

# Strengthening the AgUS-UBC Farm Partnership Final Report

UBC Food Systems Project  
'Scenario 2'

April 13, 2007

**Prepared for:**  
AGSC 450 (Land, Food and Community III)  
Faculty of Land and Food Systems  
University of British Columbia

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## **ABSTRACT**

This UBCFSP plan explored strategies to strengthen direct linkages between UBC Farm and the MacMillan community; specifically by implementing Farm produce into weekly Agriculture Undergraduate Society (AgUS) barbeque dinners. We conducted a literature review and engaged in community-based action research with both AgUS and UBC Farm representatives, to explore demand for and barriers to using UBC Farm products AgUS. Previous UBCFSP studies examined similar opportunities among campus food providers external to MacMillan. Like campus food providers, AgUS supports the goals of the UBC Farm and is willing to include produce from the Farm into their menus. We found that despite strong interest from AgUS in supporting the UBC Farm, implementation of UBC Farm produce raises several concerns, including: unreliable supply from the UBC Farm, weak communication with the UBC Farm, limitation of menu options and cost.

Key recommendations to AgUS are to:

- Develop an agreement with UBC Farm to facilitate a smooth purchasing relationship;
- Incorporate menus that ease the utilization of UBC Farm products, while considering costs; and
- Promote the pending partnership with UBC Farm within the MacMillan community.

The overall plan sets the foundations for a mutually beneficial relationship between AgUS and UBC Farm, strengthening land, food, and community connections within the Faculty of Land and Food systems.

**Abbreviations:** UBC: University of British Columbia; AgUS: Agriculture Undergraduate Society; UBC Farm: Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm; UBCFSP: UBC Food System Project

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Occupying 24 hectares of land on the south of the University of British Columbia campus in Vancouver, the UBC Farm strives to "retain and re-create existing farm and forest lands into an internationally significant centre for sustainable agriculture, forestry and food systems", under the initiative of Faculty of Land and Food Systems (LFS) students and faculty (UBC Farm, 2007).

As the parent faculty of the Farm, LFS has worked to create a strong link between the UBC Farm and UBC by providing the university with local Farm produce, and actively promoting the development of sustainable campus communities, especially through the UBCFSP.

Since 2000 the UBC Farm has been sporadically selling produce to the student-run Agora Cafe, Agriculture Undergraduate Society (AgUS) barbeque dinners, as well as occasional purchases for faculty events. This paper outlines the methods, findings and results of the exploration of how to initiate more use of UBC Farm produce into the LFS community based at the MacMillan building. While other Scenario 2 groups chose to focus on the connections between the UBC Farm and the Agora Café/MacMillan faculty events, we focused on connecting the UBC Farm and the AgUS. Specifically, we sought to incorporate more UBC Farm products into the first few AgUS barbeque dinners during the first term of the coming academic year.

We have identified three strategies that will establish a stronger connection between the Farm and AgUS. First is to facilitate purchasing and logistics by creating a template process; second to provide theme-based menu options bearing in mind the cost aspect for AgUS to supplement the template process; and finally, to promote awareness among the MacMillan community of the UBC Farm relationship with AgUS to complement the process. Through the strategies suggested, we have taken into account the factors that govern UBC Farm's food procurement requirements - quantity, quality, seasonality and cost requirements.

## 2 PROBLEM DEFINITION

Groups in scenario 2 were given the task to create and strengthen the linkages between MacMillan building—the hub for the Faculty of Land and Food Systems—and the UBC Farm. Linking the UBC Farm with MacMillan is best done by integrating food from the Farm into meals that are already being consumed in the building. The three main outlets for this are the Agriculture Undergraduate Society (AgUS) Barbeque dinners, Agora Café, and general faculty events. Because there were three groups in this scenario, we found it only logical that the tasks were split up into three parts. Our group's goal was to find ways to integrate food from the UBC Farm into the AgUS barbeques. The barbeques are weekly dinners that promote a sense of community and healthy eating within the Faculty.

This scenario is integrated into the UBC Food Systems Project's larger goal to "Explore ways the food system at UBC could contribute to sustainable agricultural production, food security and safety, and the health of human communities, within UBC's campus and in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland" (UBCSFP, 2007, p. 3). Integrating the UBC Farm into the AgUS barbeques is significant in enhancing the UBC food system's sustainability for several reasons. By providing food from a local source on a small scale, the dinners will exemplify what eco-localism is all about—self-reliant communities that "...increase positive externalities such as ecological restoration and community building" (Blewitt, 2006, p. 53). The AgUS dinners already promote community building, but by integrating food from the UBC Farm they will provide food produced in the community, in an ethically and ecologically sustainable manner. By supporting the UBC Farm and keeping the money within UBC's geographic boundaries, the dinners will also promote local small-scale economies. Because local community economies enhance environmental sustainability, the benefits will be multifaceted (Curtis, 2003).

On the global scale, providing food from the UBC Farm will reduce the ecological footprint of the meals produced for the AgUS barbeques. Food miles will be vastly reduced considering that the Farm is located less than 2 kilometres away from the MacMillan building. By reducing the food miles for the produce used in the dinners, fossil fuel inputs used for transporting food will be significantly decreased, a small step to reducing anthropologically induced climate change. Because the UBC Farm produces its food in accordance with organic standards, the reduction in fertilizer inputs also reduces the reliance on fossil fuels, thereby enhancing the UBC food system's sustainability and providing an example of a localized economy that can be successful. Supporting a local food system will also reduce the negative impacts that the globalized food system has had on marginalized communities such as reduced food security, abuse of human rights, and reduced food prices (Curtis, 2003). While the realized impact of one weekly dinner produced in an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable manner may be small, it can be used as an example of community building and sustainability for the rest of campus and a model for implementation on a larger scale (M'Gonigle & Starke, 2006).

### **3 VISION STATEMENT AND VALUE ASSUMPTIONS**

The academic vision statement of the UBCFSP project encompasses eight principles, which guides actions within the ecological, environmental and social realms. The definitive goal of the guidelines is to “protect *and* enhance the diversity and quality of the ecosystem and to improve social equity” (UBCFSP, 2005).

Our group reached a general accord regarding most of the issues raised by the guiding principles. We agreed that vision statement reflects our value assumptions well. However we feel that the notion of fair pricing should be incorporated into the guiding principles, as it is important for all areas of the food system to be able to maintain a healthy, sustainable living. A fair economic

return ensures that farmers will be able to continue making a profit without having to overuse croplands or surmount debt, effectively destabilizing the system that consumers rely on.

It was also discussed that reducing the use of non-decomposable materials such as plastic could be addressed more comprehensively. Our group feels that locally produced food should be favoured considering that imported foods require fuel to be brought in and is considered less beneficial to ecological sustainability. We agreed that the plain language version of the guiding principles is important to have, especially for the general public, as the academic version tends to be rather verbose and harder to grasp for those unfamiliar with the jargon of sustainability. We value a healthy, vibrant community, a robust natural environment, and economic viability along with the incorporation of these ideals into an academic setting.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

The overarching methodology was community-based action research (CBAR), featuring a recursive ‘look, think, act’ routine (Stringer, 1999). CBAR was suitable because our research participants (AgUS, UBC Farm, and Agora Café) have the experience with CBAR, expertise and commitment necessary to implement and ensure the sustainability of this project. Our team brought the actors together and helped them synthesize this expertise. Thus, our team led research participants in *looking* at the current ways of buying or selling food, *thinking* about potential strengths and opportunities in building partnerships, *acting* to develop solutions that benefit all parties, and then repeating this process.

### **4.1 Previous UBCFSP work**

We reviewed relevant UBCFSP reports as identified by the UBCFSP lead investigators. These reports were from spring 2006 (Groups 3, 6, 8, 13, and 23), spring 2005 (Groups 2 and 10), summer 2004 (Group 4), and spring 2004 (Groups 7, 9, and 14). The review focused on reports

from 2006. Information in 2004-2005 reports was incorporated when it was not reflected in 2006 reports and when it was relevant to the partnership between UBC Farm and AgUS.

#### **4.2 Demand for strengthening the AgUS-UBC Farm partnership**

A survey was used to characterize AgUS demand for, and perceived challenges to incorporating more UBC Farm products into the barbeque dinners of September and October (see Appendix A). This survey was emailed to the AgUS council (30 members) on March 10, 2007, with the required ethics documents. To exclude those without experience planning, preparing, or hosting AgUS barbeque dinners, the AgUS president identified survey recipients who had such experience with at least one barbeque dinner. Two reminder emails were sent before the survey closed on March 26, 2007. Responses were analyzed as a census, with numerical responses summarized by averages and standard deviations and written responses summarized separately. From March 12 to 22, 2007, the survey was followed up with interviews of select AgUS representatives: Matt Edgar, president (2005-2007); Danny Gruner, UBC Farm-AgUS Liaison (2005-2007); and Pearl Yip, treasurer and president-elect (2006-2007). On March 14, 2007, we listened to and discussed with UBC Farm representatives (Mark Bomford, Program Coordinator, and Amy Frye, Market Coordinator) about their goals and perceived challenges related to supplying the MacMillan community, including AgUS. Meghan Molnar, manager of Agora Café, was interviewed by email on April 2, 2007 to investigate opportunities to combine orders of AgUS and Agora Café for UBC Farm products. After the surveys and interviews were conducted, we began to develop a process with interviewees to facilitate purchasing by AgUS from UBC Farm. The interviewees were invited to discuss our final recommendations together, however scheduling conflicts between our group and the interviewees hindered this meeting.



### **4.3 Menu options and associated costs**

Sample menus were designed to incorporate significant quantities of UBC Farm produce into AgUS barbeque dinners. The UBC Farm produce availability list for 2006 obtained through our UBCFSP resources was the proxy for future produce availability. An Internet search of recipes was conducted with recognition that UBC Farm produce would be a main ingredient of potential menus. The menus were modified and compared according to pre-determined criteria: each has a theme, possibly ethnic; they are as quick and easy to prepare as meals cooked at previous barbeque dinners and with kitchen equipment available to AgUS (as determined by comparison with recipes from 2006/07 obtained from AgUS on March 22, 2007); and they are nutritionally balanced according to the nutritional standards of the Canada Food Guide (Health Canada, 2007).

During interviews with the AgUS president and treasurer, the following information was requested to assess the finances of the barbeque dinners: number of customers, amount charged per person, dollars spent per event, and dollars spent on vegetables per event. Specifically, estimates and official records (e.g. receipts) were requested. During the interview with Mark Bomford, we requested an estimate of the relative costs of UBC Farm produce relative to conventionally produced produce in Vancouver grocery stores.

## **5 FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Previous UBCFSP work**

Past UBCFSP reports focused on the sales from UBC Farm to campus food providers rather than to groups in the MacMillan building. Food providers felt more convenient to order in bulk from one supplier (Group 3 and 23, 2006). Price and/or product unavailability throughout the academic year at UBC Farm were a major obstacle for the campus food providers to use its produce (Group 3, 6, 13, and 23, 2006). The quantity of UBC Farm produce supplied to food

providers was uncertain (Group 6, 2006). Produce from UBC Farm would not be used in the near future in the residence cafeterias, Place Vanier and Totem Park, because of the expensive prices and poor availability between September and April (Group 23, 2006).

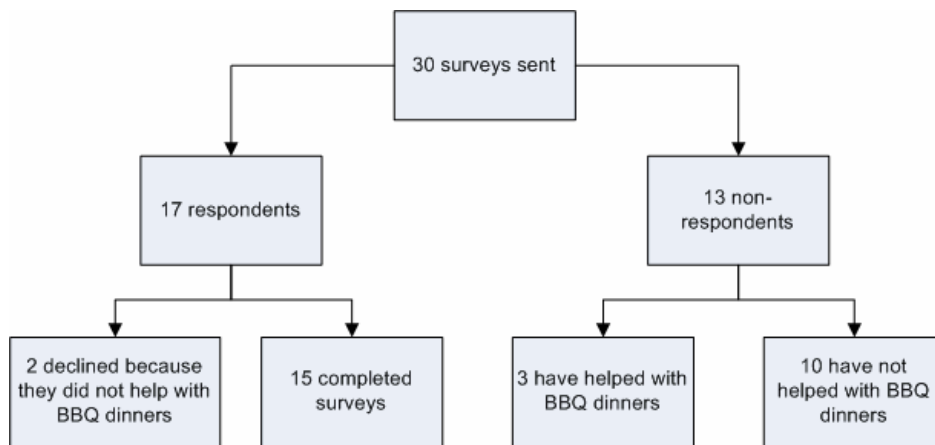
There were a few key recommendations to UBC Farm and food providers to increase the amount of UBC Farm produce in the food providers' menus. UBC Farm was suggested to increase the farmed area to enhance the produce range (Dench *et al.*, 2005). The idea of building a root cellar was also recommended to UBC Farm because it would extend the shelf-life of produce and allow UBC Farm to supply produce throughout the year including off-season period (Group 6 and 13, 2006); in turn, potential revenue and food production at UBC Farm would be increased. In addition, recipes were created to incorporate as much seasonal UBC Farm produce as possible for the food providers (Group 3, 6, 8, 13, and 23, 2006). Groups 3 and 13 proposed that contract could be signed between food providers and UBC Farm to ensure product availability (2006). This might be similar to the Community Shared Agriculture program at UBC Farm where customers placed deposit in the beginning of the year to purchase produce boxes and receive them weekly throughout the growing season (Group 13, 2006).

## **5.2 Demand for strengthening the AgUS – UBC Farm partnership**

### *5.2.1 AgUS survey and interviews*

Survey data were analyzed as a census, since completed surveys were received from most AgUS members (83%) who had experience planning, preparing, or hosting barbeques (see Figure 1). The survey showed that AgUS is interested in strengthening their relationship with UBC Farm. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = don't care and 5 = want as much UBC Farm as is available, the importance of buying food from UBC Farm was 4.1 (n=14). One notable survey response was that the importance of building community and providing affordable, quality meals at AgUS

dinners is greater than incorporating local or UBC Farm produce. Concurrently, the President-elect conveyed that it is important to buy from UBC Farm to strengthen ‘community’ between AgUS and the Farm (Yip, 2007, personal communication). The consensus among AgUS members interviewed was that achieving the goal of community building with the Farm justifies operating the barbeque dinners at zero or negative profits (Yip, 2007, pers. comm.; Edgar, 2007, pers. comm.; Gruner, 2007, pers. comm.).

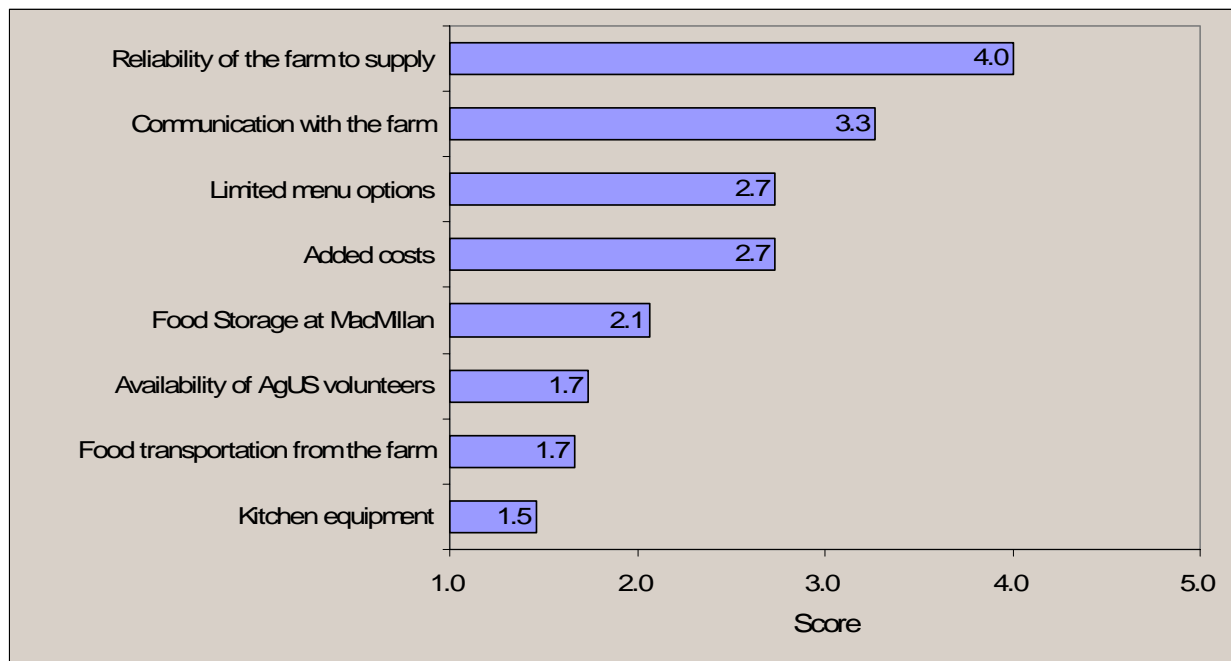


**Figure 1: AgUS survey flowchart. AgUS members ‘helped’ with barbeque dinners if they helped plan, prepare, or host at least one dinner in 2006/07.**

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Demand was limited by challenges AgUS perceived to incorporating more UBC Farm produce into the barbeque dinners. The survey showed that the most significant barriers were the *reliability of the Farm to supply weekly, communication with the Farm, produce availability limiting menu options, and added costs* constraining AgUS finances (see Figure 2). The interviews revealed that based on past experiences with ordering from the Farm, the AgUS President, Farm Liaison and Treasurer were generally concerned about the potential inconvenience of purchasing food from UBC Farm, an inconvenience that would burden student volunteers. In both the survey and interviews, there were concerns that using UBC Farm produce would limit the ability of AgUS to serve dinners with a theme or particular style such as Mexican or Greek. They preferred to purchase food in one day and be certain on the availability of the

produce they need on the same day. Because the AgUS interviewees believed that overall demand for UBC Farm produce was greater than supply, they questioned if UBC Farm would be able to supply enough produce for each barbeque (Yip, 2007, pers. comm.; Edgar, 2007, pers. comm.; Gruner, 2007, pers. comm.).



**Figure 2. The importance of challenges (mean), as perceived by AgUS, to incorporating more UBC Farm produce in barbeque dinners. 1 = not very important; 5 = very important.**

Other challenges that were less significant were *food storage at MacMillan*, *availability of AgUS volunteers*, and *food transportation from the Farm*, and availability of *kitchen equipment* to prepare food (Figure 2). Interviews showed that AgUS could easily transport food from the UBC Farm to MacMillan, because AgUS has a freely accessible van (Edgar, 2007, pers. comm.).

### 5.2.2 Incorporating Agora Café into AgUS-UBC Farm partnership

AgUS and Agora Café perceived challenges to combining their orders for UBC Farm produce. Based on the survey, AgUS was concerned if the UBC Farm would be able to have enough food to provide both groups. Furthermore, AgUS members felt that it would be difficult for them to

organize the date to pick-up orders, communicate, and split orders with Agora Café, partly because they usually did not know the menu until a few days or even a day before the barbeque dinner (Yip, 2007, pers. comm.; Edgar, 2007, pers. comm.). Another complicating factor is that no representative from Agora Café is currently sitting in at AgUS meetings (Gruner, 2007, Pers. comm.; Molnar, 2007, pers. comm.). During her interview, the manager of Agora Café stated that the new inventory manager would hope to purchase as much UBC Farm produce as possible in September to October next year; in addition, she expressed that they could possibly share picking up duties with AgUS (Molnar, 2007, pers. comm.). But it would depend on the date that the Agora lunch special would take place and the quantity Agora Café would require, since currently they need produce by Monday morning for their Monday lunch (Molnar, 2007, pers. comm.) There would be sufficient storage space to hold an AgUS order until Wednesday or Thursday in the AgUS fridge, but that would not be ideal (Edgar, 2007, pers comm.).

### *5.2.3 UBC Farm's interview and presentation*

In the 2007 growing season, the area in production at UBC Farm is planned to increase by 15% and the composition of products will change little from 2006 (Bomford, 2007, class presentation). Mark Bomford stated that a hypothetical contract or agreement would be helpful for the Farm to determine the demand for the weeks AgUS would be ordering (2007, pers. comm.). He also expressed that the demand for product was so high that it would be less likely to have some remaining for storage; by the third week of October only squash and sweet potatoes would possibly be available (Bomford, 2007, pers. comm.). Amy Frye presented that eggs, fruit, berries, garlic, squash, salad mix, cherry tomatoes, and red peppers would have growth potential (2007). The challenges AgUS would be facing in terms of unpredictable supply of produce would be lesser compared to past years, because the Farm is now more prepared and committed

to supplying the MacMillan community as a priority (Frye, 2007, class presentation). In addition, Amy provided the product ordering, pickup and delivery flow: the produce availability list would be made on Tuesday, sent to clients on Wednesday morning, and order forms should be returned on Thursday; produce would be harvested on Friday and therefore, pick-up would be available as of Friday afternoon (Frye, 2007, pers. comm.).

### **5.3 Menu options and associated costs**

#### *5.3.1 Menu options*

We developed six menus that incorporate themes, in keeping with the spirit of past AgUS menus. The menus were Mexican, Asian, Valentine's, Greek, Fruit Night, and Italian. These menus each incorporated 8-12 UBC Farm products. They were compared to the menus supplied by the AgUS with respect to similarity to dishes that were used before, what types of cooking equipment and what range of utensils are needed, and to the Canada Food Guide, for nutritional balance of the meal (Health Canada, 2007). They were then further narrowed down to the three that best met all our pre-determined selection criteria; Greek, Fruit Night and Italian were the themes chosen (see Appendix B). Upon request, all six menus will be provided to AgUS with an executive summary of this report; the three menus omitted here are available upon request.

#### *5.3.2 Associated costs*

The actual percentages of the budget spent on vegetables during the final two Thursday dinners were within the range of estimates of AgUS executive members (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). Financial losses per event were greater when dinners switched from Wednesdays to Thursdays to accommodate AgUS volunteers' schedules due to reduced attendance.

Mark Bomford estimated produce from UBC Farm to be 20% more expensive on average than conventionally produced produce during September and October. He said this figure could vary

widely from negative percentages to 100% according to the product and market forces (Bomford, 2007, pers. comm.).

**Table 1. Estimated income and expenses of a typical AgUS Wednesday or Thursday BBQ.**

	Income	Total expenses	Expenses on vegetables and fruit
AgUS President	Wed: \$500 Thurs: \$150 to \$300 price: \$5 per attendee	Wed: \$500 Thurs: \$350	Thurs: \$100 (29% of total expenses)
AgUS Treasurer	Wed: \$400 to \$450 Thurs: \$225 price: \$5 per attendee	Wed: \$500 Thurs: \$350	Wed: \$200 (40% of total expenses)
Grocery store receipts <sup>a</sup>	n/a	Mar 14, 2007: \$289 Mar 21, 2007: \$222	Mar 14: \$62 to \$116 (21% to 40%) <sup>b</sup> Mar 21: \$42 to \$90 (19% to 41%) <sup>b</sup>

a. March 14, 2007 was Greek Night and March 21, 2007 featured a beef/tofu stir-fry dinner.

b. Receipts did not clearly itemize purchases. The low end of the estimates includes only items listed as 'vegetable' on New Apple Farm Market receipts. The high end includes items listed as 'vegetable' or 'fruit' on New Apple Farm Market receipts as well as processed vegetable products from Safeway.

## 6 DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Previous UBCFSP work

While reviewing the many previous UBCFSP papers that have dealt with increasing the use of UBC Farm produce in campus food provider menus, we were able to see examples of how Farm produce can be integrated into the campus food system. However, we encountered special challenges in implementing this project since the AgUS is volunteer run and has a distinctly community focus. AgUS' food procurement process is unique compared to the other campus food providers examined by previous UBCFSP Groups (Groups 3, 6, 8, 13 & 23, 2006). In contrast to institutional providers, the AgUS decisions are made spontaneously, and by an elected student council. Also, the AgUS barbeques are community events held once per week, whereas the campus food service providers were mainly restaurants. While the volunteer and evolving nature of the society could be a challenge in the long-term viability of this project, we think their

inherent flexibility is an asset. We concluded that a major need for enabling this project idea to be carried out was to develop a tailored procurement process for AgUS to follow.

Based on our findings from discussion with UBC Farm representatives, the possibility of offering dinners using fresh UBC Farm produce beyond the end of October is low. This is because even if UBC Farm had a root cellar as has been suggested by a previous UBCFSP project, the demand is so high that the Farm would also sell out of these items rapidly, and so, the infrastructure for preserving food at this time is unwarranted (Group 13, 2006; Bomford, 2007, pers. comm.). This finding caused us to focus the scope of this project to incorporating UBC Farm produce only during the first 5-8 weeks of the fall semester.

## **6.2 Demand for strengthening the AgUS-UBC Farm partnership**

### *6.2.1 The AgUS-UBC Farm partnership*

Our analysis of the findings indicated that the main challenges to incorporating UBC Farm produce were identified to be *communication from/with the UBC Farm*, and *reliability of Farm supply*, and the reason for this stems from past difficulties with ordering, supply and quality of produce from the UBC Farm (Gruner, 2007, pers. comm.; Edgar, 2007, pers. comm.). The extra time involved with pre-ordering foods was also a challenge, since AgUS members have limited spare time to devote to logistic complications (Gruner, 2007, pers. comm.). Thus a strengthening of the communication between the parties would enable the two to work together. The UBC Farm is committed to making a stronger effort towards meeting the demands of campus customers in 2007 and beyond (Frye, 2007, class presentation). To that end, we are hopeful that the concerns of AgUS over availability and communication will be addressed.

The AgUS will be experiencing significant turnover for the coming school year, and elections were in progress during the survey period. A limitation of our survey data is that we were not



able to survey the future council to determine the actual demand for the 2007-2008 season.

However, we feel encouraged that at the time of writing, Pearl Yip's position as future president is confirmed, and the AgUS-Farm Liaison position will be filled by a Group 29 member.

### *6.2.2 Possibility of Agora Café-AgUS partnership*

One concern that the Farm team mentioned was that they would prefer to consolidate any orders and deliveries from the campus community as much as possible. However, after discussing the issue with the AgUS executive we determined that their invoicing and packaging must be separated from other groups eliminate complications with billing and order separation. Through our interviews with AgUS members, we found that AgUS has free access to faculty vehicles. This finding means that coordinating delivery with Agora or other MacMillan community customers is not a necessity for the AgUS, yet, there is a possibility of Agora or other orders being picked up by AgUS, or of Agora and AgUS sharing pickup duties (Molnar, 2007, pers. comm.; Edgar, 2007, pers. comm.).

Storage of food was scored as the 4th most important obstacle. Storage should however be a non-issue, since the UBC Farm can store the order in its cooler for convenient pickup/delivery (Bomford, 2007, pers. comm.). If earlier than ideal pickup was coordinated with Agora, fridge storage at Agora is not an option for AgUS (Molnar, 2007, pers. comm.). The orders could be kept in the AgUS fridge until needed, though this is not ideal (Edgar, 2007, pers. comm.).

## **6.3 Menu options and associated costs**

*Limitations to menu options* and *financial constraints* were tied in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in terms of overall rating as barriers to increasing the use of UBC Farm produce. Following our analysis of the 2006 UBC Farm availability, we feel that the wide selection of vegetables available through UBC Farm is ideal for incorporating ethnically themed foods into the AgUS' meals needs.

In our process for selecting the most suitable menus according to our criteria, we found that meeting the criteria of simple preparation and servings needed for the barbeque was difficult when using Internet recipe sources. These recipes are not generally sorted according to preparation difficulty or equipment requirements, although indexes for nutrition and serving information, ethnic themes and specific ingredients were very good. So even though the method could have been effective theoretically, in practice it took too much time to review potential menus and select ones that could be used or adapted to the equipment available. As a result, it was necessary to select from our menus three that are the most practical for AgUS to use, based on our criteria.

Another drawback to developing menus ahead of time is that the availability of products may change, such that ingredients for each menu may not be offered simultaneously, or products offered may change from season to season. So, new menus may need to be adapted continually to take advantage of the current availability, and this will require additional dynamism and advance preparation on the part of the AgUS. Menu plans may have to be finalized up to 2 weeks ahead of schedule, depending on the day of the AgUS meetings and the day of the barbeque, and then adjusted to accommodate the availability when it is released.

Financial constraints may be an issue however, as the incorporation of organic priced products from UBC Farm will likely increase costs. We believe this concern should not be downplayed, since although it not identified as a serious concern by our survey results, Pearl Yip (outgoing treasurer and incoming president) scored financial constraints at her highest level of concern.

We have used sensitivity analysis to demonstrate the potential extra cost of purchasing produce from the UBC Farm when compared to conventional produce bought currently. The change in total cost of a barbeque dinner resulting from the implementation of UBC Farm produce into menus is

influenced by the % *markup* of UBC Farm produce relative to conventional produce Table 2, and the % of *produce budget* that is spent on UBC Farm produce Table 3.

**Table 2. Percent of produce markup vs. profit for one Wednesday or Thursday event, assuming the target markup is 20% relative to conventional produce based on findings, and 2/3 of produce used is purchased at UBC Farm<sup>a</sup>.**

	Wednesday Night			Thursday Night			
	No Markup	Target Markup	2 x Target	No Markup	Target Markup	2 x Target	
% markup	0%	20%	40%	% markup	0%	20%	40%
\$ on UBC veg.	\$100	\$120	\$140	\$ on UBC veg.	\$70	\$84	\$98
profit margin	\$0	(\$20)	(\$40)	profit margin	(\$100)	(\$114)	(\$128)

a. Other assumptions, based on findings:

Wednesday dinner budget \$500, Thursday \$350;

Wednesday income (100 attendees) \$500; Thursday (50 attendees) \$250 @ \$5/attendee

Produce is 30% of the total budget; \$150 on Wednesday and \$105 on Thursday.

**Table 3. Percent of produce budget spent on UBC Farm produce vs. profit for one Wednesday or Thursday event, assuming the target usage of UBC Farm produce is 67% of produce, and markup of UBC Farm produce relative to conventional produce is 20%, based on findings<sup>a</sup>.**

	Wednesday Night			Thursday Night			
	0.5 x Target	Target	1.5 x Target	0.5 x Target	Target	1.5 x Target	
% of produce budget	33%	67%	100%	% of produce budget	33%	67%	100%
\$ on UBC veg.	\$60	\$120	\$180	\$ on UBC veg.	\$42	\$84	\$126
profit margin	(\$10)	(\$20)	(\$30)	profit margin	(\$107)	(\$114)	(\$121)

a. Other assumptions, based on findings:

Wednesday dinner budget \$500, Thursday \$350;

Wednesday income (100 attendees) \$500; Thursday (50 attendees) \$250 @ \$5/attendee

Produce is 30% of the total budget; \$150 on Wednesday and \$105 on Thursday.

Assuming, based on findings, that the most likely scenario is where % *markup* is 20% and % of *produce budget* is 67%, and other variables are fixed as per Tables 2 and 3, the increase in costs are \$20 for a Wednesday dinner and \$14 for a Thursday dinner if AgUS dinners changed to incorporate UBC Farm produce. We do not believe that this small increase in cost should be a strong deterrent to initiating this project given that the AgUS is motivated to build community

connection with UBC Farm (Yip, 2007, pers. comm.). Furthermore, UBC Farm would receive \$120 for a Wednesday dinner and \$84 for a Thursday dinner.

However the data we based these numbers on was not ideal. Data were approximated percentages based on two years of experience of the AgUS President and Treasurer, and from receipts from two barbeques that occurred during the study period. Since these barbeques occurred during the winter, produce spending and prices may be different during the season when UBC Farm produce would be being used, still, the numbers provide a rough estimate of the difference in cost that AgUS would experience in future years.

Other concerns were scored below 2/5, and were decided to be unimportant factors to increasing the use of Farm produce in the AgUS dinners following discussion with AgUS executives.

## **7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **7.1 Recommendations**

#### *7.1.1 AgUS and UBC Farm cooperatively develop an agreement for their partnership:*

To alleviate concerns around communication from both the Farm and the AgUS, we recommend that the two parties develop some form of mutually negotiated agreement, be it a contract or memorandum of understanding, so that both parties know what is expected through the relationship. The agreement would probably need to be renewed annually. This would serve as a template process for ordering between the Farm and AgUS, outlining the expectations of both parties. To address both parties' concerns, this agreement should contain three components:

- Approximate quantities of produce that will be demanded and specific weeks when the demand will be.

- Service expectations, such as billing and payment parameters, storage service, order filling and notification if orders can't be filled completely. This could include the ordering schedule that outlines when important dates are; for an example, see Table 4. Contact information for the key people, since contact people may change regularly.

**Table 2. Recommended schedule for ordering of UBC Farm produce for a Wednesday AgUS barbeque.**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
AgUS meets----- to decide on menu	-----→ UBC Farm availability released	Menu planning & Ordering complete by today <sup>a</sup>	←-----	Order is ready for pickup -----	-----	AgUS Meets to decide on menu -----
-----	Order is picked up -----→ UBC Farm availability released	<b>First AgUS BBQ!</b>  Menu planning & Ordering for next week complete by today	←-----	Order is ready for pickup -----	-----	AgUS Meets to decide on menu -----
-----	Order is picked up -----→ UBC Farm availability released	<b>Second AgUS BBQ!</b>  Menu planning & Ordering for next week complete by today	←-----	Order is ready for pickup -----	-----	AgUS Meets to decide on next menu -----→

a. For either a Wednesday or Thursday barbeque, the council should meet on or before the previous Thursday morning to decide, based on the availability, what they will cook and order for the following week. They must submit their order as early as possible after it is released to ensure their order is filled, so we recommend that this meeting occur on Wednesday.

*7.1.2 AgUS uses or adapts our menus, considering the cost implications:*

To enhance the relationship between AgUS and the UBC Farm, we have proposed a wide selection of healthy menus so as to incorporate more produce from the UBC Farm. Some of the menus recommended have, in fact been revised from the current AgUS recipes. Through the implementation of these theme-based menus, AgUS can provide a wide variety of ethnically diverse, nutritious and affordable dinners, and at the same time strengthen the bond between the MacMillan community and the UBC Farm.

A recommendation for future AGSC 450 students and the AgUS is to set up a food tasting panel and conduct surveys amongst the Land and Food Systems faculty and student body to gain feedback on any proposed menus. This would allow the AgUS to have a better idea of how to attract people from the MacMillan community to the barbeque dinners.

We would also like to recommend the possibility of expanding the kitchen equipment used by the AgUS as it has been observed that there is a lack of proper cooking stoves and ovens that would allow the committee to prepare food easily. This could be done by organising fundraisers to raise money to purchase used stoves or by seeking for donations.

#### *7.1.3 AgUS promotes their newly strengthened relationship with UBC Farm:*

The number of attendants directly affects AgUS' revenue from their weekly dinners. This in turn influences AgUS' willingness to purchase, and the amount of purchased from UBC Farm. To encourage AgUS' purchasing of UBC Farm products, enhance the relationship between UBC Farm and the MacMillan communities, and increase the numbers of attendees that will knowingly benefit from the enhanced community connection being offered, promotion of the UBC Farm produce at AgUS barbeques is a very important tool. We recommend:

- a. AgUS promotes the significance of adopting more UBC Farm products into weekly dinners. The promotion materials could deliver the following messages:
  - i. Large amounts of UBC Farm products are used in the new menus;
  - ii. The tastiness and freshness of new meals in which various UBC Farm produces are adopted;
  - iii. The low food miles of the barbeques, reduced emissions from consumption of fossil fuel and conserving environment surrounding UBC; and

- iv. The significance of supporting Vancouver's only farm, and having economic and social support for UBC Farm in the community.
- b. A poster about barbeque dinners could be a useful mean of promotion around the MacMillan building. A sample poster is enclosed in Appendix C, Figure 1.
- c. AgUS could recruit AGSC 100, 250, 350 & 450 teaching teams to incorporate a short weekly announcement about the dinners into the first five minutes of every AGSC class. This simple action would reach the whole undergraduate population within the faculty of Land and Food Systems since AGSC courses are mandatory core courses. A template PowerPoint announcement slide is in Appendix C, Figure 2.
- d. A term survey about the quality of barbeque dinners may be delivered to all LFS students, to facilitate the future improvement of attendance at this event.

## **7.2 Final reflections**

There is strong demand for developing a partnership between AgUS and UBC Farm, and it is feasible to incorporate a significant amount of UBC Farm produce into the weekly barbeque AgUS dinners through action on our recommendations. Ultimately, it is up to the AgUS to implement this partnership as a commitment to enhancing the integration of the Land and Food Systems community. We believe our recommendations and supporting materials will help AgUS to make this step, and that through this not only will the relationship between the UBC Farm and the AgUS be strengthened, but the goal of achieving a campus community within UBC that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable will be closer to being attained.

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## APPENDIX A: SURVEY FOR AGUS MEMBERS

We are interested in helping the AgUS incorporate more UBC Farm produce into the first 5-6 Wednesday/Thursday Night BBQs of the fall term. The end result of our project may include some form of agreement between the AgUS and UBC Farm that benefits both parties. It would have to be something AgUS is *able* and *willing* to adopt. For now, we're asking for your help to answer these questions:

1. How important is it to you to have BC items in the first 5-6 AgUS BBQs? Comment or use 1 – 5 (1=don't care; 5=want as much BC foods as is available).
  
2. How important is it to you to have UBC Farm items in the first 5-6 AgUS BBQs? Comment or use 1 – 5 (1=don't care; 5=want as much UBC Farm as is available).
  
3. What do you *perceive* to be the main barriers or constraints to increasing the use of UBC Farm produce in future AgUS dinners? Please rate from 1 – 5:  
(1 = not very important, 5 = very important)
  - a. \_\_\_ financial constraints / added costs
  - b. \_\_\_ equipment to process or cook
  - c. \_\_\_ availability of volunteers
  - d. \_\_\_ transportation of food from UBC farm to MacMillan
  - e. \_\_\_ storage of food (if not picked up on the day of the BBQ)
  - f. \_\_\_ limited menu options
  - g. \_\_\_ reliability of UBC Farm to supply
  - h. \_\_\_ communication from or with UBC Farm
  - i. \_\_\_ other (please specify)
  
4. Gavin Wright from UBC Farm suggested the AgUS / UBC Farm purchasing relationship might work best if AgUS combines their orders with Agora Café's. What do you *think* would be the biggest problem with combining orders with Agora Café?
  
5. What's your *estimate* of how much of the food in the first 5-6 dinners is already from BC? \_\_\_ % of the food served  
And how much from UBC Farm? \_\_\_% of the food served

Thank you for your time. We welcome additional comments/suggestions:

## APPENDIX B: SAMPLE MENUS

**HIGHLIGHTED INGREDIENTS ARE ITEMS THAT WERE AVAILABLE FROM UBC FARM IN SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 2006.**

<b>Proposed Fruit Night Menu: Ingredients</b>	<b>Dish Name, Servings &amp; Method</b> (All Recipes, 2007)
8 x watermelon 8 x apples, core removed and sliced 8 x kiwifruit, peeled and sliced 96 x strawberries, hulled and quartered 8x orange, segmented 8 x mango, cubed 8 cup of fresh blueberries 8 cup of blackberries 8 cup of seedless grapes 8 bunch of fresh mint, sliced thinly	<p><b>Appetizer: Fruit Salad with Mint</b>                      Originally for 6 servings; now x8 = 40 servings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cut watermelon in half and scoop out about 2-dozen balls from one half of the melon with a melon baller or teaspoon. Scoop out the flesh from the other half and reserve the melon to use as a salad bowl.</li> <li>2. Toss all fruit together with the mint and spoon into the watermelon bowl.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Blackened Cod</b>                      20 x 7 ounce portions of cod filets with skin on                      30 tbsp blackening spice                      20 tbsp olive oil  <b>Mango Salsa:</b>                      40 mangos cubed into ½ inch pieces                      40 green onions sliced thinly 40 tbsp red onion, chopped fine                      15 Thai chilli, finely chopped                      60 tbsp cilantro, chopped roughly                      40 tbsp red pepper, chopped into ¼ inch cubes                      Juice of 30 limes                      Salt and pepper to taste</p>	<p><b>Entrée : Blackened Cod with Mango Salsa</b>                      Originally for 4 servings; now x20 = 100 servings</p> <p><b>Blackened Cod</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place a large cast iron pan over medium high heat. Allow pan to preheat for 10 minutes. Meanwhile pat fish dry with paper towels and sprinkle with spice rub.</li> <li>2. Place oil into preheated pan then fish flesh side down. Allow to cook for 1 - 2 minutes or until a nice dark crust has formed on the fish.</li> <li>3. Carefully flip fish over and place into preheated oven for a further 7 minutes or until desired doneness.</li> <li>4. Remove from oven and serve with mango salsa.</li> </ol> <p><b>Mango Salsa</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Combined all ingredients in a bowl and add season to taste with salt and pepper. Chill mixture in refrigerator for 20 minutes before serving.</li> </ol>
50 cups of any sliced fruit: apricot with stones removed, pears, blackberries, raspberries, rhubarb 1 cup sugar, plus extra sugar, for dusting ½ cup balsamic vinegar 2 cups butter, chilled 4 cups self-raising flour 1cup sugar 8 large pinch salt 1040 ml buttermilk vanilla ice cream	<p><b>Dessert: Fruit Cobbler</b>                      Originally for 6 servings; now x8 = 40 servings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C/gas 5).</li> <li>3. Put the fruit into a pan over heat, with the sugar and the balsamic vinegar. Cook gently, until the juices begin to run from the berries. Pour into an ovenproof dish.</li> <li>4. Meanwhile make the topping. Rub the cold butter into the flour until the mixture resembles fine bread crumbs. Add the sugar and salt, stir well, and then add the buttermilk to form a loose, scone-type mixture. Roll balls of the dough and place randomly over the hot fruit.</li> <li>5. Sprinkle with a little sugar, and bake in the oven for 30 minutes until golden brown.</li> <li>6. Serve with vanilla ice cream.</li> </ol>

<b>Proposed Italian Menu: Ingredients</b>	<b>Dish Name, Servings &amp; Method (All Recipes, 2007)</b>
<p>34 large tomatoes, coarsely chopped                      8.5 sweet onion, chopped                      34 tablespoons olive oil                      17 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano                      17 teaspoon chopped fresh basil                      34 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley                      8.5 (17 pound) loaf Italian bread, cut into 1 inch slices                      4.25 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese</p>	<p><b>Appetizer: Bruschetta</b>                      Originally for 6 servings; now x17 = 102 servings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).</li> <li>2. In a medium bowl, combine tomatoes, onion, olive oil, oregano, basil and parsley. Place bread on a baking sheet, and top with tomato mixture. Sprinkle with Parmesan.</li> <li>3. Bake in preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes, or until bottom of bread is browned. Allow to cool 5 minutes before serving.</li> </ol>
<p>9 (108 ounce) packages rotini pasta                      18 cups half-and-half cream                      4.5 cup butter                      6 cups freshly grated Parmesan cheese                      4.5 tablespoon chopped basil leaves                      4.5 tablespoon chopped oregano                      4.5 teaspoon chopped fresh chives                      4.5 teaspoon chopped fresh parsley                      36 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cubed                      4.5 green bell pepper, chopped                      4.5 red bell pepper, chopped</p>	<p><b>Entrée-Meat: Chicken Rotini Stovetop Casserole</b>                      Originally for 6 servings; now x9 = 54 servings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta, and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, or until al dente; drain.</li> <li>2. Combine half-and-half and butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Boil gently, stirring, until mixture has reduced to 1 1/2 to 1 2/3 cups. Remove pan from heat; whisk in cheese, basil, oregano, chives, and parsley. Cover, and set aside.</li> <li>3. Sauté chicken in a large skillet until lightly browned on both sides. Stir in green and red bell pepper, and cook until vegetables are tender, and chicken is no longer pink in the middle.</li> <li>4. In a casserole dish, combine the hot cooked pasta, chicken mixture, and sauce. Mix well, and serve immediately.</li> </ol>
<p>104 ounces uncooked spaghetti                      26 cups fresh broccoli florets                      26 large tomatoes - peeled, seeded, and chopped                      26 garlic cloves, minced                      3 and 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes                      26 tablespoons olive or canola oil                      6.5 cup sliced ripe olives                      6.5 cup minced fresh parsley                      9 and 3/4 teaspoon salt                      1 and 5/8 teaspoon pepper                      3 and 1/4 cup grated Romano cheese</p>	<p><b>Entrée-Vegetarian: Broccoli 'n Tomato Pasta</b>                      Originally for 4 servings; now x13 = 52 servings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In a large skillet or Dutch oven, bring 3 quarts water to a boil. Add spaghetti; boil, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Add broccoli; boil 3-4 minutes longer or until pasta and broccoli are tender.</li> <li>2. Meanwhile, in a non-stick skillet, sauté the tomatoes, garlic and pepper flakes in oil for 2 minutes. Drain pasta mixture; add to the skillet. Add remaining ingredients and toss to coat.</li> <li>3. Serve with Romano cheese garnish.</li> </ol>
<p>9 cup ricotta cheese                      27 tablespoons sugar                      2 and 1/4 cup miniature chocolate chips                      9 (96.75 ounce) loaf frozen pound cake, thawed</p>	<p><b>Dessert: Italian Torte</b>                      Originally for 6 servings; now x9 = 54 servings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In a bowl, combine the ricotta cheese and sugar; mix well. Stir in chocolate chips. Split cake into three horizontal layers. Place bottom layer on a serving plate; top with half of the cheese mixture. Repeat layers. Top with the remaining cake layer. Cover and refrigerate until serving.</li> </ol>

<b>Proposed Greek Menu: Ingredients</b>	<b>Dish Name, Servings &amp; Method</b>
6 cups olive oil 2 cups fresh lemon juice 8.25 teaspoon fresh chopped garlic 16.5 teaspoon red wine vinegar 8.25 teaspoons each of oregano, dill Salt and freshly ground black pepper 50 large plum tomatoes, seeded, coarsely chopped 20 cucumbers, peeled, seeded, coarsely chopped 12 red onion, peeled, chopped 25 bell peppers, seeded, coarsely chopped 8.25 cup pitted black olives coarsely chopped 10 cup crumbled feta cheese	<b>Appetizer: Dad's Greek Salad Recipe</b> (Bauer, 2003) 100 servings 2. Whisk the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, vinegar, oregano and dill weed together until blended. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. (Can be prepared 3 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Re-whisk before using.) 3. Combine the tomatoes, cucumber, onion, bell pepper, olives in a bowl. Toss with dressing. Sprinkle cheese over and serve.
<b>Sandwich:</b> 2 tablespoons each of salt & black pepper 200 (1/4-inch-thick) slices of tomato (~40 tomatoes) 200 (1-ounce) slices sourdough bread 25 peeled cucumber, diagonally cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices 75 cups chopped arugula 12.5 cup vertically sliced red onion 50 tablespoons chopped pitted kalamata olives <b>Vinaigrette:</b> 1 cup olive oil 3 cups each of crumbled feta cheese & lemon juice 12.5 teaspoon sugar 12 tablespoon fresh oregano 3.1 teaspoon salt 25 garlic cloves, minced	<b>Entrée- Vegetarian: Greek Sandwich with Feta Vinaigrette</b> (Cooking Light Magazine, 2005) Originally 4 servings; now x25 = 100 servings 1. To prepare the sandwich, combine salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Place 2 tomato slices each on half of the bread slices, and sprinkle evenly with half of the salt mixture. 2. Arrange the cucumber slices over the tomato slices; sprinkle evenly with remaining salt mixture. 3. Add arugula, onion, and chopped olives to the vinaigrette; toss to coat. Arrange the arugula mixture evenly over the cucumber slices. Top with the remaining bread slices. 4. To prepare the vinaigrette, combine the first 7 ingredients in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk.
50 lb meat of choice 125 cloves garlic (finely chopped) 6 cups olive oil 1.5 cups fresh chopped oregano 2-3 tablespoons pepper & salt 3 cups fresh lemon juice pita bread	<b>Entrée –Meat: Souvlaki &amp; Pita</b> (Media Mosaic, 1997) Originally for 4; X25 = 100 servings 1. Cut the meat into 2 x 2 inch cubes. 2. Mix with the rest of the ingredients and marinate, preferably overnight, in the refrigerator. 3. Skewer with or without your favourite vegetables (like mushrooms, peppers, onions or tomatoes) and barbecue at medium heat. 4. Baste with olive oil, lemon juice and oregano brine.
12 ounces (3/4 pound) of dark chocolate 12 ounces (3/4 pound) of roasted almonds, unsalted - whole or coarsely chopped	Dessert: Anomala - Chocolate Covered Roasted Almonds 1. Break the chocolate into chunks and melt over low heat in the top of a double boiler, stirring frequently. Serve warm with roasted almonds. Note on quantities: The recipe calls for equal parts (weight) chocolate and almonds.

## APPENDIX C: SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

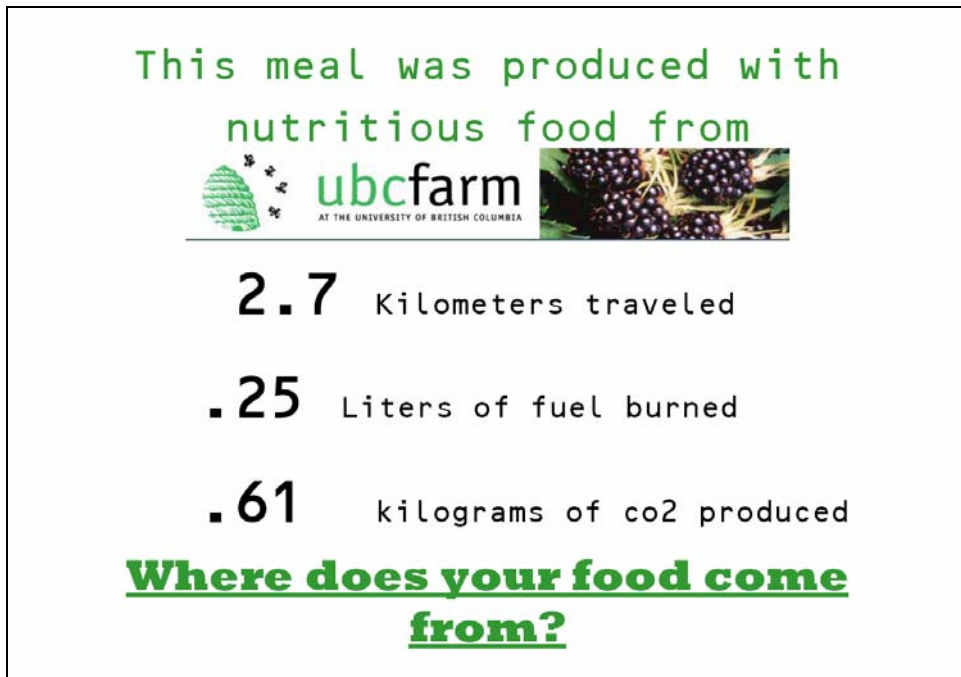


Figure 1. A sample poster promoting the low food miles of dinners made with UBC Farm produce.

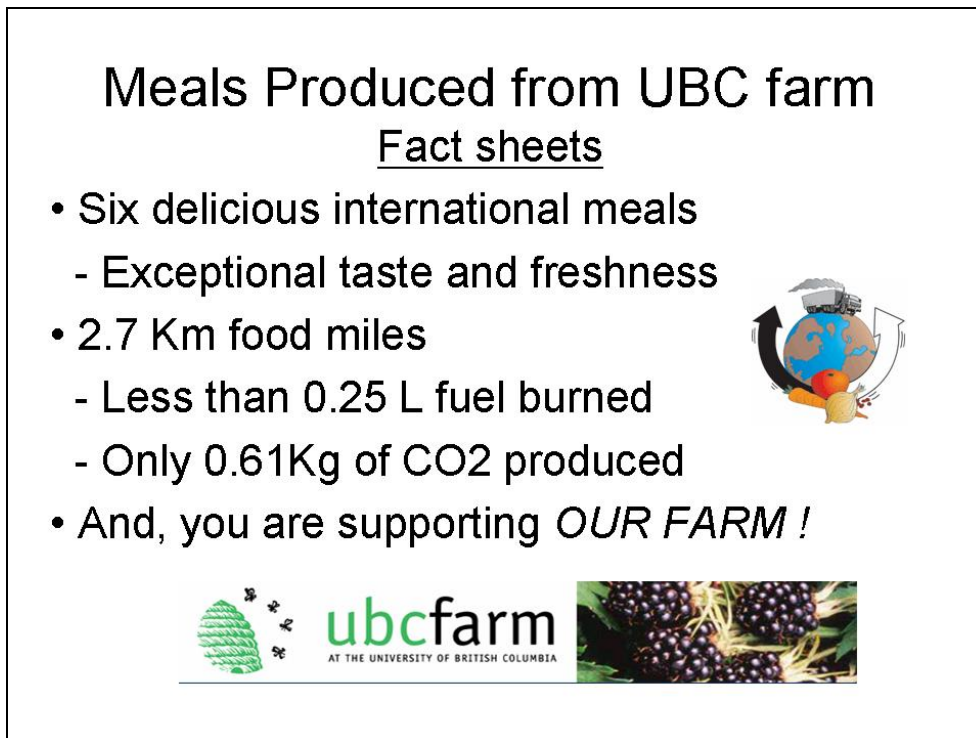


Figure 2. A template PowerPoint slide to promote AgUS barbeques featuring UBC Farm produce in Faculty of LFS classes.