

Food Preparedness Guide

UBCFSP Final Report

Zineb Bazza, Dawn Brinkman, Kyla Sheehan, Di Wing Wu, Andy Yang

UBC FOOD SYSTEM PROJECT

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Instructor Andrew Riseman

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Executive Summary

This project is aimed at addressing food insecurity faced by the UBC international student population by delivering a food preparedness guide. The guide focuses on access to affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food options both on campus and throughout Vancouver's food system for incoming international students. Canadian food systems seem to offer a variety of ethnic restaurants and a wide range of options for people with food allergies and diet preferences. However, there are certainly challenges faced by newcomers to Canada with regards to food security; predominantly access to affordable, healthy and fresh products. Understanding the food challenges faced by non-Canadian students is critical to gaining insight on the food security of a student population, and as an indicator of their overall university experience.

A focus group interview was used to obtain qualitative data, which then shaped the content of the food preparedness guide. This methodology was chosen because it provides current feedback from international students on campus, and informs the research group of students' experiences interacting with and integrating into UBC and Vancouver's food systems. The 2-hour session was held with five UBC international students, recruited by the community partner Eve Court from the Global Lounge. The questions posed in the discussion were formulated to guide the dialogue with themes focusing on campus food experience, challenges in accessing food, food budget, involvement in local food systems and interests in culturally appropriate food. The main focus of the food guide content was determined through a debriefing of the focus group, revision of the notes taken during the session and through discussion between research group members.

Findings demonstrate that many international students have experienced food insecurity in their first year on campus. A general dissatisfaction was expressed by participants, in terms of their on-campus food experiences. Despite their interests in cultural food, food budget was shown to be the most important determinant of food choices that students made on and off campus. Participants expressed interest in involvement of campus food systems but little actual commitment due to busy school schedules. They also showed interest in obtaining a better understanding of seasonal foods available in the lower mainland throughout the year as well as a good glossary that covered local food terminology.

This feedback heavily shaped the content of the food preparedness guide. The guide acted as a template to deliver information on affordable and healthy food options, food terminology, local food resources and cultural food in order to alleviate new-coming students' stress with food shopping and food preparation.

This project concludes that international students at UBC are exposed to an array of vulnerabilities with respect to food. A food guide of that addresses the needs of the local food system can be an effectual strategy to improve the quality of academic and social experience for incoming international students. While food from their home country had a big place in their hearts, a majority of students were mostly interested in affordable and healthy food options and recipes for inexpensive and easily-preparable meals.

Proposed Recommendations for Future Project Involvement:

- Re-evaluate UBC food services and identify areas for improvement. A conversation can be started between the students and the staff on how to improve campus food systems. Resident students can form an advocate group that facilitates this conversation.
- Use an electronic medium to share the information delivered in the food guide. By having this information on a web page or a mobile application, students can refer or look up the information whenever needed. It can be especially helpful for use when out grocery shopping or looking for a place to eat.
- For future researchers who are tasked with expanding this project, data collecting from a larger sample size is recommended. In this project, only five people were recruited for the focus group interview. A larger and more diversified sample may be able to deliver critical findings that are more representative of the international student community in UBC.

Abstract

The population of international students enrolled in Canadian universities has risen substantially. Understanding the food challenges faced by foreign students becomes important in terms of gaining insights on the food security of student populations, and is an essential part of overall university experience. With a focus on newcomers, this project is part of the UBC Food System Project (UBCFSP), which is a collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including the Faculty of Land and Food Systems and the UBC Sustainability Office, tackling food insecurity on campus and striving toward campus-

wide food sustainability for the long run. The Food Preparedness Guide aims to deliver information on finding affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food options both on campus and in the Vancouver food system for incoming UBC international students. A focus group discussion was conducted with five international student participants who were recruited by the community partner through the Global Lounge. Findings demonstrate that many international students have experienced food insecurity during their first year on campus. General dissatisfaction was expressed by participants in terms of their experience with food on campus. Despite their interests in cultural food, budget and affordability was shown to be the most important determinant of food choices students make both on and off campus. This heavily shaped the content of the food preparedness guide. The content of the guide was built based on feedback received during the focus group. The guide's aim was to deliver information on: affordable and healthy food options, food terminology, local food resources and cultural food, as a means to alleviate new-coming students' stress with food shopping, preparation and consumption.

Introduction

Food insecurity in the international student population?

A person's cultural background is an influential determinant of their food choices. In recent decades, the population of international students enrolled in Canadian universities has risen substantially (CBIE, 2014). Gaining understanding of foreign students' food experiences when they first arrive in a host culture can be very important

in developing effectual strategies to improve the quality of academic and social life for new coming students (Amos&Lordly, 2014).

Previous studies from Canada and the U.K. both show that traditional food acts as a cultural tie to reassure newcomers' identity and reconnect them with a sense of home during the challenging early stages of acculturation in the host country (Amos & Lordly, 2014; Brown et al., 2010). Overall, Canadian food systems seem to be “greatly accommodating”, including a variety of ethnic restaurants and wide range of options for people with food allergies and diet preferences (Guignard, 2014). However, there are certainly challenges with regards to food security faced by newcomers to Canada. Predominantly, these hurdles are centered around questions regarding access to affordable, healthy and fresh products.

The typical Canadian meal conjures up images of pre-made packaged foods; an easy and convenient option, but not necessarily a healthy one (Amos & Lordly, 2014). Language barriers also contribute to food insecurity. Evidence shows that some immigrants experience difficulties finding certain foods they want because they are not able to describe it properly or know the right word for it (Guignard, 2014; Vehabi & Damba, 2013). Limited knowledge on community-based food resources may also prevent people from accessing the food they need (Vehabi & Damba, 2013).

Existing relevant guides, or lack there of

After researching the existing food guides available for international students and newcomers to Vancouver, it has become apparent that there is a lack of tools available for accessing affordable and culturally appropriate foods. While not necessarily being aimed

at students, the idea of a food guide for newcomers has been implemented by the government of Canada (welcomebc.ca). Available in more than ten languages the guide is not specifically focused on where or how to find culturally appropriate foods for the immigrant populations, but more geared towards healthy food choices. The Food Preparedness Guide, found in the Appendix of this report as Figure C, aims to deliver thematic links and text materials on finding affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food options in both UBC and Vancouver food systems. The structure and content of the project outcomes can be further transformed into a chosen format (website, mobile app, blog or paper pamphlet) and made accessible to incoming international students at UBC.

Formulation of focus group questions

This project is based on the concept that eating is a social behavior; that the food systems that people engage in have significant impacts on their well-being and what they consume. Food habits have been documented as being a prominent factor in delaying the impacts of changes when individuals face the challenge of a new social environment (Brown et al., 2010). Studies demonstrate that, for newcomers in the early stages of acculturation in a host country, cultural food brings comfort to their psychological insecurity by soothing their emotions of homesickness and nostalgia (Amos & Lordly, 2014; Williams-Forson, 2014). Based on the above-mentioned research on the importance of “home” food, we prioritized culturally appropriate food as the top focus in our initial stage of constructing the food guide draft. The online and literary research and resulting assumptions also heavily shaped the direction of the questions we created for the focus group interview.

Visions for a Utopian Food System

Our team generally agrees with the “Visions for a Utopian Food System” created by UBCFSP, given that it argues for a sustainable campus food system that supports the well-being, integrity and growth of the ecosystem, animals, local residents and their community. Despite the visions being very well constructed, we do find that some of them are not practical and have not been rigorously applied to many UBC food service facilities. For example, it stated that “providers and educators promote awareness among consumers about cultivation, processing, ingredients, and nutrition of food products in the food system”, however this has rarely been carried out with on-campus food facilitators. Our project itself does not tackle raising awareness on specific traits of food products used in UBC food systems. Nevertheless, it allies with some parts of the vision to push for affordable, nutritious and culturally sustainable food options for students. It also hopes to broaden students’ access “to learn about the food system and to gain food production and preparation skills”.

Methodology

Research of Focus Groups

A focus group discussion was chosen as our primary activity to obtain qualitative data, which then shaped the content of the food preparedness guide. This methodology is utilized in many psychological studies, as its format allows for open discussion rather than simply a question and answer exchange between participants and researchers.

Taking note from Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook (2007), our list of discussion questions were kept to a minimal amount, as to maintain an open environment that promotes discussion, rather than simply mimic a survey. The community partner for this project, Eve Court, also acted as a recruiter for participants in the focus group. In the context of UBC, Court is both a formal service provider and a community gatekeeper, and was therefore able to reach the desired audience and gather participants through the Global Lounge (Hennink 2014).

Focus Group Recruitment and Attendance

The focus group was held on Wednesday March 4th, 2015, in a conference room within UBC's Global Lounge, and the session lasted for approximately two hours (scheduled 4:30-6:30). Participants were recruited in an intentional manner, by the Global Campus Initiatives program advisor. The recruitment process and discussion designed for our focus group was intended to create an environment conducive to open and honest discussion. Participants were recruited based on their familiarity with the Global Lounge, and on their status as a community of international UBC students; this belonging to a social network is desirable among participants of discussion groups (Hennink 2014). Of the community contacted by our community partner, five participants attended the focus group. This means that our sample size was five; because we are unable to determine the amount of students that were contacted, we cannot define the response rate. The participants were all UBC undergraduate students who interact with the campus and city food systems on a daily basis. Although a larger sample size may have been more representative of the population (UBC international students), the smaller grouping

allowed there to be a ratio of researchers to participants that allowed an ease of execution, and fostered a setting of open communication.

Focus Group Roles and Activities

Our team of researchers consisted of five UBC students. During the focus group, two students acted as note-takers, while the other three acted as moderators. Because of the small sample size, we were able to have only two note-takers, with each note-taker transcribing the answers of two to three different participants. After doing round-table introductions of both participants and researchers, an icebreaker activity was implemented (icebreaker outline can be found in table 2 in appendix). The icebreaker activity, which lasted 15 minutes, incorporated questions surrounding food preferences and food systems and was a crucial element in building a comfortable rapport with the participants, which is considered to be prerequisite to a successful focus group discussion (Hennink 2014).

The questions posed in the discussion were formulated to guide the dialogue and to direct our areas of focus for the food preparedness guide; these questions can be viewed in table 3 (Appendix). During the focus group, the moderators and note-takers were active participants, sharing in our experiences as UBC students as a way to connect with the focus group participants and to guide our direction in building the content for the food guide. In this open setting, we were able to conduct “humanistic” research, where moderators are able to utilize tools of empathy and active listening (Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook, 2007). Following the focus group discussion, the notes were shared amongst group members using a google document. The main focus of the

food guide content was determined through a debriefing of the focus group, revision of the notes taken during the session and through discussion between group members.

Why A Focus Group

This methodology was chosen by the stakeholder and supported by the group because it provides fresh and current feedback from international students on campus, and informs us of their experience interacting with and integrating into UBC and Vancouver's food systems. Although most researchers advise homogeneity among participants in focus groups, our research question stood to benefit from a culturally diverse group (Kitzinger 1995, Hennink 2014). Having feedback and ideas directly from the demographic for which this guide is intended will greatly benefit the effectiveness of the guide.

Other Methodologies used

Other methodologies include research into pre-existing resources and guides in Vancouver, BC and on campus. These resources and guides were included as support and content for the food guide along with a brief description of their objective and practicality. We also conducted and incorporated literary research on related topics covered in the guide. While searching for sources to use in the literature review, key search words included terms like: "average food prices in Canada/Vancouver", "International students", "cultural adaptation", "cultural sustainability" and "focus group advantages/benefits". As a group, we also brainstormed tools that we use in our daily lives to access affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food choices.

*List of focus group participants: Narissa Diwan, Cicely Blain, Kimberly Neumann. The other two participants preferred not to be named.

Findings and Outcomes

The focus group allowed us direct insight into the opinions and experiences of international students currently immersed in the food systems on and off campus. Some were still in the process of discovering what Vancouver's food system has to offer. This afforded us a unique perspective and we found that many of their experiences were aligned. We would often ask if their friends within the international student community also had the same experiences and feedback, which they affirmed was certainly the case.

Thrust into a new food system

Firstly, there was a general consensus among the participants that first year students living on campus generally have a negative experience with respect to food. Students living in first year residence often have no other choice than to purchase a meal plan, which allows them to buy food from a variety of establishments on campus. The meal plan provides students with a discount on food purchased from cafeterias on campus; however the quality and taste of food from these cafeterias and other food outlets on campus was reported to be very disappointing. In terms of fresh and healthy options, the participants agreed that the salad bars were the best option, however they are often the most expensive, with patrons being charged based on the weight of the meal. Variety and cultural authenticity of food options were also reported to be limited and

unsatisfactory in campus cafeterias. New food items are generally brought in every two weeks, which results in a great deal of repetition. The participants also reported that it is difficult to get access to food after night classes, and that what was available at these hours tend to be unhealthy food items such as chips or microwave pizzas from convenience stores.

Affordability

Another major point of discussion and feedback from the focus group was surrounding student food budget, which turned out to be the most important determining factor of food options and choices on and off campus. With the time constraints of university life, the group surmised that they, along with most students they know on campus, are only able to cook for themselves on average three times per week. The rest of the week meals are eaten in various food outlets either on or off campus. The participants agreed that resources and tips on accessing foods that were budget sensitive would be very helpful. Shopping for groceries can be challenging and confusing when first coming to Vancouver and to the UBC campus, especially when budget is a major consideration. It can take a great deal of time before students become aware of cheaper grocery stores off campus such as No-frills or ethnic markets where they are able to find culturally familiar foods. The participants also showed interest in meal planning, shopping tips and recipes that would cater to their budgets and lack of time available for food preparation.

Involvement

Due to their busy schedules, there was little interest shown in volunteering at the UBC farm or becoming involved at any committed capacity in food system activities on campus. However there was interest in participating in the food and meal preparation events which would result in free meals, of which there are many on campus. There was also an interest in first nations food culture and meal preparation. Participants talked about their experiences with first nations food and were keen to learn some of the simple recipes such as Bannock. Participants also expressed interest in local food events in Vancouver such as farmers markets, however it was noted the level of surprise at the prices of fresh produce at Vancouver farmers' markets. In most countries, weekly markets are places to connect directly with local farmers, cutting out the middleman and therefore negotiating cheaper prices for fresh produce. In Vancouver, by contrast, prices at farmers markets are comparable to those found in grocery stores. Despite the disappointment in price point, the participants agreed that this was an important element to include in the guide as a reference for plugging into the local food culture. They also showed interest in obtaining a better understanding of seasonal foods available in the lower mainland throughout the year as well as a good glossary that covered local food terminology.

Building the Food Guide Content

Based on the information gathered from the focus group discussion, we were able to effectively narrow and define the scope of the Food Preparedness Guide. The focus of the guide directly correlated with the emphasis and importance placed on the topics discussed in the focus group. The guide covers regularly occurring food events, volunteer positions and opportunities for free food on campus. The guide also provides a list of

grocery stores that are affordable and/or offer ethnically appropriate food items both on campus and throughout Vancouver. Additionally the guide includes a list of average prices of common grocery items from BC. We have also included a section that links to various websites that acts as search engines for local restaurants and grocery stores, on these sites the student will be able to narrow down their search to incorporate specific considerations such as healthiness, affordability or belonging to a certain ethnicity, with detailed instructions to the user on how to navigate these sites. We also provided information on local food events and topics such as farmers markets, seasonal foods and local terminology and food etiquette. And as requested we included a recipe for Bannock and some introductory information regarding the local First Nations food culture.

Discussion

Facilitating and connecting students to resources

We found that much of the information desired for this guide already existed on various websites both associated and not associated with UBC. Our work resided in synthesizing this information, with categories, links and introductions to the content covered. What we created was essentially a guide to accessing these resources and information, the first of its kind. Fortunately this made the scope of the topics covered in the food guide manageable. Were we to have developed and written the entire content of so many topics it would have been far too broad for the timeframe allotted for this project.

Budget and meal planning in a new culture

One of the common themes from the focus group findings, was that budget was the most important factor influencing food choices. One of the reasons for this could be attributed to students adjusting to the currency exchange rate and local food prices. The cost of food is one of the largest expenses for students living on campus. Many students have student loans to pay off after graduation. Managing expenses in university is very important and for international students who pay substantially more for education in Canada, budget is even more of an issue. Apart from having to adjust to a new food system here, international students also have to adjust to prices and sometimes even appearances of certain produce in BC. Often this can be challenging and students may choose to eat out even when the cost is greater. A student budget will not offer the luxury of eating out every meal in order to avoid the unknowns. By having a meal plan, first year students will be offered some diversity in terms of food items at reasonable prices.

Culturally appropriate foods

The quality of students diet can greatly affect the quality of both their academic and social life. The overall negative experience reported by students enrolled in the meal plan seems to suggest that students are not likely to eat at campus cafeterias, given other options. Secondly it was apparent to us from the focus group discussions that overseas students do seek out food that is culturally diverse. These foods reminded them of home. There was good knowledge of where to local the relevant restaurants, the expected prices and their authenticity. Also most of the ingredients for making these authentic dishes are easily available in supermarkets or ethnic markets all over BC. We had originally thought

that the guide would predominantly cover culturally appropriate neighborhoods, markets and restaurants, however upon exploring this theme with the focus group we realized that these resources were already readily available. Urban Spoon and Yelp would provide a more thorough search for a specific restaurant than we would be able to provide. Our task became how to introduce and facilitate students in navigating these online tools in order to achieve their search objective, and as a result increase their food security.

Need for increased on-campus food system knowledge

Our focus group also brought to attention the need for more knowledge and fluency of the UBC food system and its services. Participant's knowledge was limited to food outlets for day to day food consumption or grocery shopping. A portion of the guide was dedicated to providing information on the various food events around the UBC campus and where to find inexpensive and healthy foods. If students decided to help out, the meal is often free. This can reduce the amount of money spent on food on campus and is especially helpful for students with tight budgets.

Stakeholder Recommendations

The Purpose of the SEEDS project was a food systems project collaboration between the stakeholders and the students of the LFS 450 class. Throughout the project our stakeholder has guided and helped us in shaping the final deliverable: a Food Preparedness Guide. In our collaborations we were successful in narrowing the scope of our project to fit the parameters of our timeline. The focus group meeting was arranged by our stakeholder and was carried out successfully. Our team was able to gather

valuable information that later became the focus of our food guide. This guide is however, the first of its kind and should act as the platform and justification of expanded research and development on this topic and initiative.

Recommendations to the Stakeholder

In order provide the most widely accessible method of delivery and to quickly and effectively reach the largest number of international students we think it is best to showcase the information in a smartphone application. The sections of this app can correspond to the major themes in the food guide and be an interactive and dynamic tool . By having this information in a mobile device, students can refer or look up the information when needed. It can be especially helpful for use when grocery shopping, for tracking costs and land marking favorite stores or products. Another medium that is able to reach a large number of students is a web page. Students can search and read the information and if needed print the relevant pages for use.

Recommendations to future LFS students building upon this guide

For future LFS students taking this project further we recommend having a larger sample group with more diversity of participants when gathering information. We were only able to assemble five participants for our focus group. A larger and more diversified sample may reveal critical information missed in this first guide. We recommend a survey as a means of reaching as many international students as possible, in addition to a focus group. The focus group may also benefit from a follow up session in order to evaluate and revise the guide at an early stage. This method would also allow for areas of the campus food system to be looked at and evaluated in further detail. Another project

possibility could be accessing food outlets on campus for price point, hours of operation, nutrition and sustainability to better guide students and provide feedback for the management of UBC Food Services. We also recommend including content that covers healthy food products and recipes, potentially combining the need for budget sensitive options with health and nutrition.

Recommendations for UBC Food Services

As students of UBC, we feel a duty to relay to UBC food services the feedback we received during the focus group regarding overall campus food experience. Due to the required meal-plan purchase imposed on first year international students, UBC food services is responsible to deliver abundant, healthy, diverse and widely accessible food choices across campus. Students obligated to subsidize on UBC food services should not be reporting issues with food security while on campus. However, general dissatisfaction with food providers on campus was expressed by all participants of the focus group. Furthermore, the cohort claimed their experience was representative of the wider international student body. Primary complaints were: a lack of fresh and healthy foods available in cafeteria meals, a lack of diversity in weekly menu plans and no food available after night classes. This feedback points at the need for further dialogue and investigation into the level of food security experienced by the international student community, which would be valuable in identifying areas in need of improvement. This conversation could be facilitated by a resident student advocate group or another LFS SEEDS project group.

Scenario Evaluation

In order to evaluate the successfulness of the project, we relied very heavily on feedback from our stakeholder, as our food guide will not be published until the medium of presentation is chosen, and established by a specialized team specialized (be that specialization in app, website, or blog creation). The goal for this project was to create a food preparedness guide that could effectively aid new international UBC students navigate Vancouver food systems. The guide also aims to provide tips, resources and strategies for students to successfully shop and cook for themselves while living on their own. In order to be able to do that, we wanted to first discuss the contents of our food guide with a group of international and local students. We were able to do that early on during our project and had collected enough information and feedback from our students to continue on in our research. This was successful and helped us greatly in our work, and means that our group has successfully conducted our qualitative data collection.

The second part of our project was to research and compile all the information requested by the focus group in a usable food guide; our final deliverable. Our group also successfully completed this task and sent the food guide directly to the stakeholder for feedback. The feedback from our stakeholder can be found in the Appendix as Figure A.

Given that our primary form of evaluation is the direct feedback of our stakeholder, we feel that our group has successfully performed the task of creating a useful food guide. The feedback from our primary stakeholder, Eve Court, has been consistently positive and she has expressed satisfaction with our final product, with only a few comments and modifications to be made before the food guide is ready. Eve

requested that the guide include some information on healthy eating, which we did not originally include in the guide because it was not a prominent point of discussion during the focus group. However, we agree that is an important component of a food guide and have since added some healthy recipes and resources. Our group has been very responsive to the stakeholder; we were diligent in making sure that the goals for this project were common and understood by both parties for the duration of the project. This ensured that the final food guide was in the correct format and contained all the information needed.

Reflection: Successes and Challenges

Preparing a food guide for incoming international students has been an interesting and exciting project for all of our group members. We have encountered a few challenges along the way, but for the most part, this has been a positive experience.

At the beginning of this project, we did not have a clear idea of what our task was going to be. The only information we had was that we would be preparing a food guide for international students at UBC. This made a few group members nervous about the nature of the project, but after meeting with our stakeholder and having clear instructions, we started feeling more confident about the project in general. A few of us were disappointed to only work on the content of the food guide and not on the final format in which it is to be released, but others were relieved to only focus on the content and not the final presentation of the product. Figure B in the Appendix illustrates this dichotomy of responses to the same event, which shows the diversity in contexts and assumptions

with which students approach group projects. It's also been somewhat anti-climactic for us to prepare the raw data and text materials for a word document that will then be used for a guide which will be in an unknown format.

As a group, we decided on a few questions to ask the focus group in order to narrow down the contents of the food guide and focus on the aspects requested by the students. Considering the small size of the focus group, we felt it was a successful methodology and all of our group members were very happy with the outcomes and findings from this meeting. Once the guide was ready, we sent it to our stakeholder and waited for their feedback in order to see if any modifications or clarifications were needed.

One of the challenges that our group faced while collecting the data for this project is the size of the focus group, which we felt was not large enough to be representative of the international student population at UBC. Our focus group only had 6 student participants, and we do not believe that this sample size is large enough upon which to base a food guide. Nonetheless, we hope that most of the topics brought up by our focus group represent the most common challenges faced by international students at UBC and that we have provided substantial groundwork for the guide to expand in the future. For most of our group members, this was the first time working with human subjects and qualitative data. Interpreting this data in a way that accurately represented their concerns was challenging.

Other than the few frustrating moments that we had due to anticipation and confusion, working on this food guide has been a positive experience for all members of

our group. It involved a great deal of brainstorming and collaboration amongst group members and working with a focus group of international students, as well as maintaining constant communication with our stakeholder. Working as a group has made this experience more enjoyable for everyone. We were also able to successfully distribute the work equally between all group members. And thanks to the in-class leadership workshops before the commencement of the project, we utilized our personal strengths and values to split the project components and tasks. The leadership workshops also created a conversation piece to diffuse potential tensions and clashes in leadership style, creating a self-awareness that resulted in intention and cooperation amongst group members. This ability to negotiate our values and strengths streamlined our project and allowed us to ensure the best product was delivered, one that capitalized on our existing strengths and talents. We sincerely hope we have created a resource that will be easily utilized by future students, to help smooth their transition into a new culture and establish themselves within the local food system.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the focus group for taking the time and effort to answer all of our questions, Eve Court, our primary stakeholder for her constant feedback and for organizing the focus group for us. We would also like to thank UBC SEEDS for facilitating this collaboration, and the LFS 450 teaching team for their support and feedback throughout the project.

Media Release

Food security is not necessarily a concept that is used to measure the well-being of students, but defining it shows us that not all students at UBC are food secure. Food security is the state of having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable and nutritious food. Incoming international students at UBC are at risk of not having all the tools available to live on their own. Living on your own for the first time can be intimidating and challenging, and preparing food is not an easy task if you don't have the skills to do it properly. Eating comes in many steps, from meal planning and grocery shopping for the right products to prepping and cooking. International students arriving at UBC are often unfamiliar with Vancouver's food system. Especially after their first year in residence dependent on the UBC meal plan provided, students require support and guidance on where to find affordable grocery stores, specific produce to make a special recipe from their home country or how to simply cook and prepare their own meals.

Our LFS 450 group participated in the UBCFSP to construct a food preparedness guide with the help of a focus group of international students. We met with international students from all over the world and a few local students to get an idea of what areas students were struggling, with respect to food. The focus group informed us that while food from their home country had a big place in their hearts, students are most interested in affordable food options and recipes for cheap and easy meals. There was also an interest in free food events on campus and tips on enjoying and understanding local food culture and terminology. With this feedback in mind, we synthesized a food guide that provides user friendly resources and information on these topics of interest. We hope

that this guide will reach many UBC international students to come and help to increase their level of food security and enrich their food experiences on and off campus.




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Williams-Forson, P. (2014). “I Haven’t Eaten If I Don’t Have My Soup and Fufu”: Cultural Preservation through Food and Foodways among Ghanaian Migrants in the United States. *Africa Today, 61*(1), 68-87.

Figure A

 **Court, Eve** 8:14 PM (22 hours ago) ☆  

to me, kyla, W, andyrettawt, Dawn ▾

Hi Team,

So you will find attached the food guide with a few notes from me -- not many, and mostly around terminology as it looks great. My only suggestions would be to consider adding another cheap and nutritious recipe or two if you have time to come up with some - something that hits the nutrition piece as that was not really there. I would also more clearly delineate the sections - maybe number them - because as an online resource, I am envisioning it as section paths you can follow.

As far as your team is concerned, you have been fantastic to work with - you've been thoughtful, engaged, organized and flexible. I am not sure if I need to send in formal feedback to your Prof or if there is a format I need to follow but if there is please let me know.

Thanks for all your hard work!
Cheers,

Eve

From: Zineb Bazza [zinebbazza@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2015 4:03 PM

...

...

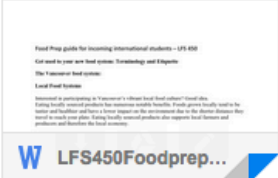


Figure A. Sample feedback from our stakeholder concerning our final deliverable: a food preparedness guide for incoming international students.

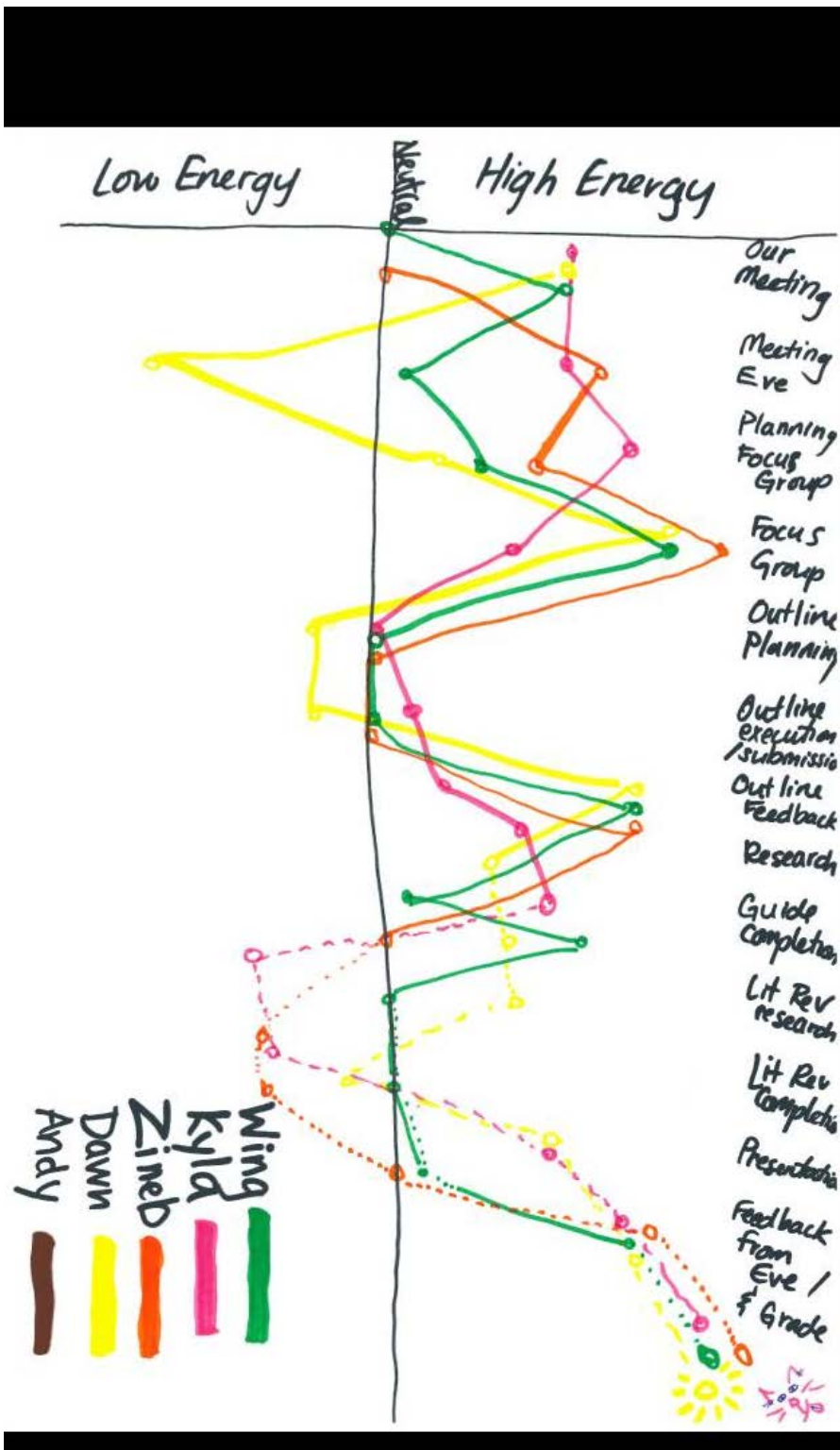


Figure B. This action shot shows our emotional progress for the duration of this project, and summarizes well how working with people can be, with high and low energy states depending on the tasks to perform and the feedback received for our deliverables.

Figure C.

Food Prep guide for incoming international students – LFS 450

The Vancouver food system:

Local Food Systems

Interested in participating in Vancouver’s vibrant local food culture? Good idea. Eating locally sourced products has numerous notable benefits. Foods grown locally tend to be tastier and healthier and have a lower impact on the environment due to the shorter distance they travel to reach your plate. Eating locally sourced products also supports local farmers and producers and therefore the local economy.

Get Local BC

Get Local BC is a website directory advocating Vancouver’s local food system. They provide listings and direction on *What Where* and *How* to “Get Local” and connect with local producers and buyers throughout the lower mainland. Get Local BC features an assortment of topics and articles ranging from- the top chefs and restaurants sourcing regional ingredients, Feasts of the Fields gourmet-wandering picnic, to a Sustainable Turkey guide! Check out Get Local BC and indulge in Vancouver’s creative and bountiful local food culture.

<http://www.getlocalbc.org/>

Seasonal Foods

You may wonder what local products are available at different times of the year. Vancouver has specific seasons for growing certain crops throughout the year, so don’t be surprised if you can’t find locally grown pumpkins in May.

The seasonal chart provided by Farmfolk Cityfolk covers a broad range of products grown and produced in the South West BC region including: fruits, vegetables, herbs, dairy, meat and seafood.

http://www.farmfolkcityfolk.ca/PDFs_& Docs/MetroVan%20Seasonal%20Chart.pdf

Farmers Markets

Many neighborhoods across Vancouver host a farmers market at regular intervals throughout the year. Some are weekly, some are monthly and some continue through the winter months. Farmers markets tend to be fun and celebratory gatherings that bring together local producers and artisans with local consumers. Expect to find a diversity of different vendors offering a range of products, such as canned goods, seafood and meat, fresh produce, baked goods and hot meals from innovative mobile food trucks and trailers. The prices for produce are similar to prices in grocery stores.

Your Local Farmers Market Society has a website listing all of Vancouver's farmers markets, dates, locations, lists of vendors, products available and volunteer opportunities found at:


<http://eatlocal.org/>

Terminology and Etiquette:

Cooking and feeding yourself can be a challenge for some students, just to get your head around the terms we use in Vancouver. Believe us, you are not the only one standing in the market and trying to figure out what a gluten-free bagel or a Nanaimo bar is. Here let's reveal some myths on food culture and food terms in Vancouver!

1. There is no such thing as Canadian food.

Despite being in a multicultural country with integrated food culture of a diversity of ethnic cuisines, many Canadians follow a diet that is close to Americans and Europeans.

- Take a look here  (<http://www.thecanadaguide.com/food>), JJ's Guide to Canadian covers some authentic Canadian foods and typical meal times that can help you to familiarize with the food system in Vancouver.

2. Where is my courgette in the market?

Many find that shopping for groceries can be a bit tricky when products such as *aubergine* or *courgette* are now labelled *eggplant* or *zucchini*.

Here's a multilingual glossary for common vegetables and fruits.

Melissa Kaplan's Herp Care Collection: Vegetable and Fruit Names


(<http://www.anapsid.org/resources/vegetablenames.html>)



Confused about a certain cooking term you came across while following a recipe? SOS Cuisine offers a comprehensive and regional culinary dictionary on their website. Simply choose BC as the region and find a long list of food related terms and words defined, everything from *Adjust the seasoning* to *Zest!* SOS Cuisine is also a great resource for budget shopping, cooking, healthy recipes, weekly menus and eating local.

http://www.soscuisine.com/glossaire.php?sos_l=en

3. A slice of vegan banana bread and medium coffee with soy milk, please.

Many people in Vancouver are vegan or vegetarian for various reasons ranging from health or moral concerns to religion. The terms are defined more thoroughly in the table below.

	What is it?	Learn More
Vegetarian or Vegan	<p><u>Vegetarian</u> is commonly defined as someone who lives on a plant-based diet with, or without, the use of dairy products, eggs and honey.</p> <p>Different types of vegetarian:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacto-ovo-vegetarians eat both dairy products and eggs; this is the most common type of vegetarian diet. • Lacto-vegetarians eat dairy products but avoid eggs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Vegans</u> do not eat dairy products, eggs, or any other products derived from animals. 	<p>The Vegetarian Society https://www.vegsoc.org</p> <p>International Vegetarian Union http://www.ivu.org</p> <p>The Vegan Society http://www.vegansociety.com</p>
Gluten-free	<p>A gluten-free diet is a diet, where the consumer avoids the intake of gluten, commonly found in grains such as wheat, barley and rye.</p> <p>Gluten-free products are primarily offered to people with celiac disease. People who don't have celiac disease but with non-celiac gluten sensitivity may also benefit from a gluten-free diet.</p>	<p>Gluten-free diet http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/gluten-free-diet/art-20048530</p> <p>Are Gluten Sensitivity Rates Rising? http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/757916_5</p>
Dairy-free	<p>A dairy-free diet is a diet excluding any type of dairy products.</p> <p>Dairy-free products are commonly provided for people who follow a vegan diet or with lactose intolerance (do keep in mind people who are lactose intolerant can sometimes consume yogurt, aged cheese and other lactose-free dairy products.)</p>	<p>Go Dairy Free http://www.godairyfree.org/</p>
Organic 	<p>Organic agriculture a farming management practice that does not rely on inputs such as synthetic pesticides, fertilizers or antibiotics to grow the harvest. Its ideology follows a sustainable principle and emphasizes the well-being of land and all the living things on the planet.</p> <p>Choosing organic food can greatly reduce negative impacts on our local ecosystems, the climate, and our health.</p>	<p>Canada Organic Regime: A Certified Choice http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/organic-products/labelling-and-general-information/certified-choice/eng/1328082717777/1328082783032</p> <p>BC Organic/Canada http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/organic-products/eng/1300139461200/1300140373901</p>

<p>Ocean-wise</p> 	<p>Ocean Wise is a conservation program created by Vancouver Aquarium to educate and empower consumers to choose sustainably sources seafood.</p> <p>Overfishing greatly threaten our marine system today. Studies show that 90% of the oceans' large predatory fish (salmon, tuna, swordfish, etc.) have been lost to over fishing. When choosing seafood, look for ocean-friendly products with the Ocean Wise label.</p>	<p>Ocean Wise (Vancouver Aquarium) www.oceanwise.ca/</p>
<p>Fair Trade</p> 	<p>Fair Trade is a global trade system that ensures producers get a fair price for their goods. In the case of coffee, buying Fair Trade coffee beans means that no labour exploitation has involved in growing, harvesting and processing your bag of coffee. Fairtrade Certification indicates that basic international social and environmental standards are met in producing the good.</p> <p>UBC became Canada's first Fair Trade Campus in 2011. Now multiple food service spots on campus serve food and beverages made from Fair Trade products.</p>	<p>Fairtrade Vancouver www.fairtradevancouver.ca/</p> <p>The Canadian Fair Trade Network www.cftn.ca/</p>

Finding and Preparing Affordable Food:

Popular Online Resources

- Based on the philosophy of being able to afford a healthy, delicious, and varied diet without spending a lot of money, 'Budget Bytes' offers student-friendly recipes and tips. The six principles that Budget Bytes totes are: Plan your Meals, Use Ingredients Wisely, Portion Control, Don't be Afraid of Leftovers, The Freezer is your Friend, and Shop Wisely.

Resource: <http://www.budgetbytes.com>

- 'Yelp' is a popular online resource to help users search through bars, cafes and restaurants, as well as retail stores and services. On the Yelp site, you can input your location to find good restaurants nearby, or search for a specific food establishment and read hundreds of reviews to make your choice of where to eat.

Resource: <http://www.yelp.ca/vancouver>

- Another very popular online search tool for local eateries is ‘Urban Spoon’. This site categorizes bars, cafes and restaurants into many categories like neighbourhood (within the city of Vancouver, and in the areas surrounding the city), and budget (from fine dining to cheap eats). Establishments may also be tagged with helpful indicators like ‘offers free wi-fi’, ‘cash only’, and ‘late night,’ among others.

Resource: <http://www.urbanspoon.com/c/14/Vancouver-restaurants.html>

- ‘Chowmenow’ is a reservoir of cheap meal options in Vancouver, and in surrounding areas. The basis for ‘Chowmenow’ is that users submit a description, the price, and location of the meal they had... only, it has to cost less than \$5.00. Search the site for postings near your area, and share a great deal you found by adding a review of the meal.

Resource: <http://chowmenow.com>

Grocery Stores and Markets:

1. **No Frills.** As its name suggests, this grocery store chain offers simply food for low prices, much of them bearing no-name labels.

Location: There are five locations in Vancouver, each with a different name attached. I.e. Alfie’s no frills on west 4th avenue, Jason’s no frills on Alma St., and Joti’s no frills on West Broadway.

2. **Famous Foods.** Famous Foods is a great resource if you cook most of your own meals. Offering whole ingredients like flour, spices and grains in bulk, this store will help you see your dollar go a long way. Famous Foods also has a selection of dairy products and non-medicated meats.

Location: 1595 Kingsway Street. Although quite far east of campus, this store is easily reachable by bus. Just hop in the #25 King Edward, getting off at Kingsway.

3. **East West Market.** This grocery store offers very fresh, good quality produce, organic products, and some locally made products for lower prices than other stores. The produce section has been known to sell their blemished or over-ripe items for a discounted price.

Location: 4169 Main St. Also reachable by the #25 King Edward bus (getting off at Main street).

4. **Kin’s Farm Market.** Kin’s is a great resource for fresh produce. This location offers a large section of organics, and features local items when in season. Location: 1160 Davie St. Although located downtown, this location is praised as the best Kin’s in Vancouver for its selection of fruit and vegetables. Coming from UBC, take the #44 Downtown bus across the Burrard bridge, getting off at Davie St.

5. **Safeway & Save-On Foods.** These two stores offer similar selection and pricing. Prices are moderate, and can be quite affordable with sale items, however, the produce in both of these stores is often regarded as quite low in quality. They are good resources as they are easily accessible and numerous around Vancouver, and offer staple food items. Use the ‘Yelp’ resource as a tool to find the location nearest to you.

6. Granville Island. The large indoor Granville Island market offers fresh seafood and meat products, amazing prepared pastas and colourful produce; but can be at the higher end of your budget. Visit this market for food inspiration or just a fun weekend afternoon, but do not rely it if you are working with a conservative budget.

Location: Granville Island. Take the #84 or the #04 bus east until Fir St., then walk down Granville Street into the market (beneath the Granville Street Bridge).

7. Whole Foods Market. For students with a more flexible budget, Whole Foods Market offers a wide selection of natural and organic foods, freshly made baked goods and smoothies and juices, as well as a supplements section. Although on the higher end of price ranges, this store is a great resource for students looking for free-range meats, ocean-wise seafood and organic produce. Pick up a Whole Deal coupon booklet in store for deals! Location: The largest Whole Foods Market is located a stone's throw from Broadway-City Hall Canada Line station, at 510 West 8th Ave. There is a smaller location closer to campus, however, in Kitsilano, at 2285 West 4th Ave.

Standard price list for different food items

The average monthly spending on food per person was reported by Statistics Canada to be 139.1. This works out to be about 35 dollars per week (all home cooked meals) Here is a list of sixteen common grocery items in the greater Vancouver area and their average prices.

Milk (1 liter) 1.82
Loaf of Fresh Bread (white) 3.82
Rice (white) 1 kg 4.88
Eggs (12) 3.46
Local Cheese (1 kg) 11.55
Boneless Chicken Breast (1kg) 13.07
Apples (1kg) 2.96
Oranges (1kg) 2.56
Tomatoes (1kg) 3.41
Potatoes (1kg) 1.51
Lettuce (1 head) 1.47
Water (1.5 liters) 2.08
Wine (mid range) 18.5
Local Beer (0.5 liter) 4.67
Imported Beer (0.33 liter) 3.33
Packet of Cigarettes (Marlboro) 11.0
Butter (454g) 4.57
Macaroni (500g) 1.45
cooking/ Salad oil 4.15
Canned soup 1.01
Sugar (2kg) 2.88
Round Steak (1kg) 18.34
Sirloin Steak (1kg) 21.03
Stewing Beef (1kg) 15.40

Ground Beef (1kg) 11.99
Pork Chops (1kg) 12.99
Bacon (500g) 6.86

UBC Food System Affordable Food Options

- Sprouts is a student community-led, organized, and operated establishment on campus which offers a wide array of healthy meal options, coffee and tea, as well as baked goods. Sprouts is located in the basement of the Student Union Building (SUB). One of Sprouts' campus initiatives is called Community Eats. Bring your own reusable dish to this weekly event for a vegetarian meal of diverse foods, ranging from lentils, to bread and babaganoush. Community Eats is on Fridays, from 11:30 to 1:30; but get there early to get a good spot in the line-up! *Meal by donation. Visit <http://www.ubcsprouts.ca> for more information, and to apply as a volunteer

- An offshoot of Sprouts, called Seedlings, is another student operated UBC cafe. Seedlings is located above Koerner's pub, in the Thea Koerner Graduate Centre (North end of campus near the Rode Garden). While a bit of a maze to find, Seedlings is a beautiful escape from the rest of busy campus. Seedling's cozy cafe offers comfortable seating, and delicious vegetarian meal options, and tea and coffee. As a volunteer with Seedlings, you are offered a complimentary meal with each volunteer shift. Visit <http://www.ubcsprouts.ca/seedlings-101/> for more information, and to apply as a volunteer

- Located in the lower level of the Land and Food Systems' Macmillan building is the Agora cafe. Agora offers affordable and healthy meal options, with \$1 baked goods baked fresh daily. Try the famous Agora granola bars! Visit <http://blogs.ubc.ca/agora/> for more information, and to apply as a volunteer

- If you are interested in seeing how food grows, and where many UBC food establishments source their beautiful produce, the UBC farm might be the volunteering fit for you! The UBC Farm is part of the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, and provides UBC students like yourself with an opportunity to spend time outdoors, helping in growing various crops, and in learning about sustainable agriculture. Visit <http://ubcfarm.ubc.ca> for more information, and to apply as a volunteer

- Global Lounge provides students with a bright common space to study, meet new friends and look out for global engagements. Plenty of fun events are happening here every week. While hanging out in Global Lounge, you are welcome to enjoy free coffee and tea as you were at home. Visit <http://students.ubc.ca/about/global-lounge> for more information on what they offer and the events calendar

- AMS food bank <http://www.ams.ubc.ca/services/food-bank/>

The First Nations House of Learning Longhouse

Looking to experience first nation's food culture, and feel the benefits of a delicious and healthy meal? Try attending the monthly Feast Bowl meal at the First Nations House of Learning longhouse located at 1985 West Mall (Behind Koerner Library). The Feast Bowl community meal seeks to promote holistic health and wellness through shifting perspectives toward seeing food for its power to heal and restore. Volunteer to help prepare this lunch-time meal, made with fresh produce from the Indigenous Health Garden at the UBC Farm, and stay to enjoy the health-promoting dishes with the community.

Learn more by visiting: <http://ifs-indigenous.sites.olt.ubc.ca/indigenous-research-partnerships/feast-bowl/>

or by emailing the Feast Bowl coordinator, Hannah Lewis at hannah.lewis@ubc.ca

Looking for other ways to save on campus?

- Bring your own reusable coffee mug or travel mug and receive a discount for your tea or coffee at most food establishments on campus.
- Forgot your reusable container at home? Don't waste money by buying a new one! Reduce waste by being a part of the Eco - To Go container exchange program. For \$5 plus tax, you can obtain a membership card which allows you to “rent” a reusable container for your food. When you return the container to any participating UBC food services establishments, they will wash it and keep it for the next time someone in the Eco – To Go program needs a container. You can purchase a membership card at any participating UBC food services establishments, or in Totem or Vanier's Dining Rooms. --
><http://www.food.ubc.ca/sustainability/eco-to-go>
- Don't buy a water bottle! Refill your reusable water bottles at the many water refill stations on campus.
- To learn more about food system on campus you can go to “UBC Sustainable Campus Food Guide” <http://sustain.ubc.ca/sites/sustain.ubc.ca/files/images/UBCSustainableCampusFoodGuide.pdf>

Finding culturally appropriate food

Vancouver is renowned as a tasty destination, with its celebrated fresh farm produce from the Fraser Valley and a rich diversity of ethnic cuisines. However, as someone who newly arrived in Vancouver from half a globe away, it often takes some time and researches of you to find ‘home food’ around corner of the street. This section will introduce you on how to easily find a taste of home in the booming trend of ethnic foods in Vancouver.

With more than 40 percent of city residents as ethnic minorities, Metro Vancouver neighbourhoods offer a wide range of cultural food and restaurants. For instance, Chinese immigrants account for more than half of the population in Richmond and similar story with South Asians in Surrey. Ethnic foods are highly accessible in ethnic neighbourhoods like them.

Yet we are aware that getting a particular kind of spices you need for a traditional dish or the just right pastry you crave, may not be as straightforward as identifying ethnic neighbourhoods. After all, mostly students don’t just get off one skytrain station in Richmond and knowing where exactly to go for their *dim sum*. We find public reviewing sites such as *Yelp* and *Urbanspoon* can be very useful tools in locating ethnic grocery stores, restaurants and cafes. Use *Yelp* as an example, below are some tips that hopefully make your food-hunting process easier:

- ***When you know exactly what you are looking for*** — Looking for one type of curry paste for your Thai dinner? Try enter “Thai grocery” in *Find* on the top of the page for searching and put the neighbourhood name in *Near*, the number of results come up may surprise you! With information on the page, you can then going into their individual pages or phone the store to find out if they carry the specific product you like.
- ***When you are around a neighbourhood and want to grab some food before head back to UBC*** — Simply browse in the “food” or “restaurants” category and click the area name that you are at to find out food resources around. You can also change the geographic range for your search by adjusting the map showing on the right side of results page.
- ***Filters can be your best buddies!*** It’s not just about the type of food or the location you are looking for, opening hours, budget and debit/credit card acceptability may also be factors you take into consideration. Play around with different filter options to get the most suitable result you like!
- ***Review matters!*** Having a handful of options for Spanish Tapas night with friends and you’re wondering which one would be your best choice? Easy way to go is to

sort them by rating and read through what people say about the place. Often time you get to know much more from reviewing previous experiences than simply comparing stars.

First Nations Traditional Food Recipe

Bannock, also known as Fry Bread, is a traditional flat bread that is common throughout many indigenous cultures, including the Musqueam band (on whose land UBC rests).
Bannock Recipe:

→ This recipe offers an easy baked bannock, but the bread can also be prepared in a greased frying pan (12-15 minutes).

“The following recipe was developed by Ron Plowright and Chef Maluh for the Urban Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden project at UBC farm on traditional Musqueam territory.

Preheat Oven to 400 degrees (F) Grease a 6” by 6” baking tin. Measure the following ‘Dry’ ingredients into a mixing bowl

- 2 cups organic whole wheat flour
- 2 cups organic un-bleached white flour

- 1/2 organic sugar
- 1/2 organic quick rolled oats • 2 tbsp baking powder
- 1/4 salt

Measure and whisk together the following ‘Wet’ ingredients:

- 1 organic or free range egg
- 2 tbsp olive or grapeseed oil
- 2 cups of cold water

Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients, and using a fork, mix the ingredients together without kneading or over mixing the dough. Incorporate the flour into the wet or vice versa just until the point that the dry and the wet ingredients are mixed together, but do not over mix or you’ll have a tougher product.

Pour into greased 6x6 tin and place in a 400 degree oven. Bake for 40 minutes until the top of the bread sounds hollow when you tap it or knock the top. When the cracks are dry and the bread light or golden brown, take out of the oven. Butter the top of the bannock you have just completed baking. Turn upside down onto a drying rack. Cover with a clean tea towel and let cool on a drying rack for 20 minutes, before slicing. Use a knife to

pry the bread out of the pan. Serve up with butter or margarine and a low sugar fruit/berry compote or jam. If you're not eating within 24 hours, freeze the loaf to eat another day.

Recipe from: BC Aboriginal ChildCare Society. (July-August 2009). Caring For Our Children Newsletter, 12(2). pdf. Retrieved from:

http://www.unicef.ca/sites/default/files/imce_uploads/DISCOVER/OUR%20WORK/ADVOCACY/DOMESTIC/POLICY%20ADVOCACY/DOCS/CaringForOurChildrenJulyAug2009.pdf

For a video tutorial on making bannock, and some history surrounding the bread, visit:

<http://www.aboriginalbc.com/blog/bounty-bannock/>