

**AZERBAIJAN STATE
UNIVERSITY OF
ECONOMICS (UNEC)
CAMPUS FOOD POLICY**

Campus Food Policy

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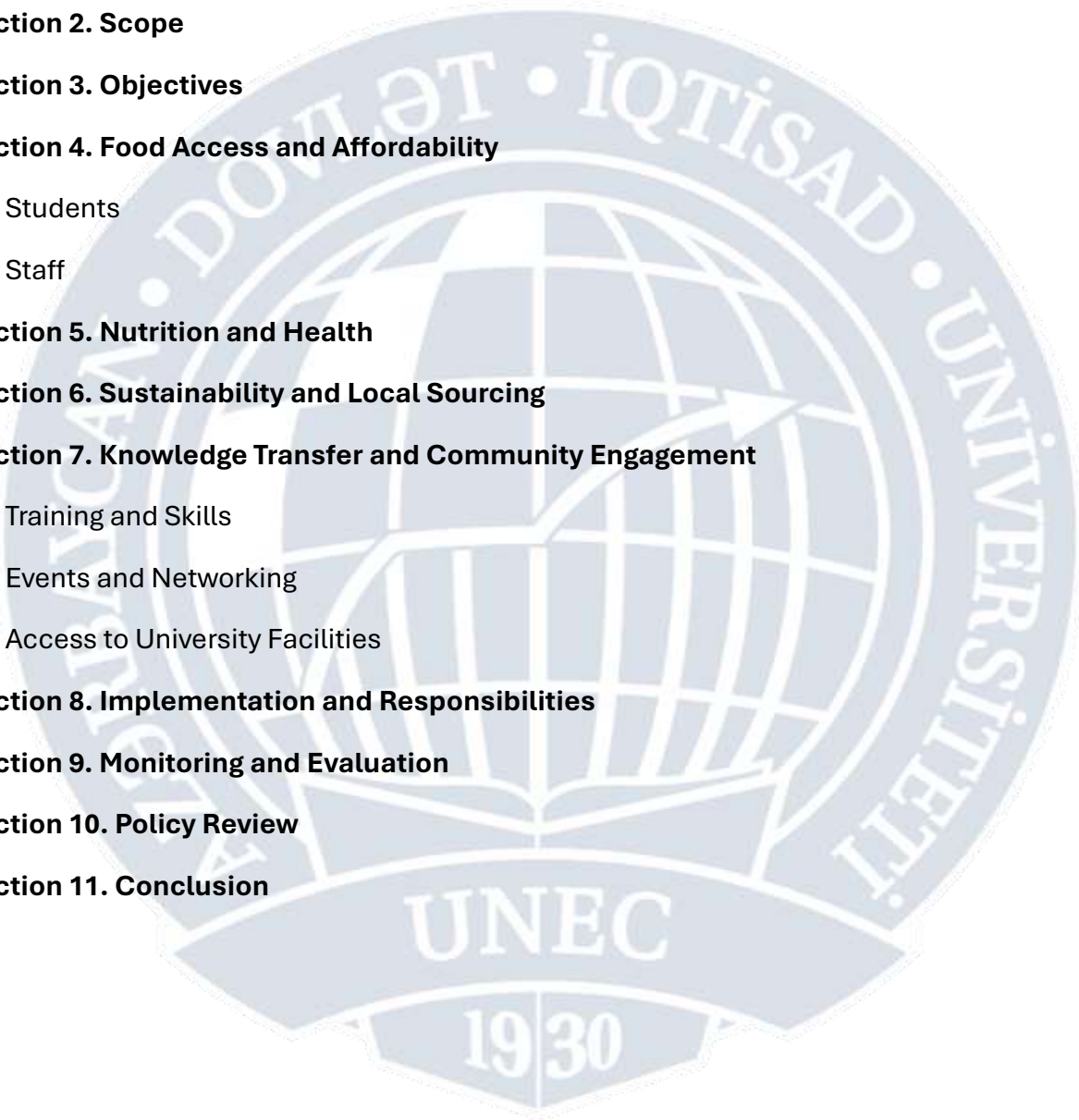
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Section 1. Introduction

UNEC recognizes that access to nutritious, affordable, and sustainable food is essential for the wellbeing, academic success, and productivity of its campus community. Food security, health, and sustainable agriculture are core components of UNEC's mission to foster an inclusive and environmentally responsible campus.

This policy establishes UNEC's commitment to providing equitable access to healthy meals, supporting staff and students facing financial hardship, promoting sustainable and environmentally responsible food practices, and extending knowledge and technology to local farmers and food producers. It emphasizes collaboration, inclusivity, and local economic support as part of the university's broader social responsibility.

- UNEC aligns its campus food initiatives with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).
- The university is committed to ensuring that all food procured, prepared, or consumed on campus is ethically sourced, environmentally responsible, and socially equitable.
- UNEC promotes transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in its food ecosystem, monitoring suppliers, campus dining services, and community engagement programs to uphold these standards.

Section 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students, including full-time, part-time, and international students.
- All staff members, including academic, administrative, and support personnel.
- All campus dining services and affiliated vendors.
- Local farmers and food producers who engage with the university through training, events, or access to facilities.
- All suppliers and contractors providing food, beverages, or related services to UNEC, ensuring compliance with ethical sourcing, labor standards, and sustainability criteria.
- All campus events, including conferences, workshops, and student activities where food is provided or sold.

- All procurement and catering decisions related to campus food, including menu planning, ingredient sourcing, and waste management.
- All monitoring, reporting, and evaluation activities to ensure adherence to sustainability, nutrition, and food safety standards.

It covers food provision, affordability, nutrition, sustainability, access to knowledge and technology, and interventions to alleviate food insecurity.

This policy ensures that all food-related activities on campus are conducted in a manner that is environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and economically sustainable, supporting UNEC's broader commitments to sustainability and community wellbeing.

Section 3. Objectives

The UNEC Campus Food Policy has five main objectives:

1. Ensure food security for students and staff through access to nutrition and affordable meals.
2. Promote healthy eating practices and dietary inclusiveness across campus.
3. Advance sustainability in food procurement, preparation, and consumption.
4. Strengthen local food systems by supporting farmers and sustainable sourcing.
5. Provide knowledge, skills, and facilities to local food producers to enhance sustainable agriculture and aquaculture practices.
6. Ensure ethical sourcing by engaging suppliers who comply with labor standards, fair wages, and safe working conditions.
7. Promote waste reduction, composting, and circular economy principles in all food-related activities.
8. Encourage plant-based and low-carbon menu options to support UNEC's sustainability and climate goals.
9. Foster community engagement and collaboration with local farmers, NGOs, and stakeholders to strengthen regional food security and resilience.
10. Integrate monitoring and evaluation to track nutrition, affordability, sustainability, and food safety metrics across campus.

These objectives aim to create a campus food ecosystem that is nutritious, affordable, sustainable, ethical, and socially responsible, aligning with UNEC's broader mission of wellbeing, inclusivity, and environmental stewardship.

Section 4. Food Access and Affordability

4.1 Students

- Affordable meals are provided across all campus cafeterias, including vegetarian, vegan, and culturally appropriate options.
- The Student Union administers meal vouchers and food bank access for students in financial need, ensuring no student goes hungry.
- Food security programs are monitored and updated regularly to ensure equitable access and effectiveness.
- Ensure all procured food aligns with ethical sourcing and labor standards, avoiding suppliers that exploit workers.
- Promote low-carbon and plant-based meal options to support environmental sustainability.
- Conduct regular surveys to assess food security, dietary satisfaction, and accessibility for diverse student populations.

4.2 Staff

- Staff have access to nutritious, low-cost meals daily, with subsidized options for those facing financial challenges.
- Feedback mechanisms enable staff to provide input on menu quality, dietary diversity, and accessibility.
- Encourage staff participation in sustainable meal programs, including plant-based or low-carbon options.
- Provide information and training on nutrition, sustainable eating, and responsible consumption.
- Ensure that staff with dietary restrictions, allergies, or religious requirements have equitable access to suitable meals.

All programs aim to integrate **nutrition, affordability, ethical sourcing, and sustainability**, supporting UNEC's broader campus wellbeing and environmental goals.

Section 5. Nutrition and Health

- Campus meals are designed to meet nutritional standards, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.

- Special dietary needs, including vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, halal, and kosher options, are accommodated.
- Educational initiatives encourage healthy eating practices for students and staff.
- Promote meals sourced from local and sustainable producers, reducing environmental impact.
- Incorporate low-carbon and plant-based options as part of the standard menu to support UNEC's climate goals.
- Ensure that all food suppliers comply with ethical labor and fair-trade practices.
- This includes nutrition education that also raises awareness about sustainable consumption and responsible food choices.
- Periodically review menus to align with updated dietary guidelines, sustainability standards, and community preferences.

Section 6. Sustainability and Local Sourcing

- UNEC prioritizes procurement of ingredients from local and sustainable sources, supporting regional farmers and reducing environmental impact.
- Campus meals incorporate produce from UNEC's own vegetation areas, providing fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Plant-based and environmentally responsible menu options are emphasized.
- Food waste is minimized through composting, portion control, and donation of excess edible food.
- Prioritize suppliers with eco-labels or certifications (Fairtrade, ISO 14001, FSC) for responsible sourcing.
- Implement take-back or surplus redistribution programs for leftover meals.
- Encourage composting and recycling beyond just portion control.
- Consider low-carbon transportation when sourcing ingredients.
- Promote seasonal produce to reduce environmental footprint.
- Staff and students involved in food prep should receive training in sustainable practices.
- Track % of local vs imported ingredients, plant-based adoption, and waste reduction metrics.

Section 7. Knowledge Transfer and Community Engagement

7.1 Training and Skills

- Local farmers and food producers have access to UNEC's Aziz Sanjar Food Safety Lab for practical training, consultations, and laboratory testing.
- University experts provide research-based guidance on modern farming techniques, sustainable agriculture, aquaculture, and food safety.
- Long-term mentorship programs are established, offering ongoing technical support and guidance to local producers.
- Training materials and resources are made available digitally to ensure broader access for the community.
- Programs incorporate social and economic development components, including gender equality and inclusivity.

7.2 Events and Networking

- UNEC organizes workshops, seminars, and networking events to connect local producers with university researchers, students, and peers.
- Topics include sustainable farming, crop diversification, innovative practices, food security, and responsible production.
- Regular follow-ups and assessments are conducted to measure the impact of knowledge transfer and adoption of new practices.
- Opportunities are provided for producers to showcase their products and innovations during university events, fostering local market development.

7.3 Access to University Facilities

- Local producers can utilize UNEC's experimental vegetation areas, plant stocks, and labs to test and improve sustainable practices.
- Campus areas also serve as demonstration sites for fruit cultivation and environmentally responsible farming techniques, and innovative agricultural practices.
- Collaboration with UNEC dining services allows selected local products to be incorporated into campus meals, strengthening the local food system and promoting sustainable sourcing.

Section 8. Implementation and Responsibilities

- Campus Food Committee:
 - ✓ Includes representatives from administration, student services, staff, dining services, and sustainability officers.
 - ✓ Oversee the overall implementation of the Campus Food Policy and ensure alignment with UNEC’s sustainability and social responsibility goals.
 - ✓ Reviews and approves annual action plans, budget allocations, and progress reports.
 - ✓ Facilitates coordination between internal departments and local food producers.
- Campus Dining Services:
 - ✓ Ensure that menus are affordable, nutritious, healthy, and environmentally responsible.
 - ✓ Implement sustainable sourcing practices, prioritize local products, and incorporate UNEC-grown produce.
 - ✓ Monitor food waste and establish mechanisms for redistribution, composting, and donation of excess edible food.
 - ✓ Report sustainability metrics (e.g., local sourcing %, plant-based meals, waste reduction) to the Campus Food Committee.
- Student Union:
 - Manages meal vouchers, food bank programs, and emergency food assistance for students in need.
 - Collects feedback from students on menu satisfaction, dietary inclusivity, and food accessibility.
 - Collaborates with dining services to improve equity and affordability programs.
- Staff Welfare Departments:
 - Oversee subsidized meal programs for staff and ensure nutritional accessibility for all employees.
 - Monitor staff usage and satisfaction, identifying gaps or areas for improvement.
 - Promote health and nutrition awareness campaigns across campus.
- Community Engagement and Knowledge Transfer Teams:
 - ❖ Coordinate training, workshops, seminars, and access to university facilities for local farmers and food producers.

- ❖ Support integration of local and sustainable food into campus meals, strengthening the regional food system.
- ❖ Track and report on adoption of sustainable practices by local producers, contributing to UNEC’s SDG and Climate Action objectives.
- Compliance and Coordination:
 - ❖ All responsible units ensure adherence to national hygiene, food safety, and labor standards.
 - ❖ Suppliers and vendors are contractually obliged to follow UNEC’s ethical and sustainable sourcing principles.
 - ❖ Non-compliance is reported to the Campus Food Committee, and corrective measures are implemented.

Section 9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Annual surveys assess food accessibility, affordability, satisfaction, and overall wellbeing for students and staff.
- Uptake of meal vouchers, food bank use, and local sourcing practices are tracked and analyzed.
- Sustainability indicators, such as local sourcing, plant-based meal adoption, and food waste reduction, are monitored.
- Feedback mechanisms allow continuous improvement of all food programs and services.
- Clear annual benchmarks and measurable targets will be established for food accessibility, affordability, sustainability, and nutrition outcomes.
- Periodic supplier evaluations will be conducted to assess compliance with UNEC’s sustainability, food safety, and ethical sourcing standards.
- Monitoring findings will be documented and reported to relevant university leadership bodies to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Where gaps or risks are identified, corrective action plans will be developed with defined responsibilities and implementation timelines.
- Data collected through monitoring processes will be used to improve menu planning, procurement decisions, and resource efficiency across campus dining services.
- UNEC will periodically compare its campus food performance indicators with national or international benchmarks to support continuous improvement and best-practice alignment.

Section 10. Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if significant changes in campus demographics, funding, or operations occur.
- Reviews consider feedback from students, staff, and local producers, ensuring alignment with UNEC’s mission of inclusivity, sustainability, and community impact.
- Interim reviews may be conducted when significant regulatory, public health, environmental, or supply-chain changes occur that affect campus food systems.
- Policy revisions will consider new scientific evidence, best international practices, and emerging standards related to nutrition, sustainability, and ethical sourcing.
- Stakeholder consultations during reviews may include suppliers, health professionals, sustainability experts, and community partners.
- A formal review report will summarize findings, recommended updates, and implementation priorities.
- Approved revisions will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders and incorporated into operational guidelines and training materials.

Section 11. Conclusion

UNEC is committed to creating a campus environment where food security, sustainability, and wellbeing are central to everyday life. By providing accessible, nutritious meals, supporting those in need, fostering sustainable practices, and engaging with local food producers, UNEC demonstrates leadership in promoting healthy, equitable, and resilient food systems on campus and in the surrounding community.

- UNEC will continue to monitor and respond to emerging challenges in food security, nutrition, and sustainability to ensure the campus remains a model for responsible food practices.
- The university will actively foster partnerships with local producers, NGOs, and government bodies to enhance community impact and support regional food systems.
- UNEC encourages innovation in sustainable food practices, including research, pilot programs, and student-led initiatives that contribute to long-term environmental and social goals.
- Continuous education and awareness programs for students, staff, and local partners will reinforce the values of health, equity, and sustainability in all food-related activities.

- UNEC remains committed to transparency and accountability in implementing the Campus Food Policy, regularly reporting progress to stakeholders and the wider community.

