

UMFSP Vision 2017

Campus as a Living Learning Laboratory

Take a few moments and come along for a ride. Imagine a future that interweaves currently independent visions of students, faculty, staff, and the University. There are opportunities to take the best goals, research and educational outcomes, sustainable practices in operations, brand and image impacts and form something that is greater than the sum of its individual components. There are possibilities that are greater than any one voice can achieve on its own. The power of UMSFP has been to collaborate across traditional lines and to collectively pull a larger lever for greater impact, one that we can only begin to articulate as individuals but that we can realize as a collective. As the University enters its third century, it would be ripe to imagine, without constraint and bias, what education can look, taste and feel like at The University Michigan.

Imagine

- It's fall 2018, and students are just beginning classes. The crisp air is inhaled by a student as they step off the bus at the Campus Farm. A fellow student took the bike path from campus, past the Radrick Challenge Program. They have enrolled to learn about the food system of the University of Michigan from the student-managed Campus Farm to their dinner plates, to compost and back again, to feed the plants of the following season. The course spends the first six weeks at Matthaei Botanical Gardens learning about small scale food production at the Campus Farm from the staff and student farm leaders. This portion of the course is equal parts production knowledge and difficulties facing the sustainability of American agriculture. Next, the course spends time visiting aggregators and distributors that supply Michigan Dining, including Prairie Farms milk processing facility near Battle Creek, LaGrasso Bros. Produce Distributor warehouse in Detroit, or Espresso Royale's coffee roastery in Ann Arbor. The scale of food at this level of production is rarely viewed in person. The remainder of the semester is spent exploring food preparation in dining halls on campus. With 'behind the scene tours' and culinary demos, students learn the basics of nutrition, culinary skills and institutional change. They are able to see compost and zero waste efforts, understand how to choose healthy food, and learn how the University feeds thousands of students

every day. Guest speakers include student groups Food Recovery Network and Maize and Blue Cupboard, thus shaping a narrative around food access and equity. This course, “Food at the U”, acts as a gateway to the Food Systems and the Environment minor and helps all students attending build a base understanding of the complexities that are embedded in ‘food systems’. They are able to see, simultaneously, the challenges, opportunities and impact of our food system on a wide range of sustainability topics from soil quality to human health and the economy.

- A School of Public Health student just finished leading a workshop at the Farm at St. Joe’s Hospital. They are finishing a 6-month internship under the guidance of professionals at a hospital run greenhouse and farm. The student is helping the hospital perform its community benefits obligation, while simultaneously learning about the interconnectedness of fresh food and health. In the food systems internship cohort, another student has been placed at Growing Hope in Ypsilanti. They are learning about community development and organizing through a series of workshops on leading community gardens. Yet another student is placed as a coordinator for Maize and Blue cupboard, a student group that offers a monthly food distribution for in-need students and staff. The student has helped Maize and Blue Cupboard secure multi-year funding to address the growing food insecurity of college students, partnering with the Poverty Innovation Center. Lastly, the internship at the Campus Farm is finishing. The student was able to help negotiate a joint venture between MDining, the Campus Farm, and McClure Pickles in Detroit. A select pickle recipe developed by MDining for use in the dining halls will have a limited run by McClure Pickles at area grocery stores. The M-branded pickles raise awareness of the Campus Farm and proceeds benefit a scholarship fund for students in food systems studies. The comprehensive cohort-style internship with local, external and internal partners furthers the University’s mission to serve the public good and provide practical experiential learning opportunities for students.
- A student walks out of a building on or near central campus on their way home for the evening with a bag of fresh produce from the Campus Farm and neighboring farmers. In that same building they have had their Foundations of Sustainable Food Systems Course taught by SFSI faculty as part of the minor in Food and the Environment. Later that evening, a community reskilling workshop is taught by UMSFP and community members to an integrated and diverse learning community of university students and community members. Later in the week, Maize and Blue cupboard holds their food distribution while members of Student Advocates for Nutrition hold their weekly organizational meeting and access shared resources and space. Students, faculty and

community members interact in this space through class, research and shared action building a stronger more sustainable food system and food system leaders as part of their time here at UofM.

These are all examples of collaborative and innovative projects and exciting and impactful outcomes. However, what is most important is the underlying structure and scaffolding that allows for projects like these to take shape and form.

The student leaders of UMSFP along with its staff and faculty supporters are less interested in serving one-off projects and more in making sure that the superstructure is in place here at UofM to facilitate high impact learning and action opportunities in the complex, dynamic and deeply impactful world of food systems.

Food systems provide an opportunity, unlike many other topic areas, to connect typically disparate and disconnected disciplines in a truly trans-disciplinary fashion. Food systems bridge typical gaps between students, staff, faculty, operations and a broader community. Everyone eats and everyone is impacted by their personal and community food choices. We all live in a landscape where food production is hugely impactful to the environment and our economies. It is that complex commonality that connects everything from soil to oil and social to personal welfare. Sustainability in food systems is truly one of the greatest challenges of our times and one that can only be addressed by drawing on many disciplines and many minds. University of Michigan is at an important juncture and has the opportunity to lead the discussion, education, research, and application of sustainable food system studies. The complexity of the issue, though, demands a clearly articulated and actualized multi-stakeholder approach.

Sustainable Food Systems as an Education and Action Platform

The UM Sustainable Food Program provides support to organizations on campus dedicated to building a sustainable food system. We currently connect thirteen student Member Groups, seven campus gardens and the Campus Farm. UMSFP is led by an 8 student Leadership team and is mentored and advised by a staff Program Manager and an Advisory Board. Some of the ways we support sustainable food systems efforts include showcasing Member Groups and their work on our website and the UMSFP Newsletter, facilitating transparency when working on projects to increase collaboration and resource sharing, hosting regular meetings to cross-pollinate groups with new ideas and creativity, and ensuring stability by using the UMSFP

to keep groups active and engaged especially as students and leaders graduate from the university.

History

The groundwork for UMSFP and the Campus Farm began more than a decade ago; a group of trailblazing students and faculty engaged in food systems work through research and courses had a vision to integrate sustainable food systems curriculum here at UofM in connection with the development of a campus farm. The idea was not that these changes would create a plethora of University of Michigan farmers, but that they would foster critical thinkers, engaged citizens, and future leaders with knowledge of the enormous impacts food production, consumption, and policy has on issues of the environment, sustainability, public health, economic development and social justice.

In 2004, part of this vision began to take form with the establishment of Cultivating Community, a program creating and managing central campus gardens (including its namesake garden still in operation at the Ginsberg Center), along with a pilot food garden at Matthaei Botanical Gardens. These efforts were focused on creating formal and informal experiential learning opportunities for students, staff and faculty in sustainable food systems. In 2007, Shannon Brines, researcher at the School of Natural Resources and Environment and local farmer, put together a special report: "Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems: Research, Teaching, and Outreach Potential at the University of Michigan" outlining opportunities at UofM for advancing the growing body of Food Systems work occurring around the world. Additionally, in 2007, a successful proposal to create a Sustainable Food Systems Cluster Hire was part of then President Mary Sue Coleman's initiative to recruit scholars whose work "crosses boundaries" and to "bring experts from different fields together to explore significant questions or complex problems." The Sustainable Food Systems Cluster, comprised of five new tenure stream faculty members housed across four schools and colleges, examines the path toward a sustainable and equitable food system, spanning the natural and social sciences. This cluster hire became the foundation for the Sustainable Food Systems Initiative.

Starting in 2009, an Integrated Assessment of Sustainability at the University of Michigan was conducted by Graham Institute. The final report highlighted, among other items, a campus farm as a high level priority. The University was falling behind peer institutions in having living learning laboratory opportunities, and students ranked a campus farm as their most desired outcome as part of the survey. The report went on to indicate that the creation of a campus farm

was quite achievable, however, university administrators indicated that without a unit or person to lead the project it was not a priority. Students felt compelled to remove this barrier and in 2011, as part of Environ 391 course “Sustainability and the Campus”, students conducted a follow up survey of students, faculty, and staff finding 83% had moderate to high interests in the establishment of a campus farm. Two of the student leaders of that research team, Lauren Beriont and Lindsey MacDonald, in coordination with Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum Director (and SNRE Professor) Bob Grese, applied for a PBSIF (Planet Blue Student Innovation Fund) grant for the establishment of a Campus Farm at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens. They were awarded \$42,000 in January of 2012.

Continuing the collaboration with SNRE and Director Grese, the students framed, pitched and successfully recruited an SNRE Master's project focused on establishment of UMSFP and the Campus Farm. In the summer of 2012, the Farm was started at Matthaei, and by April of 2013, UMSFP was fully formed with a leadership team, advisory board and organizational structure spelled out in the UMSFP Handbook and Business Plan.

In 2014, a half-time program manager, Emily Canosa, was hired by UMSFP with funds from PBSIF, Transforming Learning for the Third Century (TLTC), and Student Life. The Campus Farm continued to grow, supported by the student group Friends of the Campus Farm, with paid student manager position support and mentorship from MBGNA.

Also in 2014, the Sustainable Food Systems Initiative was founded at the University to engage an interdisciplinary mix of students, faculty, and communities at local and global levels to learn from and build food systems that are health-promoting, economically viable, equitable, and ecologically sound. SFSI currently has over 50 faculty affiliates from 9 different schools or colleges as well as 10 affiliated staff. Building on this increasing body of interested faculty and staff, an undergraduate minor in Food Systems and the Environment was launched collaboratively by SFSI and PitE with a graduate Certificate in Sustainable Food Systems following in 2015. SFSI is supported by a half-time staff coordinator, Lilly Fink Shapiro.

With all of the growth, success, and foundation building, President Schlissel announced 3 years of funds for a full time UMSFP manager to further facilitate and catalyze student led sustainable food systems work at the University. This announcement came at an annual Sustainability Town Hall and was part of a package of funding for transformative and systemic funds to support sustainability efforts across campus, including the creation of the Sustainable Living Experience.

At the same time, MBGNA requested and received recurring funding from the Office of the Provost for a Campus Farm Manager position to work with student leaders and UMSFP Manager to grow and build Campus Farm into a premier living learning laboratory for sustainable food systems work at the University.

In November 2016, Alex Bryan and Jeremy Moghtader, UMSFP and Campus Farm managers respectively, re-joined their alma mater to continue the growth of these student-led initiatives. In their roles as facilitators for student leadership and agency, both positions work closely with each other and the UMSFP and Campus Farm student leadership to create a scaffolding that empowers students to create positive food systems education, research and change.

It is dually important to honor the work and contribution of those in the history of UMSFP, while not constraining a sense of purpose and potential to the past. We are always looking to build off of successes, learn from mistakes, and be bold in our endeavors. Our common thread from the past through to the future is the necessity and desire to build foundational infrastructure; to act as a stable platform by which to launch ideas and dreams of a better food future and a better University of Michigan.

A Student Led Campus of the Future

On January 21st, 2017 a retreat was held with the current UMSFP leadership team and member group representation facilitated by the Campus Farm Manager and UMSFP Manager. The purpose of the retreat was to support a student led refresher of the strategic plan, particularly around 'Big Hairy Audacious Goals' or **BHAG's**. Many of the original goals of UMSFP had been accomplished, such as the creation of a Campus Farm, hiring of support staff, and clearer academic pathways in food systems. In addition, the changing campus landscape, such as the new School for the Environment and Sustainability and SFSI, made it necessary to reframe former goals, reconsider the leadership structure, and establish new BHAG's that align to changing student needs.

Maintaining authentic and grassroots student voice and leadership are critical to the development of the future of the University. The goals, structure and ideas below represent the student voice from the retreat and individual meetings with student stakeholders. At the conclusion of the retreat, the student leaders tasked the Campus Farm Manager and UMSFP Manager with articulating and forging pathways to successful goal accomplishment, while maintaining the clear and important missions of UMSFP and Campus Farm. It was evident that

student leadership and autonomy must be maintained, while seeking highly collaborative and co-created structures between SFSI, UMSFP, and Campus Farm.

The following goals were designed by students to reflect their aspirations and provide meaningful value to member groups, students, faculty, staff, academic units, operations, the University and the broader community:

- **Create Sustainable Food Innovation Hub**
- **Grow Impact of Campus Farm**
- **Comprehensive Support for UMSFP and Member Group Professional Growth**
- **Increase Sustainable Food Culture**
- **Honor the Needs and Knowledge of the Broader Community**
- **Go After Low-Hanging Fruit and also Shoot for the Moon**

Create Sustainable Food Innovation Hub

The Sustainable Food Innovation Hub represents a physical embodiment of many individual goals and needs of UMSFP. It is a place of education, of community development, and for sharing food. It could be portion of an existing building, it could be an existing house, or it could be a new space. Regardless, it is a physical space that is student directed and staff supported, open to all of the community.

It contains:

- classroom/workshop space
- meeting room (for students and community)
- offices for member groups, student leaders/interns, and staff
- commercial kitchen for use by member groups
- storefront for sales of campus farm produce and other local staple grocery items
- storage space for member groups

It will be:

- easily accessible to students (Central Campus) and an inviting and safe space
- A host for cooking and nutrition classes
- a social space to build camaraderie between historically disparate sustainable food work, building a more diverse, inclusive and stronger learning community
- host for fundraisers and events
- a demonstration space for rain gardens and urban food production

- a strong connection to Sustainable Living Experience
- a showcase for integrated and applied learning

Grow Impact of Campus Farm

There will be a significant expansion and scaling of the Campus Farm. It will be driven by expansion of production, increasing formalized academic and research collaborations, and scaffolding for student leadership and professional development. Production at the farm exists in the service of programmatic and strategic objectives and will focus on food grown by students prepared for and consumed by students through MDining. Gateway and required courses for the Food and the Environment Minor as well as the Sustainable Food Systems Graduate Certificate will be taught at the Campus Farm.

Research involving faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students will be conducted in agroecology and food systems and the farm will serve as a living laboratory for teaching and learning about sustainable food production and systems here at the University.

It will involve:

- regular, easy, and dependable transportation to the farm
- GAP Certification and significant sales to MDining
- increasing winter production, 3-10 additional hoophouses
- expanding partnerships with Student Food Co., Maize and Blue Cupboard, and other student-centric outlets of food
- co-development of new courses and research collaborations
- clear pathways for engagement and use of the farm by students, faculty, and staff
- building formal and substantive connections to SEaS, SFSI, Food and the Environment minor, and Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Food Systems.
- increase formal connections and collaborations with student groups, such as UMBees, Permaculture Design Team, Friends of the Campus Farm, Student Food Co and more

Which will result in:

- increased hosting of courses from a wide range of disciplines
- research that the pushes the boundaries of sustainable agriculture
- stronger Campus Farm organizational structure and student leadership development
- a diverse and thriving learning community utilizing the Campus Farm as a living learning laboratory in sustainable food systems

Just as the University recognizes the need for a vibrant art museum while realizing not everyone will be an artist, the University needs a robust Campus Farm to educate on and lead sustainability efforts in the broader food system.

Comprehensive Support for UMSFP & Member Group Professional Growth

There will be clear support for student engagement, learning and leadership development throughout UMSFP's work. The leadership structure will be tweaked to encourage more regular engagement and to create growth opportunities for students. UMSFP member group benefits will be expanded and more collective action will be encouraged. Simply put, the student voice has more impact when efforts are collaborative, coordinated, and continue for more than one year. Students have many priorities, and finding more clear ways to help prioritize UMSFP is critical.

To augment UMSFP's role on campus:

- UMSFP Leadership Team (LT) will explore options for a credited class, partial pay, or a combination over multiple years
- UMSFP LT will modify existing leadership structure to allow for clear pathways of leadership growth and more clear definition of position responsibilities
- increase internship opportunities to broader community of students to provide support for UMSFP and member group work
- Provide a more robust communication platform to champion UMSFP and member group work
- mini-grant funds for member groups and others to implement UMSFP work
- develop alumni and food systems career network

Increase Sustainable Food Culture

It is clear that a supportive campus culture for sustainable foods is critical to the success of UMSFP. Education, learning and development are more impactful when they are immersive and comprehensive. UMSFP will engage holistically with issues of campus culture, sustainable food awareness, and the intricate web that food plays in the many facets of our lives. Food is a unique topic that connects all humanity through a shared medium. At the same time, UMSFP realizes that food culture, knowledge, and access are not the same for everyone and need to be approached with sensitivity and compassion.

It is the goal of UMSFP that 'no one graduates from the University of Michigan without thinking critically about their personal food system.' To help achieve that goal UMSFP will:

- support greater academic and organizational partnerships with SFSI to mutually achieve success of food knowledge
- encourage sustainable food education as part of orientation or as a freshman seminar
- support off-campus students with healthy eating and composting guides and workshops
- engage with a broader audience, including more direct bridges to issues related to DE&I
- build connections to and celebrate cultural food heritage
- support general sustainability efforts of the University, including cultural goals and efforts identified in the SCIP surveys
- support work to make sure All of the UM community has equitable access to 'Good Food'
- raise food knowledge and awareness through an increased media presence

Honor the Needs and Knowledge of the Broader Community

Food crosses boundaries more easily and more directly than other education concepts at the University. The line between campus and the broader community is constantly blurred for students; whether eating in dining halls supplied by food distributors and local farmers, rescuing unused food to donate to a local food pantry, distributing food from the local food bank to in-need students and staff, or finding an internship with Growing Hope. It is the goal of UMSFP to build an intentional connection to a broader community that respects education as a reciprocal process. UMSFP will respond to community needs and interests rather than exert desired outcomes on others, learning from and partnering with the Ginsberg Center.

UMSFP will:

- support an internship program that funds and places UM students as interns at Campus Farm, Farm at St. Joe's Hospital, and Growing Hope
- build stronger connections to organizations and food systems leaders in Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Flint, and Detroit, using the success of Food Literacy for All as a model of successful community engagement

Support Low-Hanging Fruit and Shoot for the Moon

While most of UMSFP goals fit into broad categories of work, it is important to keep individual and actionable goals at the forefront to provide the space for creativity, quick impact, and continued engagement of student interest.

UMSFP will encourage:

- a partnership with the new School for Environment and Sustainability, Sustainable Food Systems Initiative, and education
- integration with Sustainable Living Experience, both formally and informally
- green roof or garden on all new campus buildings and all existing buildings undergoing major renovations
- accessible kitchenettes for students that live off-campus and would need space to refrigerate/reheat their lunch, encouraging thriftier, healthier, and more sustainable eating

The Opportunity - Strength and Sustainability in a Transformative New Structure

Food is inherently and historically collaborative. Many hands have touched food along the production chain from seed to fork, and many more are on either side of that process. Sharing food communally is often at the core of cultural identity and few things in this world can bring about peace like 'breaking bread'. Food is the very essence of how we as a species exist; what we eat, how we produce it and who has access to it is enormously impactful to humanity and the environment. It is both deeply personal and deeply affected by public policy. It connects land and water, resources and money. It is powered by the sun and by fossil fuels but can exist without both; it does so by spanning traditional and ecological production systems to highly engineered indoor growing operations. Food systems are incredibly complex and engage everyone in some way or another. It is no surprise, then, that food systems work is at its best when it is collaborative, cooperative, and shared amongst many perspectives.

While UMSFP/Campus Farm and SFSI were developed separately due to timelines of support, it is becoming markedly clear that there needs to be more foundational collaboration and partnerships between the programs. The lines of the work are continually more blurred and confusing to audiences inside and outside the university. Food Systems at the University crosses all divides and engages scholars and students from engineering and public health, economics and ecology, social justice and business. At the same time, many of the reasons that UMSFP formed were to encourage collaboration and partnership amongst food systems work at the University; recognizing that together there is greater leverage, longevity, and impact. The individual goals of UMSFP, Campus Farm, and SFSI are overlapping and synergistic. It is time

to recognize that a future forward must have the benefits of partnership, while retaining individual autonomy.

UMSFP & Campus Farm grew out of student led initiatives built on faculty student and staff dreams and aspirations. SFSI emerged from faculty seeking robust trans-disciplinary solutions to pressing food systems issues. Both see campus operations and the larger community as living learning laboratories where collaboration across academic and operational lines produce a higher quality education and research environment for faculty and students and a more sustainable campus. The University of Michigan has the opportunity to become one of the pre-eminent non land grant institutions doing work in the highly impactful field of sustainability in food systems. In the formation of the new School for Environment and Sustainability, with its focus on global sustainability challenges at the intersection of the environment and society and a structure designed to engage faculty from across the university, Food Systems is emerging as one of the key themes that will provide the opportunity for truly interdisciplinary work.

In this context and with the the history laid out at the start of this document as foundation, the time is right to create a shared platform for food systems work with students, faculty and staff. It is an evolution and opportunity that seems as natural as apple pie. This platform or center would remain true to its interdisciplinary values comprised of SFSI and its affiliated faculty; UMSFP and its affiliated student groups and connections to student life, dining and operations; and the Campus Farm located at MBGNA. Each retains their independence while simultaneously coming together to work on shared goals and collaborative outcomes that leverage greater impacts than any of the groups could alone. Each organization: SFSI, UMSFP and CF, would form legs of the stool anchored in their independence and maintaining strong footing in their different units and stakeholders, but collectively forming a new Center for Sustainability in Food Systems.

This new center, housed in SEaS, would have formal ties to the Food and the Environment minor in PitE, the Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Food Systems, and the PitE Sustainable Living Experience (SLE). Creation of the center would entail funding support for SFSI Program Manager and UMSFP Program Manager to work in collaboration with the Campus Farm Manager position already funded by Office of the Provost. Funds for the new SFSI and UMSFP Program Managers could come from a diversity of sources including Deans of home colleges of Sustainable Food Systems Cluster hire faculty, SEaS, Student Life/MDining, and Office of the Provost. Appointments for all 3 program managers would include at least partial appointments with SEaS while maintaining base unit appointments in Dining for UMSFP and MBGNA for

Campus Farm. The SFSI Program Manager would likely become nested fully within SEaS, with potential partial appointments from other departments.

This structure would not only lead to stronger and more impactful outcomes with greater collaboration, but it would also be a manifestation of the University of Michigan's new approach to sustainability work and its commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive learning community that utilizes campus academics, operations, and student life as a living learning laboratory. The time for transformative change is now. Staff positions have expanded, a new trans-disciplinary school is forming, goals are aligning and overlapping, and a path forward is becoming markedly clear. More than a decade of diverse but separate work has brought us to the point where joining together while maintaining our independence will enable all of us to create a more sustainable world with the University of Michigan leading the way.

For UMSFP and Campus Farm this is clearly the way forward. One that enables students to both lead and learn, to best accomplish the strategic goals of improving sustainable food awareness and literacy, increasing access to fresh food, food production, food systems education and leadership development. All while developing a diverse learning community of students, faculty, staff and community members, grounded in academics, operations, programming and physical place. For UMSFP and Campus Farm to accomplish the 'Big Hairy Audacious Goals', we will need to move forward in creating a truly trans-disciplinary space. We can only hope that others at the University take to heart what it means to educate in Michigan's Third Century as Leader and Best.