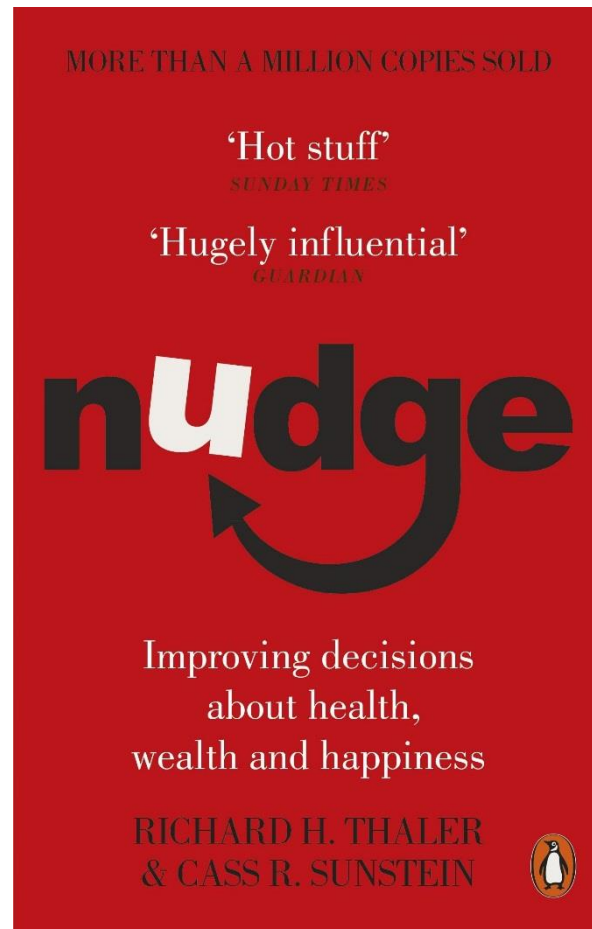
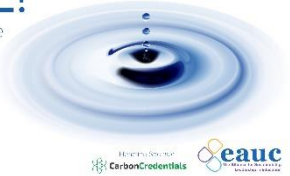
And the low-profile: "Choice architecture"...

Choice architecture: Nudge theory

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Choice architecture: Nudge theory

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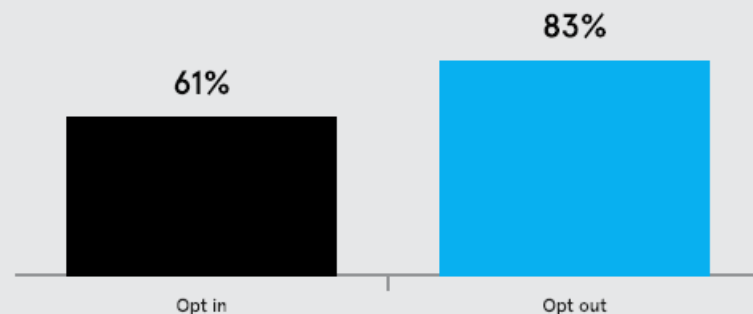


- How can you make environmental or healthy choices easy without restricting choice?

Box 1.1: Pension defaults

Studies in the US, Chile, Mexico, Denmark, and Sweden show that automatically enrolling individuals onto retirement plans and allowing them to opt out (rather than expecting them to opt in to existing systems) is a highly effective way of increasing pension savings – as well as being popular amongst employees.⁴

In October 2012 UK employers started automatically enrolling their workers into a pension. The scheme started with the largest UK employers (250 or more workers) and by 2018 will cover all employers. Initial results show that the overall participation rate rose from 61% to 83% and 400,000 more people now have a pension.⁵



Choice Architecture: Exercise 1

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- What ways could you influence customer choices in cafés?

Choice Architecture: Exercise 2

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- Order
 - Availability
 - Distance
-
- Which do you think has the most impact? Rank from first to last

Choice Architecture: Availability

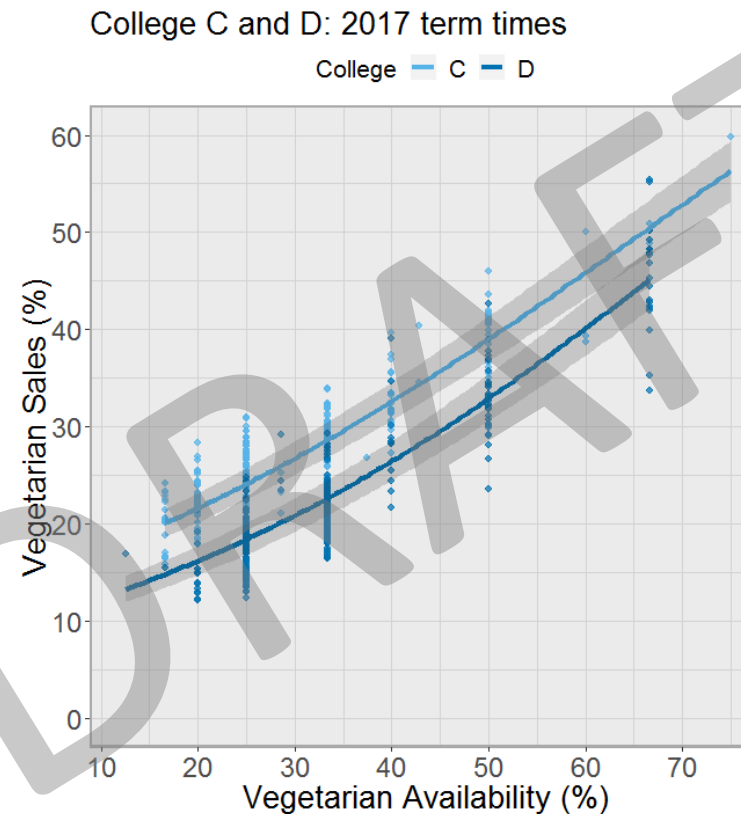
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- Increasing vegetarian availability significantly increases vegetarian sales
 - ($p < 0.001$, pseudo- $R^2 = 0.31$)
- Doubling vegetarian availability:
 - From 25% to 50% vegetarian availability: **~15.0 percentage point** increase in vegetarian sales
 - From 33% to 67% availability: **~22.5 percentage point** increase

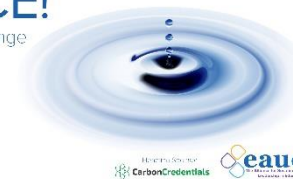


Choice Architecture: Order

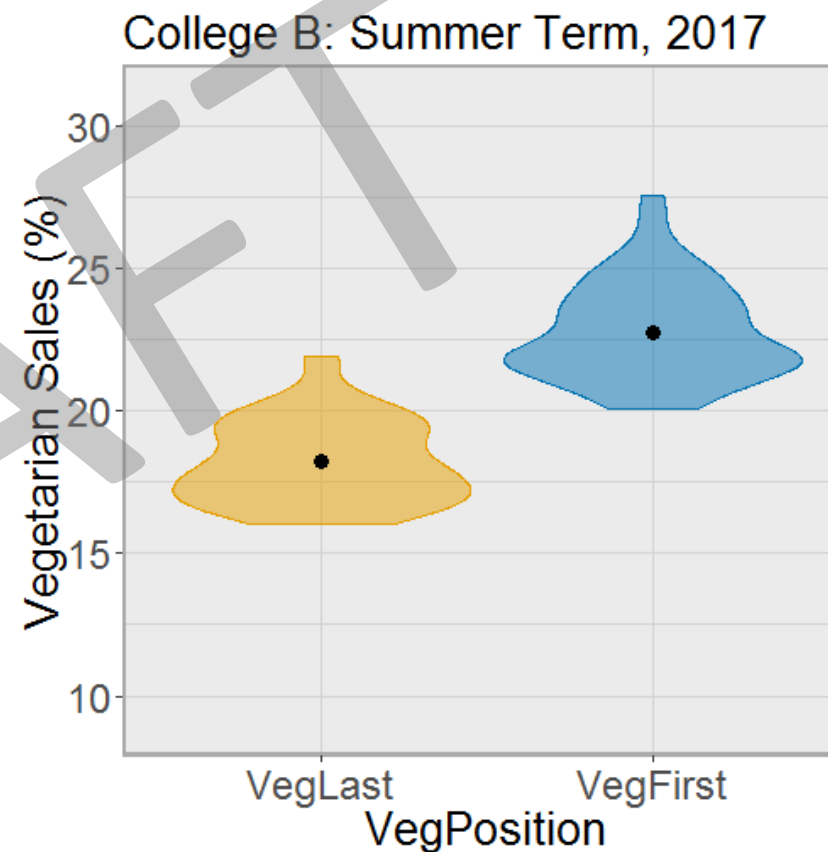
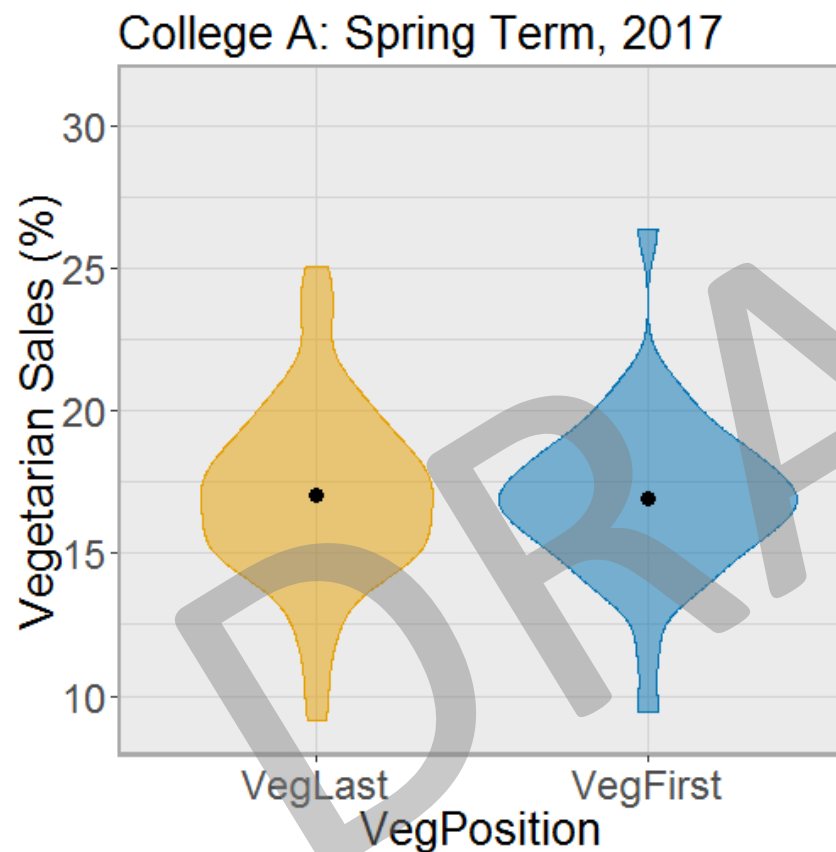
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VegLast: 17.0%
VegFirst: 16.9%
**No significant
difference**

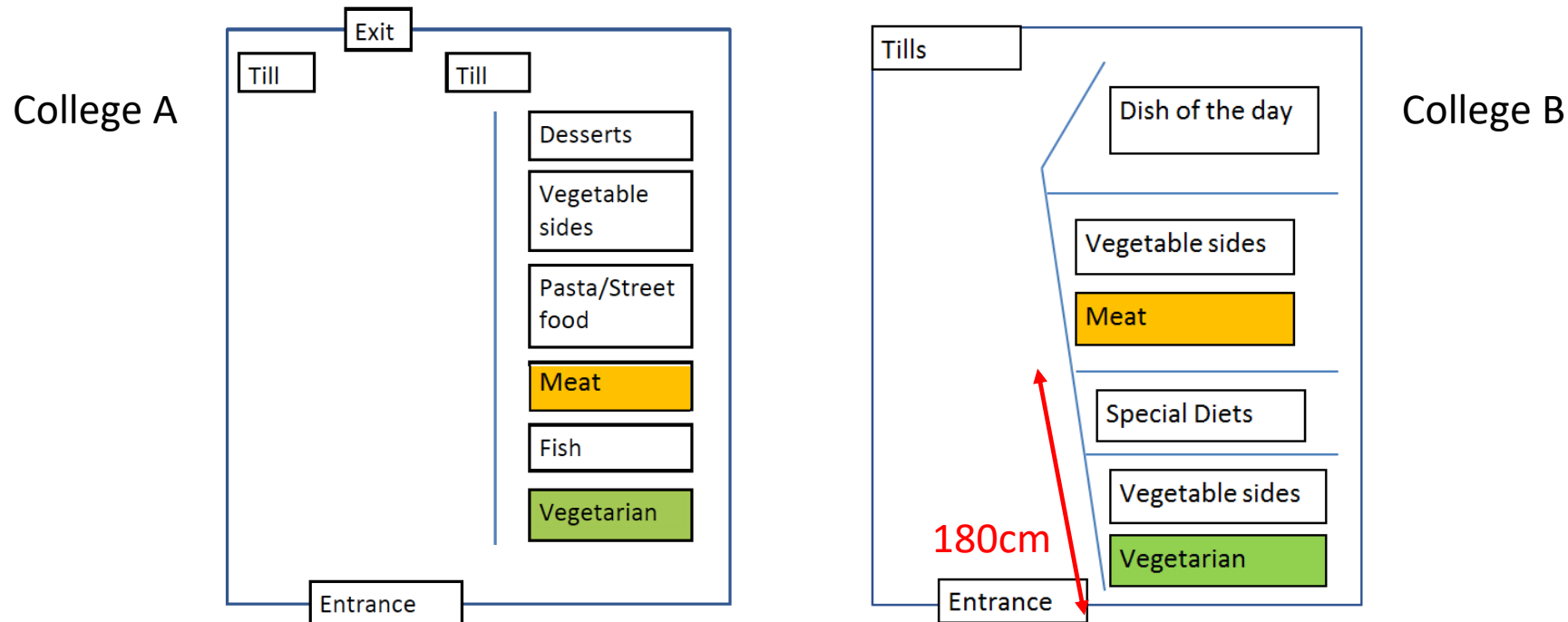


VegLast:
18.2%
VegFirst:
22.8%
**Significant
difference
 $p < 0.001$
4.6
percentage
point
difference**



Choice Architecture: Order

- Hypothesis: different distances
 - College A: **shorter** distance of 80-90cm. **No effect**
 - College B: **longer** distance of 180cm. **Effect**



Choice Architecture: Distance

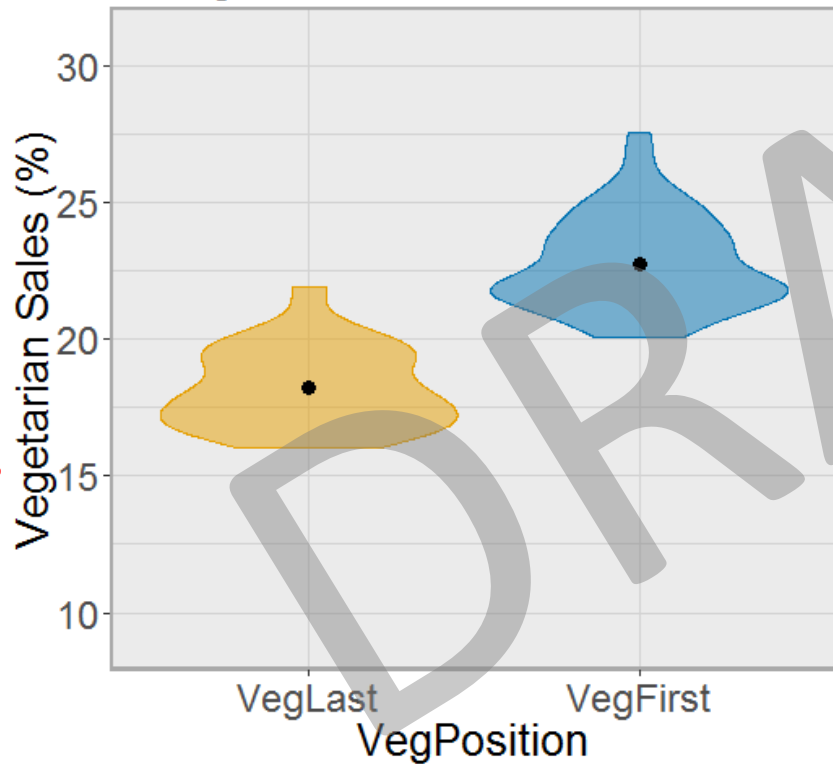
**Long distance,
181cm**

VegLast: 18.2%

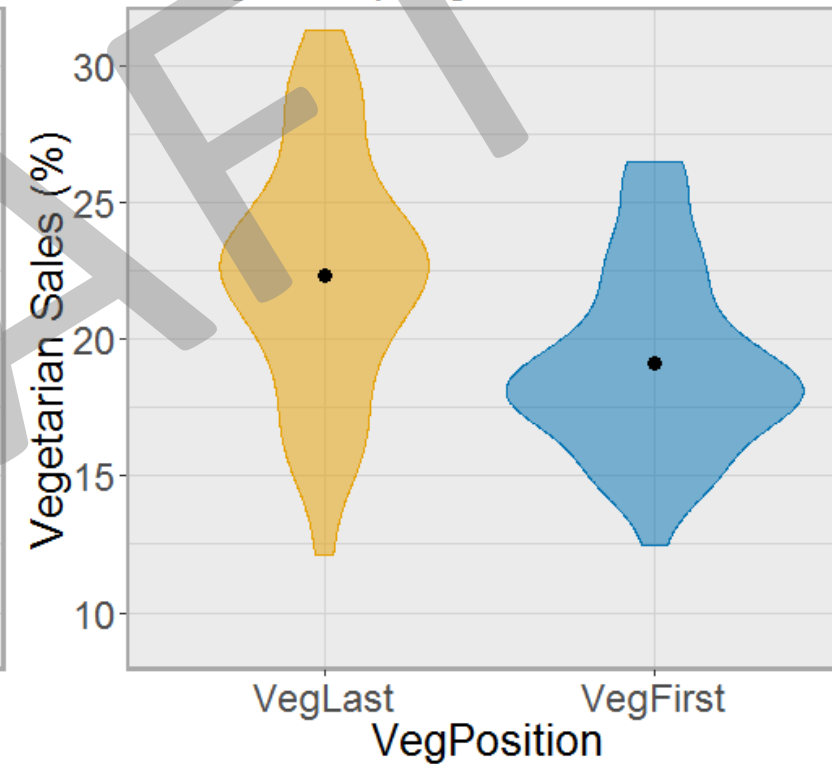
VegFirst: 22.8%

**Significant
difference
 $p < 0.001$, 4.6
percentage points**

College B: Summer Term, 2017



College B: Spring Term, 2018



**Short Distance,
67cm**

**Complicated
results**

**Under a short
distance,
VegFirst does
not increase
sales**



Influencing suppliers

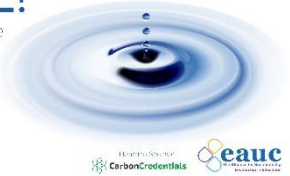
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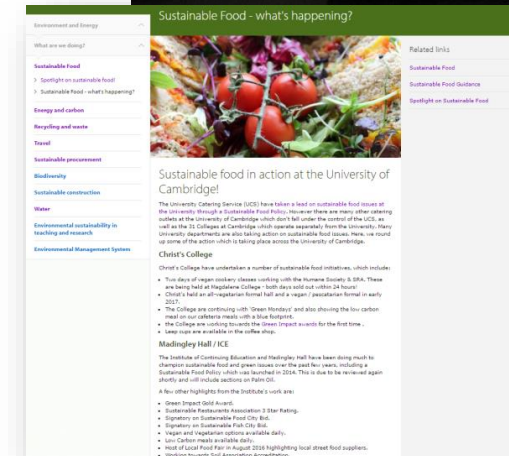


- **Tenders** - UCS worked with the University's central procurement office to ensure that tenders for 'approved catering suppliers' incorporate a requirement to adhere to the principles of the policy.
- **Informal discussions** (e.g. food park)
- **Sustainable supplier event**
- **Active engagement to ask suppliers for more sustainable options**
- **Communicating the policy to staff (who make catering orders)**
- **Data requests**



Influencing partners

- Policy 'launch event' with key stakeholders invited
- Catering Managers Committee has a 'Sustainable Sub-Group'
- Website of 'who's doing what' (league table?)
- Presentations to events & venue managers
- Collaboration with #NoBeef on guide for caterers

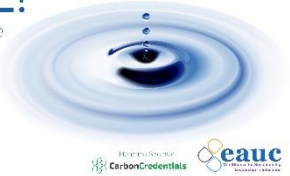


Measuring and monitoring impact

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- We took on two recent grads with experience of analysing LCA data for food.
- We compared a baseline period (Mar-May 2015) with a comparable period (Mar-May 2018). We collected all procurement data, a combination of Epsis, contacting suppliers and old invoices.
- We used an LCA approach, based on Joseph Poore's work, to calculate carbon emissions and land use for both periods.
- anya@foodsteps.org.uk

Success!

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	Overall Carbon Footprint of Food (tonnes)	Overall Land Use of food (metres square year)	Kg CO ₂ per kg food purchased	Land Use per kg food purchased	Total food purchased (kgs)
March-May 2015	287.6 tonnes	434,103m ²	4.8	7.2	60107.5kg
March-May 2018	257.4 Tonnes	414,108m ²	3.2	5.2	79862.7kg
% Reduction	11%	5%	33%	28%	



Putting the results in context

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500 tonnes of carbon...

- 1.2million miles in average car, or round the earth 94 times
- 0.8% of the University's emissions from energy use
- £11.5m on invest-to-save projects saved 4,438tCO₂e, so equivalent to £1.3m of energy saving projects?
- 2.4 million bananas!

Other results

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- No complaints!
- Higher profit
- Has become a 'USP' for the catering service
- Opportunity to demonstrate support for the 'student experience' (key priority for the University)
- Health benefits
- Links made with other local groups

What next?

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- Recommendations made on governance structure around catering at the University Catering Service
- ‘Sustainable Food Journey’ document (and launch event) being produced, to share with customers and wider sector
- Engagement with College Fellows

Our top tips

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- 'Just do it' (but quietly and slowly at first!)
- Gain academic input / seek academics as champions
- Focus on most impactful actions
- Secure buy-in/endorsement from committees
- Monitoring & reporting – demonstrate impact
- Ride the wave of 'hot topics' (cup waste, plastics)
- Enter awards!

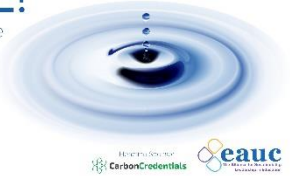


Useful resources

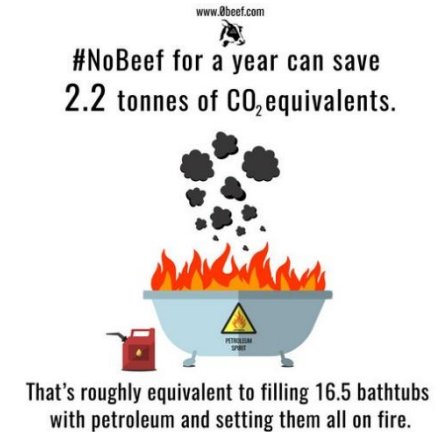
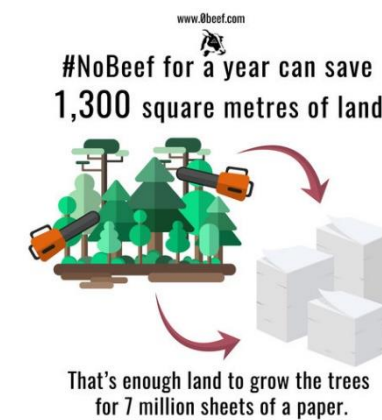
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- www.Obef.com/campaign-material
- www.tuco.ac.uk/ghgcalculator/
- www.mcsuk.org/goodfishguide/search
- www.wri.org/publication/shifting-diets
- www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/sustainable-food



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Questions?

The SDG Accord

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