

1 point

FS Credit 2

Sustainable Food Education & Promotion**Intent**

Create awareness about sustainable hospital food service initiatives among staff, patients, visitors, service providers, vendors and the community of hospital food service initiatives and the associated human health benefits.

Health Issues

Shifts in the U.S. food system over the last century are compromising human and ecological health. While total farm acreage has declined, farm size has increased and is more focused on concentrated monocropping. This contributes to declining diversity of food crops necessary to fulfill human nutritional needs, while also leading to a loss of biodiversity. In the U.S., the typical food item now travels from 1,500 to 2,400 miles from farm to plate. This long travel distance disconnects growers from consumers, increases opportunities for food contamination and nutrient loss.

Routine use of antibiotics in animal agriculture has been shown to increase antibiotic resistance among bacteria that cause human infections. Pesticide drift, field dust, waste burning, toxic gases from degrading manure, and diesel exhaust from transporting food long distances are all factors related to food production that contribute to asthma, cardiovascular disease and lung cancer. Commercial fertilizers and pesticides contaminate surface- and ground-water in many locales. Large-scale animal feedlot operations contribute to water pollution with biologically active hormones, nitrates and other breakdown products of untreated animal waste. Calorie-rich, nutrient-poor diets contribute to obesity, diabetes, cancer, and a variety of degenerative diseases. By moving toward a healthier and more sustainable food system, health care can help alleviate human health problems associated with inadequate or inappropriate nutrition, antibiotic resistance, air and water contamination, and global health issues such as climate change.

Credit Goals**Education**

- Upon hire and annually, hold a minimum of one (1) educational event targeted to the food service department (both in-house and contracted food service staff), focused on the facility's sustainability initiatives and pursuit of relevant Credit Goals in the Food Service section of the *Green Guide* and explicitly explaining the link between human health and food production.
- Hold a minimum of one (1) educational event annually targeted to hospital employees outside of the food service department (e.g., senior management, environmental services, physicians, nurses) focused on the facility's sustainability initiatives and pursuit of relevant Credit Goals in the Food Service section of the *Green Guide*.

Note: This portion of the credit goal can also be accomplished by holding a single educational event that targets both food service staff and the broader community.

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Healthy Sustainable Food Promotion

Annually implement a minimum of three (3) of the following initiatives aimed at educating hospital staff, patients, and the community about food service sustainability commitments and activities:

- Post and annually update a signed copy of the facility's Food Policy or Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge in accordance with GGHC FS Credit 1 or other information on the facility's sustainability initiatives in a visible site within the hospital and on the hospital website explicitly explaining the link between human health and food production.
- Establish and maintain a program to inform cafeteria consumers of specific product offerings that are seasonal, organic, locally grown, and/or sustainably grown/produced, etc. in accordance with GGHC FS Credit 3.
- Establish and maintain a program to inform patients of menu items that are seasonal, organic, locally and/or sustainably grown/produced, etc. in accordance with GGHC FS Credit 3.
- Host special events targeted to patients, employees, and visitors that promote the facility's sustainable food products and initiatives and explicitly explain the link between human health and food production.
- Hold special events (onsite or offsite) targeted to the larger community highlighting the facility's commitment to supporting healthy, local, seasonal, organic, and sustainable foods and food systems and explicitly explaining the relationship between human health and food production and distribution.

Note: For the purposes of this Credit, "local" is defined as sourced from within a 200-mile radius.

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Suggested Documentation

- ❑ Maintain and annually update a file of annual reporting, communications program, sample menus, table tent cards, posters, newsletters and other documents to demonstrate compliance with Credit Goals.
- ❑ Maintain and annually update new employee and annual educational information, including for example, Power Point presentations, handouts, sign in sheets and agendas.

Reference Standards

There are no reference standards for this credit.

Potential Technologies & Strategies

- **Credit Synergies:** *Coordinate implementation of this credit with GGHC IO Credit 1.2: Education: Staff, Patient, and Community Environmental Sustainability Education; GGHC SSM Credit 1: Site Management; GGHC SSM Credit 2: Reduced Site Disturbance; GGHC SSM Credit 5: Connection to the Natural World; GGHC WM Prerequisite 1: Waste Management Plan; GGHC WM Prerequisite 2: Waste Generation Profile and Measurement; GGHC ES Credit 3: Indoor Integrated Pest Management; GGHC FS Credit 1: Sustainable Food Policy and Plan; GGHC FS Credit 3: Local, Sustainably Produced Food Purchasing; GGHC FS Credit 4: Reusable & Non-Reusable Products; GGHC FS Credit 5: Hospital Supported Agriculture: Food and Farm Linkages; GGHC FS Credit 6.1: Food Donation and Composting; GGHC FS Credit 6.2: Food Services Recycling; GGHC FS Credit 7: Food Vendors; GGHC FS Credit 8: Chemical Management for Food Services.*
- Advertise the facility's sustainable food initiatives through media venues such as the local newspaper.
- In-service educational programs for food service staff should include the credit goals and relevant information embedded in the GGHC Food Service Credit. Programs should be geared specifically for food service staff including management, chefs, nutritionists and dietitians, line prep etc. Options include: roundtables, seasonal cooking demonstrations, farm visits, webinars, etc. See Health Care Without Harm website (<http://www.noharm.org>) for sample programs and ideas.
- Organize a tour of a local farm for hospital staff and/or community members as part of the education program and to build relationships with the local growing community.
- Educational programs for non-food service hospital employees should be geared to senior management, environmental services, physicians, nurses etc. Options include: grand rounds for health professionals, brown bag seminars or roundtables, webinars, cooking demonstrations, farm visits, etc. See Health Care Without Harm website (<http://www.noharm.org>) for sample programs and ideas.

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- There are many ways to inform cafeteria consumers of the local/seasonal/organic and sustainable foods on the menu, for example:
 - Post point of sale materials (tent cards, signage etc.) within the cafeteria that highlight the daily sustainable offerings;
 - Inform the consumers if milk/coffee creamers are rGBH free; and/or,
 - Identify the farms/ranches/bakeries where the products were purchased – including pictures whenever possible.
- Provide continuing education credit opportunities to employees, where applicable, as an incentive to attend events.
- Ask suppliers and vendors to provide signage promoting the facility's healthy, sustainably produced food practices (e.g., rGBH free stickers, Fair Trade coffee, pictures of farmers).
- Include specific indications of local/seasonal/organic and sustainable options in patient menus, such as a star or other icon next to such items, a list of what is being offered that day, logos from relevant organizations/vendors (e.g., Buy Fresh, Buy Local).
- Use special events to promote sustainable foods, for example: host a farmer's lunch with all local/seasonal foods; invite local farmers to meet with customers; host a cooking demonstration featuring the local products of the day; host a special holiday meal featuring locally and sustainably grown foods. See the Resource section for templates and suggestions for such events.
- Expand the special events to involve and inform the larger community. Host a special Farmer's Market Day and invite local community groups, political leaders, etc. Partner with local community groups at offsite events such as farmer's markets, community gardens, and other forums which can connect the facility's sustainable food service with other food and fitness initiatives within the larger community.
- Seek out organizations that support your efforts to promote local and sustainable products such as Buy Fresh, Buy Local campaigns, etc. Network with state and local agricultural departments for information on local events, farmer's markets etc
- Seek out speakers from local and national sustainability organizations that can participate in educational events.
- Take advantage of the facility's website as a forum for promoting sustainability initiatives.

Resources

Jamie Harvie, Michelle Gottlieb, Roberta Anderson and Marie Kulick, *Green Guide for Health Care Food Technical Brief*, <http://www.gghc.org>

Health Care Without Harm, <http://healthyfoodinhealthcare.org>

Healthy Food in Health Care Pledge: <http://www.noharm.org/us/food/pledge>

Fletcher Allen Health Care, Nutrition Services, <http://www.fahc.org/Nutrition/Services/services.html>

But Fresh, Buy Local Chapters, <http://www.foodroutes.org/bfbl-chapters.jsp#chapter-listMORE>