

UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Student Report

FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT FOR AN AMS NEW Student Union Building

(SUB) NO PACKAGING DEMO RESTAURANT- “THE PALATE”

Joanne Kam, Alan Leung, Mashael Mawji, Nicole Read, Caitlin Sousa

University of British Columbia

LFS 450

April 5, 2013

Disclaimer: “UBC SEEDS provides students with the opportunity to share the findings of their studies, as well as their opinions, conclusions and recommendations with the UBC community. The reader should bear in mind that this is a student project/report and is not an official document of UBC. Furthermore readers should bear in mind that these reports may not reflect the current status of activities at UBC. We urge you to contact the research persons mentioned in a report or the SEEDS Coordinator about the current status of the subject matter of a project/report”.

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AN AMS NEW Student Union Building (SUB) NO PACKAGING DEMO RESTAURANT-
“THE PALATE”**

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Scenario #9, Group #9

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Abstract:

The UBC food and waste systems are components of a greater global system focused on reducing the adverse environmental impacts of our consumption habits. The numerous ways UBC may address sustainability issues are found in varied institutional policies that focus on areas ranging from agriculture to CO₂ emissions. The UBC AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy outlines many of these policies, one of which aims to create a zero waste system by targeting the waste produced by disposable food containers. The New Student Union Building will be introducing a new food outlet called “The Palate”, which will operate as a bring-your-own-container (BYOC) food outlet that will not offer disposable containers to patrons. A program currently run by UBC food services known as the “Eco-To Go” program is under consideration for implementation in the New SUB to increase student participation and to compliment future BYOC food outlets such as The Palate. Our project group conducted a feasibility analysis of The Palate in the SUB using in-person surveys that were comprised of 22 questions related to the present Eco-To Go program and the concept of a BYOC program. Our sample included 244 participants over a three-day sampling period using a random (it was not a random sample) convenience sample. Our results indicated that bringing reusable containers to purchase food on campus was an inconvenience to SUB users. However, with the introduction of the Eco-To Go program in the SUB, 81% of participants indicated they would join and use the program. Thus, we concluded that the Eco-To Go program addresses the inconvenience of bringing one’s own container to campus and is integral to the success of future BYOC food outlets. Our recommendations highlight the importance of appropriate marketing so that the UBC community is more informed about food services that are aimed at increasing sustainability.

Introduction:

In preparation for the opening of the New Student Union Building (SUB) in September 2014 (UBC Alma Mater Society, 2013), the Alma Mater Society (AMS) is looking to develop a food service outlet, “The Palate,” that operates without the use of disposable food containers. The aim of this initiative is to contribute to the reduction of the overall waste produced on UBC campus. Specifically, the results of our project will provide the AMS with valuable consumer feedback regarding the feasibility of The Palate. In accordance with the Lighter Footprint Strategy, The Palate will seek to reduce UBC’s ecological footprint, as well as the amount of disposable materials used in AMS food operations by only serving food and beverages to patrons who bring their own reusable food containers. Thus, our research objective was to assess the feasibility of a bring-your-own-container (BYOC) food outlet in the New SUB based upon the results of a consumer attitudes survey.(Clear research objective.)

The Eco-To Go program allows users to purchase food using reusable containers that can be returned to food outlets for washing and reuse at a later time. Currently, UBC Food Services operates the Eco-To Go program at its food outlets and it is the hope of the AMS that this program will be carried over to the New SUB (CITATION). The goal of introducing the Eco-To Go program to the New SUB is to increase participation by making the program more accessible to SUB visitors. Additionally, if implemented, the Eco-To Go program will complement the BYOC policy at The Palate. Together, these programs will contribute to reducing disposable container waste generated by AMS food outlets as well as increasing the UBC campus community’s participation in sustainable initiatives.

The current threats of animal extinction and climate change add urgency and importance to all efforts that aim to reduce our impact on the environment. Currently, urban centres are

maximizing space, by building upwards rather than outwards, and using rooftops for gardens.

(What is the evidence for this? How is this relevant to your project on take-out wear?)

Community gardens and farmers markets are also seen in greater abundance and are centred on local agriculture, supporting farmers and ethical farming practices. This global shift towards a “greener” planet is advancing our current understanding of climate change (The causal direction indicated here seems illogical especially within the context provided above), its proposed implications for environmental health and what we can do to reduce the negative effects of this issue. Incidentally, UBC’s sustainability initiatives play a key role in contributing to this understanding because they educate the campus community in the practice of sustainable lifestyles.

Our group consists of five members who are all in the faculty of Land and Food Systems but study different disciplines within the faculty. The value trajectories of our group are informed by agro science, environmental sustainability, economics and nutrition. Although different in focus, these areas of study all promote common values surrounding sustainability and the importance of being proactive in reducing our environmental footprint. These values include striving to increase overall campus sustainability and initiatives that work towards fulfilling this goal, such as those aiming to reduce disposable container waste in the UBC food system. Related to the operations of the Eco-To Go program, our group also believes that the use of reusable containers should be more actively promoted on campus.

Regarding the general campus awareness and understanding on the issues surrounding sustainability, our project assumes that the general campus public is well informed about the long term implications surrounding sustainability initiatives. Another assumption is that the general campus sees the value of initiatives that support a healthier environment, such as fair

trade teas and the operation of volunteer-run bring your own container food outlets such as Sprouts. Despite the consistent support for current initiatives, there are still additional sustainability programs, such as the Eco-To Go program, that remain largely unknown by the campus community. An overall lack of promotion for these programs results in unawareness and reduced participation. In the case of the bring your own container program, the inconvenience associated with bringing reusable containers to campus would be mitigated by implementing the Eco-To Go program. However, the location of Eco-To Go food outlets and the marketing involved with this program will be critical in increasing campus participation. Currently, the Eco-To Go program is exclusively offered through UBC food services and is therefore only available at their associated food locations. Marketing initiatives that include posters, pamphlets, signs at food outlets and easily accessible Eco-To Go outlets are critical in increasing campus participation in the Eco-To Go program. (This paragraph started out discussing the group's assumptions about the campus community. The topic seems to shift and there is some lack of clarity regarding which points are 'facts' and require citations and which are assumptions. A concluding sentence relating to the groups assumptions could have helped.)

“Sustainability” is a word of many definitions and the context that sustainability should be defined within is an issue of contention. Although we recognize the importance of sustainable practices, the way in which we execute sustainable behaviour varies according to our values. An example of a sustainable practice that our group expressed mixed opinions towards was the use of disposable cutlery at The Palate. As part of the UBC Lighter Footprint Strategy, our community partners at the AMS are interested in reducing all disposable food container waste including disposable cups, containers and cutlery (CITATION). Compostable cutlery has been introduced to some campus food outlets in order to reduce plastic waste; however the UBC

composting facility is unable to process this new cutlery (CITATION). Due to this, the AMS feels that not offering cutlery at “The Palate” will assist in reducing the overall ecological footprint of the New SUB and encourage patrons to bring their own reusable utensils (CITATION). Our group values regarding cutlery are that alternative cutlery, such as bamboo, can be offered at a cost (Awkward wording). Offering cutlery is essential for avoiding limits on food options available at The Palate. The absence of cutlery at The Palate will inevitably prevent the food outlet from offering menu selections such as soups, stews, pastas and stir fries (This is a recommendation and should not be placed in the introduction).

The UBCFSP plan (which plan are you referring to?) includes many areas for improvement when addressing sustainability such as(;) where to buy food, who to buy from, what the impact is, why it is important and how we can address the specific concern (If a specific document is being referenced a citation is needed). A table outlining the UBCFSP strategies that pertain to the Palate is described as well as our group perspective on the feasibility and effect of the proposed method. An area of focus is to increase campus involvement in efforts to increase campus sustainability and reduce waste, with a specific focus on reducing waste from disposable containers; the long term goal is to be a zero waste system (AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy., 2008- not referenced in the work cited section). The isolation of conversations and education around sustainability is a barrier to achieving a zero waste system; therefore, educating students in the faculties outside Land and Food Systems and Forestry requires more attention in order to increase campus concern for sustainability initiatives.

Methodology:

We began our project by identifying our scenario goals and conducting a literature review of a report (title?) detailing a previous inquiry into the feasibility of a bring-your-own-container restaurant at UBC's New SUB, as well as Eco To-Go programs at other North American post-secondary institutions. We also consulted various UBC waste reports and the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy (2008). (Good. Ideally in this section you would say how you identified the material you used. In the results section you would report the material used.) Following this research, we met with the New SUB Sustainability Coordinator, Collyn Chan, to discuss our stakeholders' visions for the Palate and clarify our understanding of UBC's existing Eco To-Go Program. During this meeting, we determined that it was in the best interest of our stakeholders to conduct a survey inquiry into the knowledge of the current Eco To-Go program and attitudes of SUB users towards the Eco To-Go program and bring your own container aspect of the Palate. Following this meeting, we began to draft up a survey to present to SUB users in order to answer key questions pertaining to the Palate and the Eco To-Go program. After multiple revisions (it would be good to mention the revisions were aimed at improving the clarity and relevance of questions), hard copies of our survey were distributed to SUB users, returned and the resulting data compiled and analyzed. (You should mention that informed consent was obtained from all participants.) Our surveys were conducted in-person, using paper surveys in the SUB. Our aim was that by conducting in person surveys in the SUB, we would be surveying our target population and be able to answer any questions people had. (Good. You could provide a reference supporting your strategy.) We also frequented the SUB at different times (specific times and the number of hours spent should be reported), so that we included people during the morning and afternoon periods. We vocalized our survey (This is not clear. What does 'vocalizing the survey' mean exactly?) in the SUB as a form of advertising, to increase exposure

to the survey and increase student involvement from multiple faculties. (You should briefly describe the statistical methods used to summarize the survey results.) Using the results obtained from our survey, we were able to assess the feasibility of the Palate according to consumer attitudes and make appropriate recommendations to our stakeholders regarding how to best implement the Eco To-Go and bring-your-own-container program at this new food outlet. (Good. The survey did not technically assess the feasibility of the Palate. Rather the survey provide important information to the feasibility assessment of the restaurant.)

When conducting our literature review, we utilized several key words (You should list the key words) in order to refine our search results. We began our initial research by reviewing a previous report investigating the feasibility of a bring-your-own-container restaurant at UBC's New SUB that was completed in 2012 by Chan *et al.* After reviewing this report, we investigated how other post-secondary institutions in North America, such as the University of Toronto and University of Vermont, had successfully implemented programs similar to that of UBC's Eco To-Go program. Our searches for relevant literature focused on keywords such as "Eco To-Go", "sustainability", "bring-your-own-container" and "disposable container waste". For the purposes of our project, we also consulted the UBC Waste Reduction report (2013), UBC Waste Action Plan (2013) and AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy (2008). (Here you are repeating methods already discussed, but in more detail.)

In order to gain insight into consumer knowledge and attitudes towards the current Eco-To-Go program, our group conducted a survey over a three day time span in the Main Concourse of the current SUB. The survey itself took place on Tuesday, March 19th, 2013 from 11:00am-1:30pm, Wednesday, March 20th, 2013 from 10:00am-1:45pm and Friday, March 21st, 2013 from 10:00am-1:00pm. Our sample size (n) was 244 SUB users and the actual response rate was

81.3%. This survey contained 21 questions in both multiple choice and short answer format and was presented to SUB users at a table set up in the SUB (Ideally you would reference the appendix with the survey). In order to encourage participation, members of our group physically approached SUB users as they passed by our survey table and requested that they fill out a survey. Verbal promotion of our survey was also used to attract passerby to our table. It should also be noted that each survey participant was presented with an opportunity to enter into a draw to win one of six \$20.00 AMS gift cards, which served as an incentive to fill out our survey. Prior to filling out a survey, each participant was asked to complete a consent form indicating that they agreed to participate in our data collection. At least two of our group members were present at the table throughout the survey period in order to distribute and collect surveys and consent forms and to answer the questions of the campus community regarding our project. We selected current SUB users as our survey participants because the Palate is slated to be operated in the New SUB, thus our rationale was that the current SUB users would eventually be purchasing food in the New SUB and would have the option of purchasing food at the Palate. The SUB was also chosen for conducting our survey as it is a central location that gathers and would ensure diversity of the UBC community. We chose to distribute hard copies of our survey in order to reach our target group of SUB users and in doing so, reduce response bias. Furthermore, by setting up a physical booth in the SUB we were able to interact with the campus community and discuss the purpose of our survey in more detail, as well as obtain more feedback regarding consumer thoughts on the Eco To-Go Program. (Although this is a repeat of the methods already discussed above, it is more complete and hits on many of the points omitted in the previous version.)

Incidentally, several weaknesses existed in our data collection methods that should be identified. First of all, our sample size of $n=244$ may be too small to accurately represent the demographic composition of the UBC campus community, which may have resulted in survey response bias. (Good. Technically, the potential response bias would be associated with fact that is was a convenience sample rather than a random sample. The sample size has to do with the power of your sample to detect statistical significance. You were not planning to do comparisons, so this is less important. A sample of 244 is very good.) In addition to this, our survey table was set up at the north end of the SUB building facing the Buchanan building and as a result, the majority of our survey participants were students of the Faculty of Arts. Several of our members utilized key words in their verbal promotions of our survey such as “waste reduction” and “sustainability”, which may have contributed to attracting more participants who were aware of UBC sustainability initiatives, thereby contributing to further survey response bias. (Good insight.) A source of error in our data collection may be attributed to the inconsistent timing of our surveying and the fact that we only surveyed during three weekdays meant that we did not sample any weekend SUB users. Finally, none of our group members had any prior experience in drafting and formatting surveys, therefore some of our survey questions may have been difficult to interpret or were interpreted by participants in a manner that was contradictory to our intentions. An example of interpretation error was some respondents considering a mug as a “reusable container” when our group intended the term “reusable container” to refer only to containers designed to hold food, not beverages. (Good.)

For more information regarding data collection materials and tools, including survey questions, please refer to the *Appendix*. (Excellent discussion. Please note for future reports that

this discussion piece should be part of your discussion section. I understand that the rubric may have misled you for this report.)

We conducted a scenario evaluation of our project by reviewing our original project plan that was drafted at the commencement of our project work period. We determined the overall success of our project according to which goals outlined in our original project plan were fulfilled by the time our feasibility assessment of The Palate concluded. A detailed scenario evaluation can be found below.

Findings and Outcomes:

Ideally the table would be led by an explanatory paragraph.

Section 1:

Question	Findings (n= 244, unless stated otherwise)
<p>1. How often do you bring your own reusable container to school for purchasing</p>	<p>never = 42%; 1 time/semester = 8%; 1-2 times/month = 14%; 1-2 times/week = 16%; 3 or more/week = 19%; no response = 1%</p>
<p>2.) When you purchase food on campus that comes in a <u>disposable container</u>, what factors prevent you from using your own <u>reusable container</u>? (check all that apply)</p>	<p>Top 3 factors: 1.) Bringing my own reusable container is inconvenient 2.) I did not know you could use your own container at campus food outlets 3.) I only use a disposable container when I forget to bring my own container</p>
<p>3.) Do you know what the “Eco-To Go” program is?</p>	<p>no = 67%</p>

	yes = 33%
4.) Are you a member of the “Eco-To Go” program?	no = 86% yes = 14%
5.) If yes, how frequently do you purchase meals using the “Eco - To Go” program at UBC in a week?	n = 80 (This is not a yes/no question) no = 58% yes = 42%
6.) If the Eco - To Go program was offered campus wide, including in the SUB, would you join? (If you are already a member, select ‘yes’.)	no = 17% yes = 81% other = 2%
7.) Would you purchase food from a food outlet in the New SUB that does not provide disposable containers? (In other words, you would be required to bring your own container or to use the Eco - To Go program at this outlet.)	no = 10% yes = 58% unsure = 32%
8. I would be more likely to eat at a food outlet that did not have disposable food containers if... (Select all that apply):	* refer to survey for answer choices; # of responses (The survey questions and responses were not provided in the appendix) A = 166 B = 181 C = 207 D = 115 E = 127 F = 132
9. What would deter you from eating at a food outlet that does not offer disposable containers but supports the Eco - To Go program (Select all that apply)?	** see survey for options A = 118 B = 60 C = 113 D = 31 E = 7 F = 46 G = 15
10. What would deter you from eating at a food outlet that did not offer disposable cutlery? (Select all that apply)	A = 90 B = 129 C = 64 D = 10
11. Are there foods that the SUB could serve or serve more	Top 3 suggestions:

of that fit your personal food preferences?	1.) Fresh/ Healthy food 2.) Vegetarian/ Vegan options 3.) Asian Options
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Section 2:

1. With which faculty are you associated? (The answers on the right are not faculties)	n= 237 UBC Staff = 3% Visitor = 2% Other = 5% Student = 90%
2. How many years have you been attending or working at UBC?	n=241 <1 year= answers? 1 year= 2 years= 3 years= 4 years= >= 5 years=
3. How often do you purchase food in the SUB (or on campus)?	other = 1% Almost never= 8% 1 per semester= 1% 1-2 times per month = 22% 1-2 times per week = 33% 3-4 times per week = 22% 5 or more times per week = 1 %
4. I currently participate in a UBC Meal Plan:	No = 85% Yes = 15%
5. I currently live:	On-campus = 27% Off-campus = 73%
6. Age	18 or younger = 9 % 19- 21 = 48% 22- 25 = 28%

	Over 25 = 15%
7. Sex	F = 55% M = 44% Prefer not to disclose=1%

Discussion:

During the three day period that we were in the SUB, 244 people completed our survey and signed a consent form. However, we cannot conclude that this number was large enough to represent the majority of the UBC population, nor the majority of the UBC community that frequents the SUB on a regular basis. With that said, we do believe that our results provide a much better representation of the attitudes and opinions on waste reduction (you did not ask about waste reduction in general) of the UBC community, when compared to last year's survey on the feasibility of a BYOC restaurant. Since last year's survey was conducted solely through Facebook and word of mouth, we feel that we reached our target audience more effectively, by conducting in-person surveys in the SUB

(http://www.sustain.ubc.ca/sites/sustain.ubc.ca/files/seedslibrary/2012%20APSC%20261%20Final%20Report%20--%202%20BYOC%20MC%20PC%20AH%20KM_submittedPW.doc.pdf).

(The wording in these sentences could be improved, but the comparison is valid. It is not clear what this URL is referring to and it is not linking to a webpage when I click on it.) When conducting surveys pertaining to issues of sustainability, it is important to gather information

from a wide variety of people in order to achieve an unbiased sample of values, knowledge gaps, opinions and paradigms (CITATION or further explanation is needed. This may be true for some surveys and not true for others). It was for this reason that our group chose not to gather data only from participants in the LFS Faculty, as this could have generated biased results. (Good.) Regardless of our small sample size, however, we were able to attain results of a fairly diverse group of people spanning across many different faculties and ages. As well, we were also able to obtain a near 1:1 ratio of responses from females and males (What does this mean? What is the ratio of males to females at UBC?). These details are important so that we may make recommendations based on accurate and unbiased findings.

By specifically choosing certain questions to include in our survey, we were able to gain insight on (diction) the attitudes of participants towards bringing their own containers to UBC. For example, by asking questions such as, “How often do you bring your own reusable container to UBC for purchasing food?” and “How often do you purchase food in the SUB?” we were able to gain a better understanding of how often people(,) who eat at the SUB frequently(,) think to bring their own reusable container (diction). While the largest portion at 33% of participants responded to purchasing food 1-2x/ week, when we asked how often they brought their own containers to purchase food from the SUB, 42% responded that they never bring a reusable container to UBC for purchasing food (these are results). (The wording here is awkward. It would be better to first indicate which result you are going to discuss and then discuss it.)

Since the majority of the participants surveyed reported that they live off-campus, we feel that this (diction) commute represents a possible explanation for the inconveniences surrounding transporting one's own reusable food container to and from campus. Moreover, when participants were asked what would deter them from eating at a food outlet that did not offer disposable

containers and cutlery, the majority of participants cited not having room in their bags, worrying that food would leak out if they were to carry their own reusable containers to and from campus, and liking the freedom to spontaneously buy food without having to worry about cutlery, as their top deterrents. (Good. Again, this is a result. Ideally you would interpret the result.)

Through our survey, we were also able to gain insight on whether participants knew what the Eco-To Go program was, of which 67% of participants did not. Interestingly enough however, when participants were then given a short explanation of what the program was, and were then subsequently asked if they would participate in the Eco-To Go program, 82% of participants replied that they would. This is an extremely important finding, as it points to the conclusion that the current marketing strategies of the Eco-To Go program are not reaching the majority of the campus population, and that, should marketing become more effective, the percentage of campus participants would increase. (Excellent interpretation and discussion.) Ultimately, the majority of participants showed interest and a willingness to participate in the Eco-To Go program, which could also indicate that the community at UBC is aware of the environmental and sustainability issues to do with consumer waste, but not the initiatives that are associated with reducing waste. These are extremely important findings as they support the notion that a BYOC restaurant is indeed feasible, if adapted with an efficient and convenient Eco-To Go program. With this program, it is very possible to mitigate many barriers that the participants claim concerning overall inconvenience. (Clear interpretation of your findings.)

Although a proposal regarding a better marketing scheme for the Eco-To Go program can be made, there are still some clear limitations that could have affected our understanding of the public's view on the Eco-To Go program, as well as our view on the feasibility of "The Palate". As previously mentioned, our sample size of 244 participants is too small of a sample to

adequately represent the entire UBC population (Please see the notes in methods- it is not the sample size but the sampling method that limits extrapolation to the campus). As well, several new concepts, like Eco-To Go, were introduced within our survey which could have potentially created confusion for participants who were not familiar with such topics previous to doing our survey. Participants may also not have read the explanation of the Eco-To Go program, due to time constraints, which would have affected their answers for some of the questions. What's more, there remains a fairly obvious knowledge gap on our part, in regards to disposable cutlery. It remains unclear whether reusable cutlery should be provided along with the Eco-To Go program, if patrons should provide their own cutlery, or if reusable cutlery should be sold through vending machines. Finally, since the New SUB will not be completed until 2014, some of the participants' answers may have been misguided by their own ideas of what the New SUB may or may not offer to them. As well, our own assumptions that the Eco-To Go program will, indeed, be offered in the New SUB, have yet to be officially confirmed.

Group Reflection:

A notable success our group had was the coordination of meetings with our stakeholders. The input of our stakeholders was critical in the success of our feasibility analyses as they had a wealth of knowledge regarding the SUB operations, their vision for the Palate and suggested resources. Throughout the planning stages, they also offered their comments on our survey so that we were asking questions that would provide us with the most important information pertaining to our feasibility analyses. Despite the overall success in this project, there were

challenges as well. These challenges can be divided into the following categories that will be explained further: Temporal, logistics and the survey itself. A challenge we faced was the amount of time allocated to this project because the process involved the participation of different groups(,) Coordinating communication times for discussion meetings and through email made it difficult to address immediate concerns. Aside from stakeholders, the individual group members were not always available for planning either due to restricted scheduling or class time. Logistics was a challenge because our survey was conducted using paper surveys, rather than using a software program. The group held a prior assumption that a website called “Survey Monkey” could be used for our survey, however, ethical considerations did not allow for this, and the alternatives were difficult to navigate through this factor became an issue when we realized that it was not considered legitimate as a survey program under the university. As well as causing immediate delays to our survey enactment, it also lead to resorting to using paper surveys being handed out to people being surveyed. This itself became a logistical nightmare as it had to be made sure that a surveyor had to have both a survey *and* consent form at the end. (Be careful to maintain a professional tone.) The last logistic difficulty that was noticed was the record keeping of over two hundred completed forms and consent forms. The final planning difficulty noticed was the survey itself. Despite having stakeholder input on the questions of the survey, it was sometimes questionable if it captured all the information that we needed to obtain. Additionally, the questions that were finalized to be used in the survey also caused some level of confusion to surveyors. Because these questions would then have to be explained, it decreased the turn-over time of a surveyor during pivotal lunch hour rushes.

Despite seeing a many difficulties during this project (wording), it must also be noted that over two hundred people were successfully surveyed. The survey itself acted as an information center for the future plans of the AMS that may have indirectly changed the perspectives of the people that had been surveyed or inquired about the survey

Recommendations:

The majority of our recommendations for future LFS 450 students, Collyn, Nancy, and the rest of the AMS team stem from potential knowledge gaps that arose during the implementation of our survey, as well as from the time constraints that our team faced during this project.

Although we were given the opportunity to create a menu for “The Palate”, we decided to focus solely on customer attitudes, as our group was wary of the time pressures we faced. However, as previously mentioned, we did include several food-related questions in our survey which we feel will act as the foundation for next year’s LFS 450 students to work with. (This is discussion and should be included in the discussion section.) Specifically, we asked survey participants “Are there foods that the SUB could serve, or serve more of, that fit your personal food preferences?” As mentioned in our Discussion section, a large majority of participants answered “Fresh/Healthy Foods,” while the second highest answer was “Vegetarian/Vegan options.” These answers serve as a solid preliminary foundation for next year’s LFS 450 students, who should focus on the menu aspect for “The Palate” by conducting a survey that focuses on customer attitudes towards specific menu items. In other words, future LFS 450 students should be trying to better understand exactly what customers would want from “The Palate” in terms of food options now that we have determined that the majority of students are, at

the very least, open to a concept like “The Palate” that also includes the Eco-To Go Program. (Would you recommend this as a scenario for next year?)

Future students should also keep in mind that because we have determined the Eco-To Go Program to be a vital component to the success of “The Palate”, any research conducted in regards to potential food items should also consider portion size in relation to the Eco-To Go container. What’s more, because a BYOC restaurant will face the challenge of multiple types of containers, future students will need to consider how a food outlet like, “The Palate” will be able to efficiently and economically deal with multiple container sizes and shapes, in addition to multiple food options.

To solve this problem, we recommend that future students look to food outlets like “The Loop Cafe”, which is a UBC Food Services outlet based out of the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability. All of our team members have visited this location, and found that they operate efficiently by having a staff member portion out a certain amount of food per customer. Their food options are normally centered on hearty stews with rice and include vegan, vegetarian and meat options. Regardless of the container size, each customer is given two scoops of rice, and one scoop of stew for a set price. We feel that this is a good example of an efficient and economically sustainable solution, and would be a good initial resource for future students to use. (It would have been nice to have seen some of these observations presented as results for the project.)

After talking with Collyn, we realized that part of the AMS’ vision for “The Palate” was the complete phase-out of all disposable cutlery. We feel that, although ideal, this would not be realistic for the initial success of “The Palate”. From our survey results, we were able to determine that 42% of participants never bring a reusable food container to campus. From our

point of view, this is a signal that the success of “The Palate” will depend solely on how convenient it is for customers to change their habits. Since 81% of survey participants were open to the idea of the Eco-To Go program, we feel that the AMS should first focus on helping students, staff and faculty, create lasting habits of bringing their reusable containers or their Eco-To Go membership cards to campus. (The first part of this paragraph is deiscussion.) After the first year, future LFS 450 students could then work with the AMS, to come up with a plan to phase out disposable cutlery, based on the success of, “The Palate.” In the meantime, “The Palate” could include the cost of disposable cutlery in the price of the food items, or it could only offer disposable cutlery if staff are asked for it. (These are recommendations.)

Although the possibility of a disposable cutlery selling “Green Vending Machine” was mentioned, (This should be in the results) we strongly feel that this will deter potential customers from going to “The Palate” as by the stakeholders, we feel that, at this stage, it is far too inconvenient for customers to remember to bring reusable cutlery from home. We therefore recommend that “The Palate” offers compostable bamboo cutlery to customers who request it, for a span of at least one year, so that customers can first grow accustomed to bringing their own containers or Eco-To Go membership cards to campus. For both future LFS 450 students, and the AMS, we recommend looking again to the Loop Cafe in the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability, for pricing on compostable bamboo cutlery.

Finally, we found that the most important consideration for our survey participants, regardless of whether the food outlet provided disposable containers or not, was the price to portion ratio. Therefore, we recommend that future LFS students who are researching possible menu items, ensure that they do a thorough analysis of the campus food outlets and what they are charging per portion of food. Again, we recommend starting off with the Loop Cafe, as they already work

with a set portion per price. We also recommend that the AMS focus on advertising that “The Palate’s” customers would save money, as the price of a disposable container would not be included in their meal price. As previously mentioned, we further recommend that “The Palate” should include the cost of compostable bamboo cutlery into the cost of each meal, but also obviously deduct, or not include, the cost of cutlery if the customer brings their own. This way, incentives are created for customers to bring their own cutlery and containers, as they see the reward first hand with a discount on their meal price.

Scenario Evaluation and Feedback:

The fulfillment of individual goals outlined in our initial project plan was used to evaluate the success of our overall project. To reiterate, the project plan was separated into three chronologically linear components: Planning, Enactment, and Conclusion and Recommendation formation. Despite initially outlining goals to be met, it must be mentioned that the complexity of the project itself caused these goals to change. The following table summarizes which of the goals in our initial project plan were completed and which were not.

Stage I- Planning/ Research Question Forming		
Component	Was it a success to us? Why?	Side Notes
Evaluate the pros and cons of the Eco To-Go Program	<p>Yes-</p> <p>Some literature was initially consulted in order to assist in the directing of our project plan. Programs at other post-secondary institutions similar to UBC’s Eco-To Go program were investigated. Brainstorming sessions were done and the following factors identified by our group were investigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>The lack of knowledge in the student body of the Eco To-Go program</i> -<i>Appropriate sizes for the new SUB Eco To-Go container</i> -<i>appropriate foods that are popular to students to be contained in said containers</i> -<i>incentives to drive eventual behavioral changes</i> 	<p>In a sense, this was the most crucial part of our planning and it was successful, as key factors were identified. These important factors will then be used to dictate our goals in the future.</p>

	<i>including monetary and portion-size adjustments</i>	
Contact project partners such as Collyn Chan and Nancy Toogood	Yes- Collyn Chan was the predominant key contact during the length of the project. It was during these in-person interviews with our group that the vision of The Palate was identified. A notable factor discussed, that further complicated our project, was the vision to phase out cutlery in the new SUB along with disposable containers. Nancy Toogood was consulted when we sought to implement our survey.	
Contact management of food service outlets to obtain, specifically, an existing knowledge of the current Eco To-Go program to therefore assess attitudes towards it.	No- The reason why this factor was not assessed was because our group began to feel that obtaining the student opinion <i>first</i> was of greater importance.	Recommendation for future LFS 450 projects
Contact Chefs Golob and Josh MacWilliams to generate future menu items for the Palate	No- Same as above.	
Investigate onto the possible menu items that are appropriate	No- Same as above.	
Stage II- Enactment		
Conduct survey and obtain opinions from customers of the food outlets within the SUB	Yes- After surveying for three days on March 19 th , 20 th and the 22 nd , 244 student opinions were obtained. It was after our presentation of data that our stakeholder Collyn Chan voiced her approval of the findings. Though, her only concern was of the issue of the cutlery.	Further explored in recommendations
Stage III- Conclusion and Recommendation Formation		
Is The Palate feasible?	Yes	

Media Release

UBC Food System Project

April 2013

Project Title: Feasibility Assessment for an AMS New SUB No Packaging Demo Restaurant - “The Palate”



Photo credit: Mashael Mawji

Photo description: Survey part

Description:

With the opening of the New Student Union Building, come 2014, the UBC Alma Mater Society is looking to develop a unique food service outlet that would operate without the use of disposable food containers. “The Palate,” would not only contribute to the reduction of campus consumer waste, but it would also serve as an innovative model for alternatives to the post-consumer waste-management practices that are currently found in the majority of food service outlets on campus. Customers would have the option of either bringing their own food container, or participating in the Eco-To Go program, which is a container exchange program that is already employed in UBC Food Services outlets. In this context, our project objective was to assess the feasibility of a bring-your-own-container food outlet in the New SUB, based upon the results of a consumer attitudes survey. Of the 244 surveyed participants, 42% do not bring their own containers to campus, but 81% would be interested in participating in a container exchange program like Eco-To Go. Therefore, our findings indicate that a food outlet like “the Palate,” is feasible, provided that, moving forward, incentives are created and customer convenience is considered.

Quote

“We live in a disposable culture, and that’s why a food outlet like the Palate is so important. It’s an idea that challenges the very social norms - the very habits - that our society takes for granted on a daily basis.” - Nicole Read

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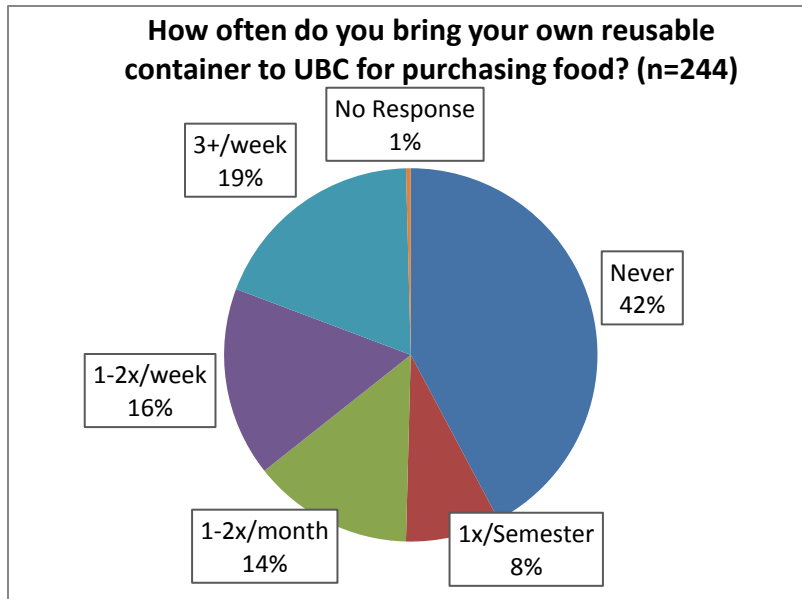
Appendix

UBCFSP Vision:

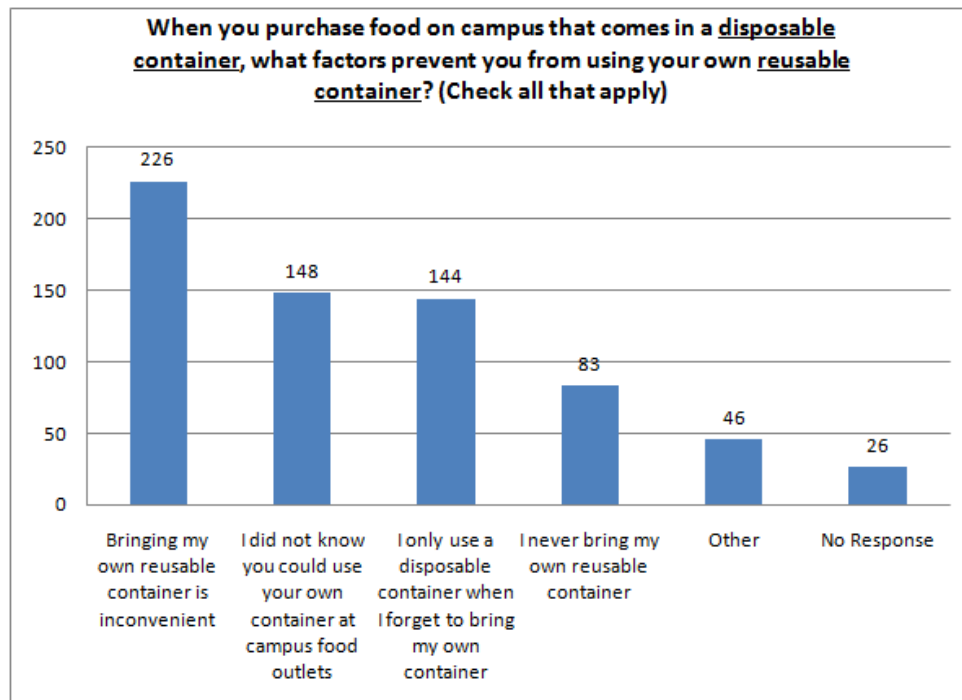
UBCFSP Vision	Recommendations and concerns
1. Food is locally grown, produced and processed in support of local people, infrastructure and economies	Local foods are only effective in some cases. Food sovereignty, local food economies and supporting farmers are all positively affected. Selection, however, may be limited. It also may not accommodate cultural preferences.
2. Food providers and educators promote awareness among consumers about cultivation, processing, ingredients, and nutrition of food products in the food systems	Ethical production must be considered. Ethical animal husbandry, monocrop production, land cultivation, workers environments and wages and the externalities produced that will impact the environment
3. On campus food system actors work toward food sovereignty and agency	More clarification is needed to understand who the actors are. Agency is driven by personal preference, beliefs and trajectories. More effective marketing that appeals to different faculties will complement the on campus initiatives.
4. Community members have access to learning opportunities	Outline the specific education opportunities that are available and the costs associated with them. Will these opportunities be offered as electives, volunteer run programs, or lecture style? Are there certain groups in the community that have the least daily exposure to sustainability initiatives, and if so, how can we get these people involved and more interested?

Findings:

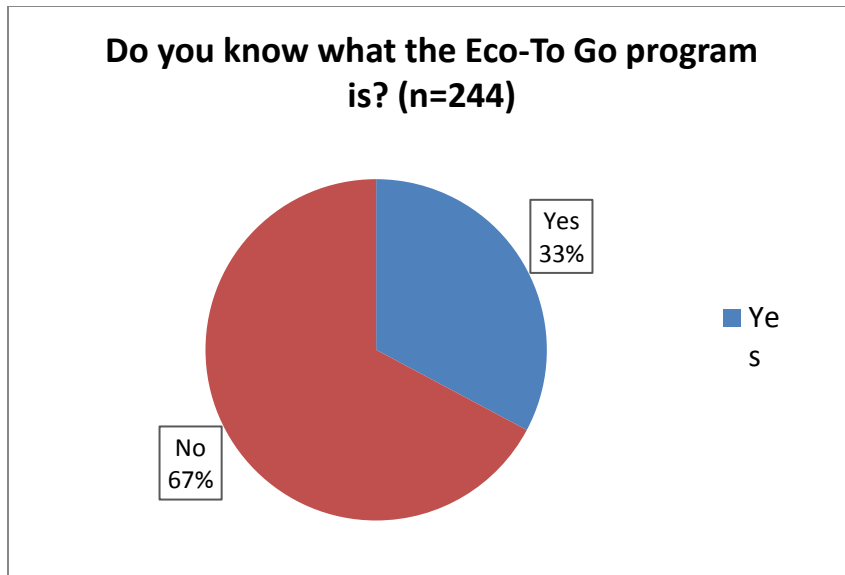
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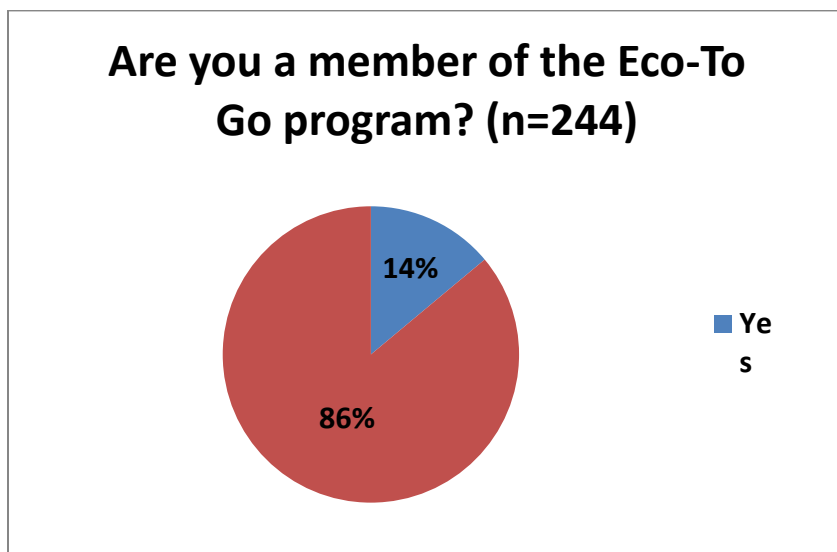
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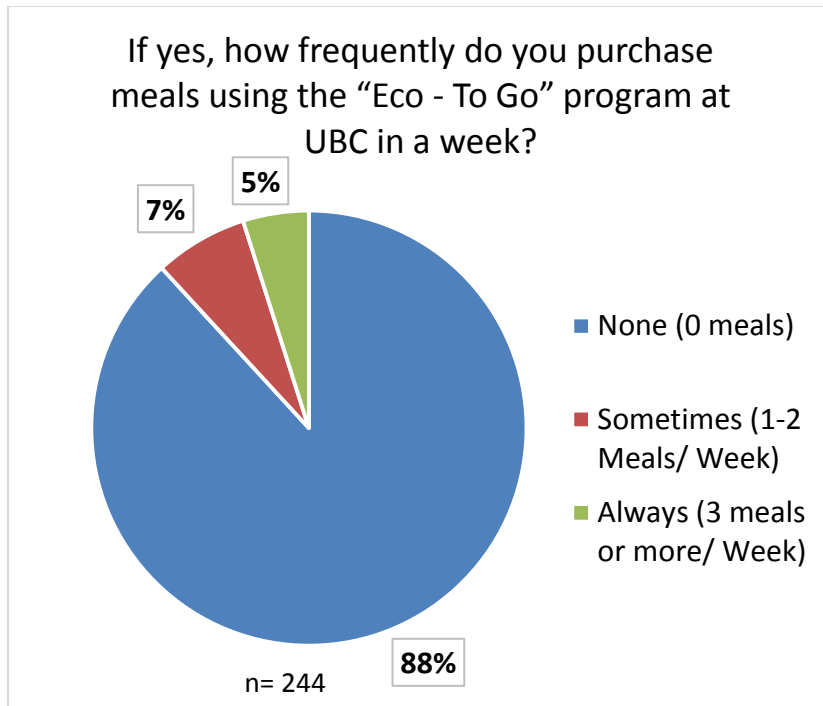
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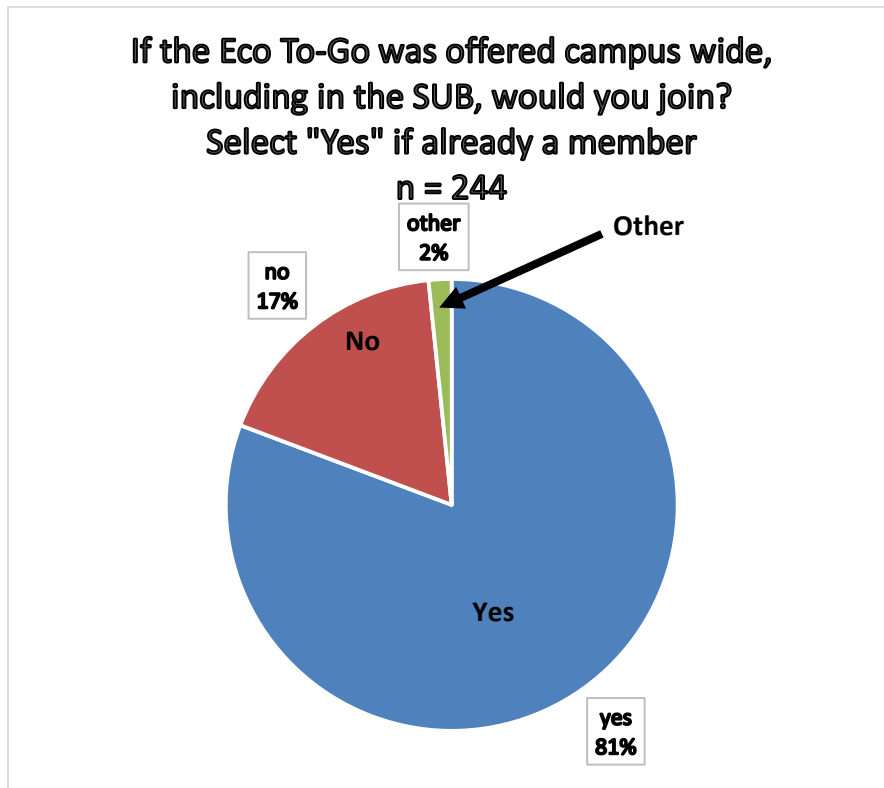
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Section 1, Question 5:



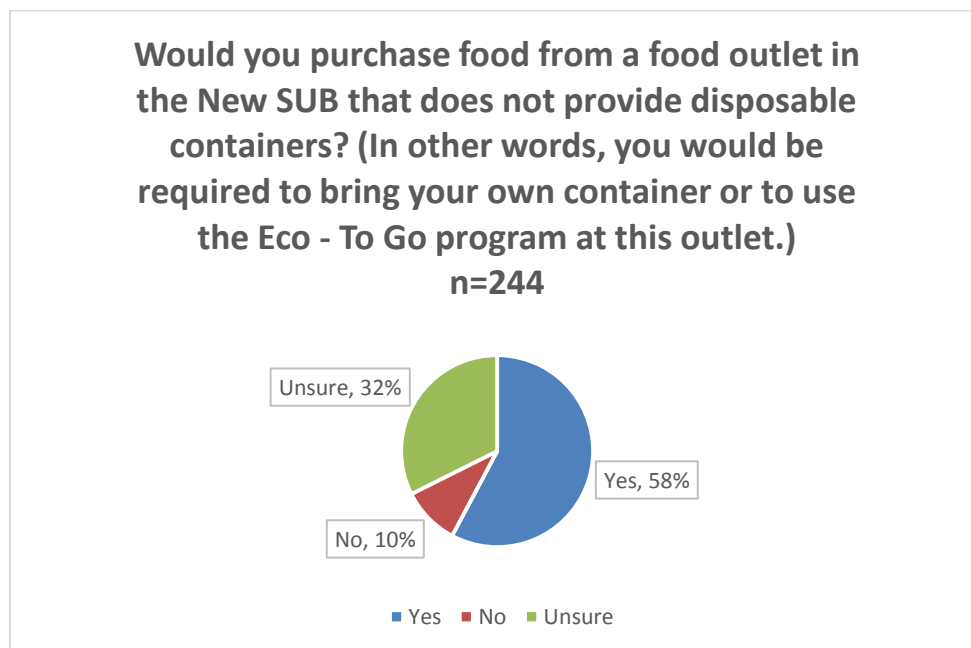
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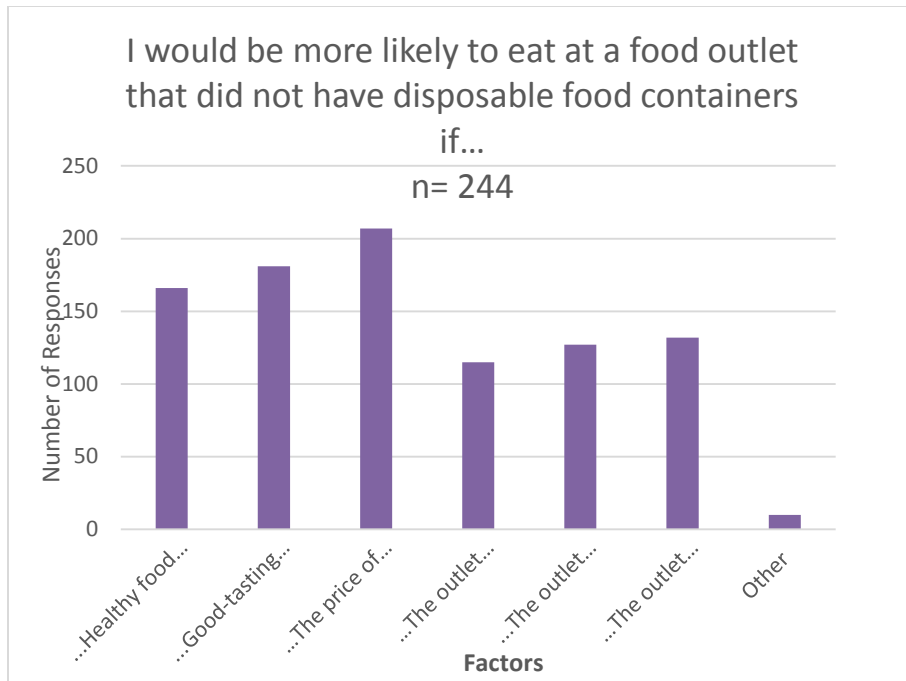
If not, why?

- Living in private residences with a chef
- Foods already comes prepackaged
- Inconvenient
- Unsure
- Don't want to carry container
- I always bring reusable containers
- Don't want to pay
- It cost \$5, would participate if free
- Food isn't kosher
- Depends, if eating in, sure, if to-go, too annoying
- I care about how my dishes are washed and water and soap is not enough
- Don't often buy food that requires containers
- Don't buy food often
- Don't want to pay \$5
- Seems unhygienic
- Have plenty of own reusable containers

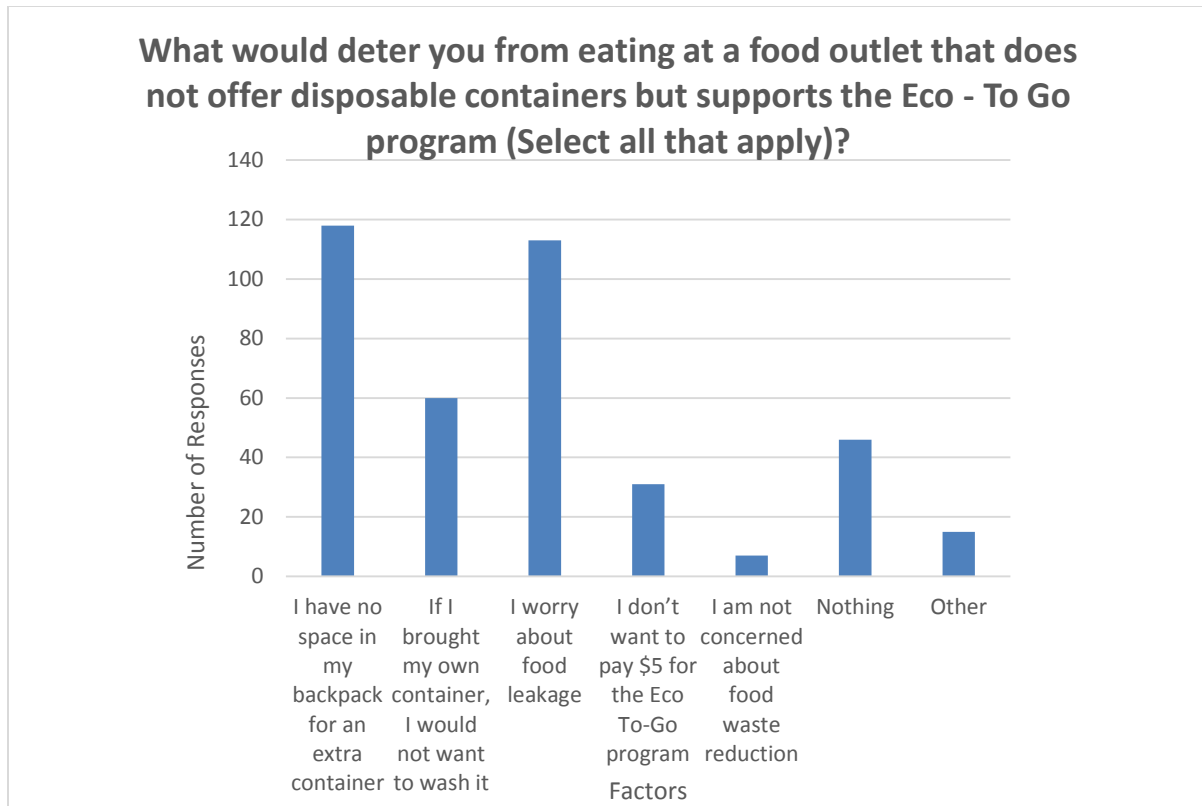
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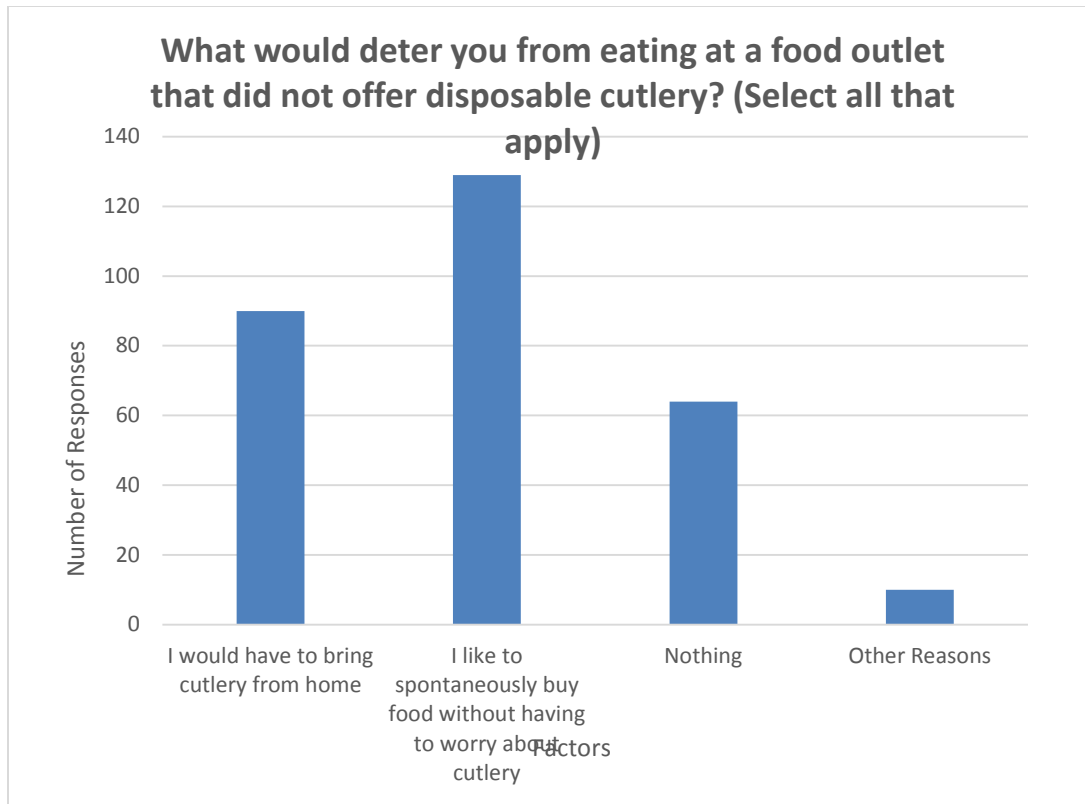
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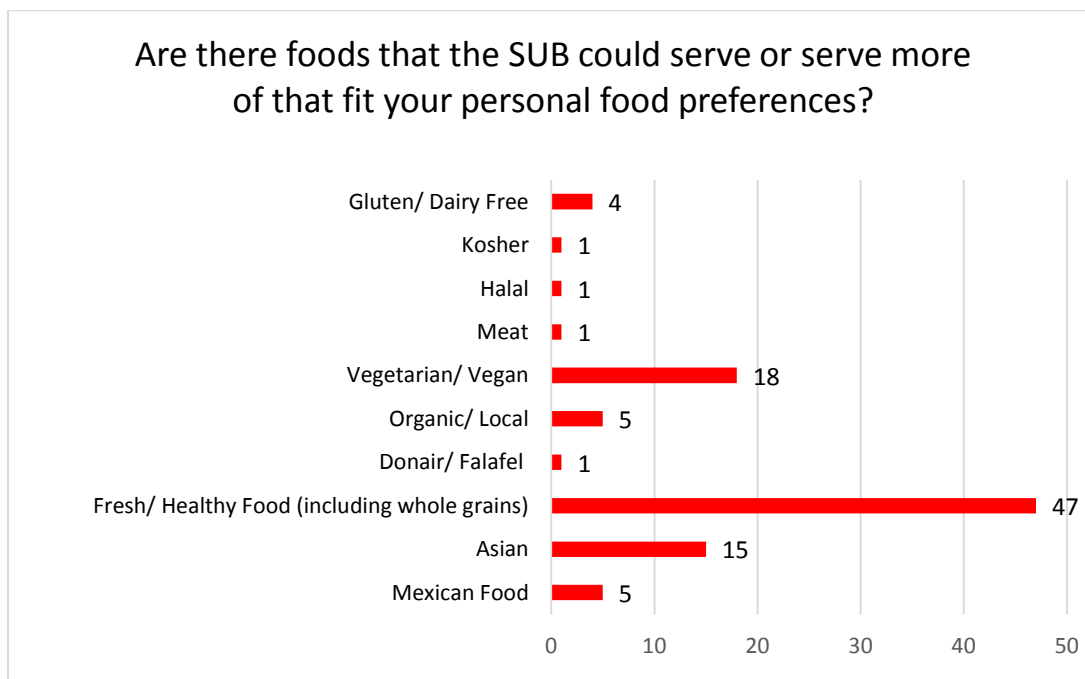
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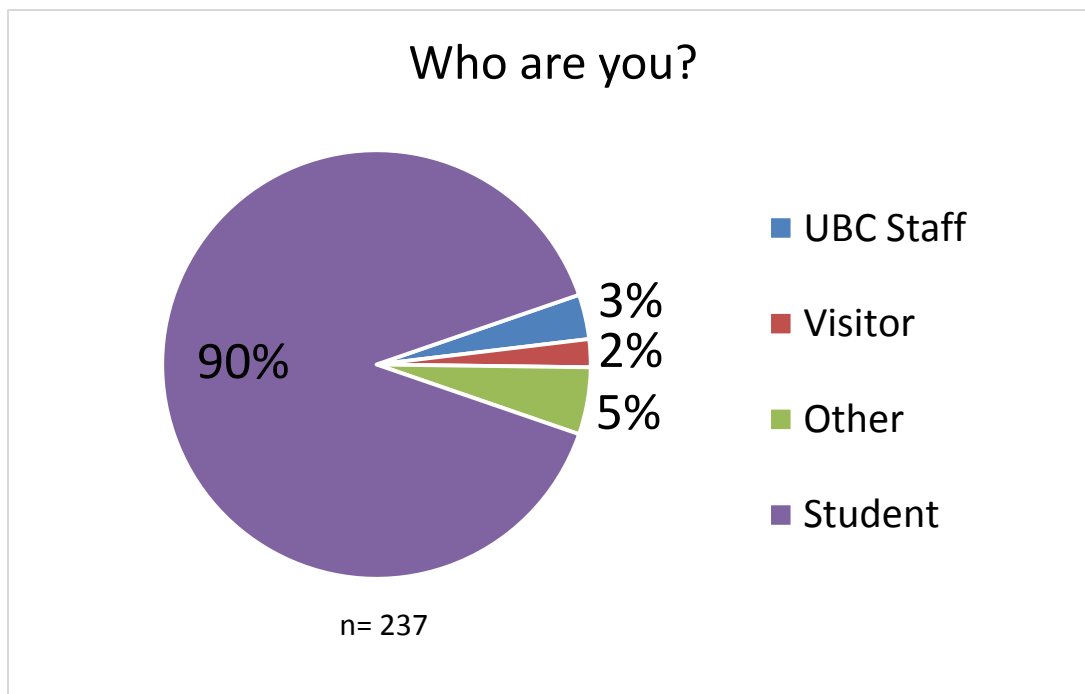
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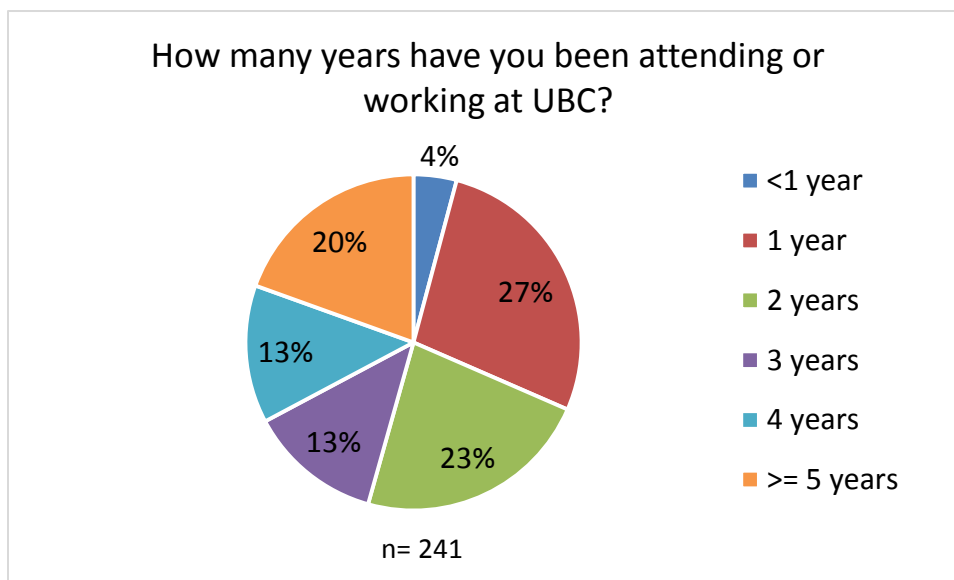
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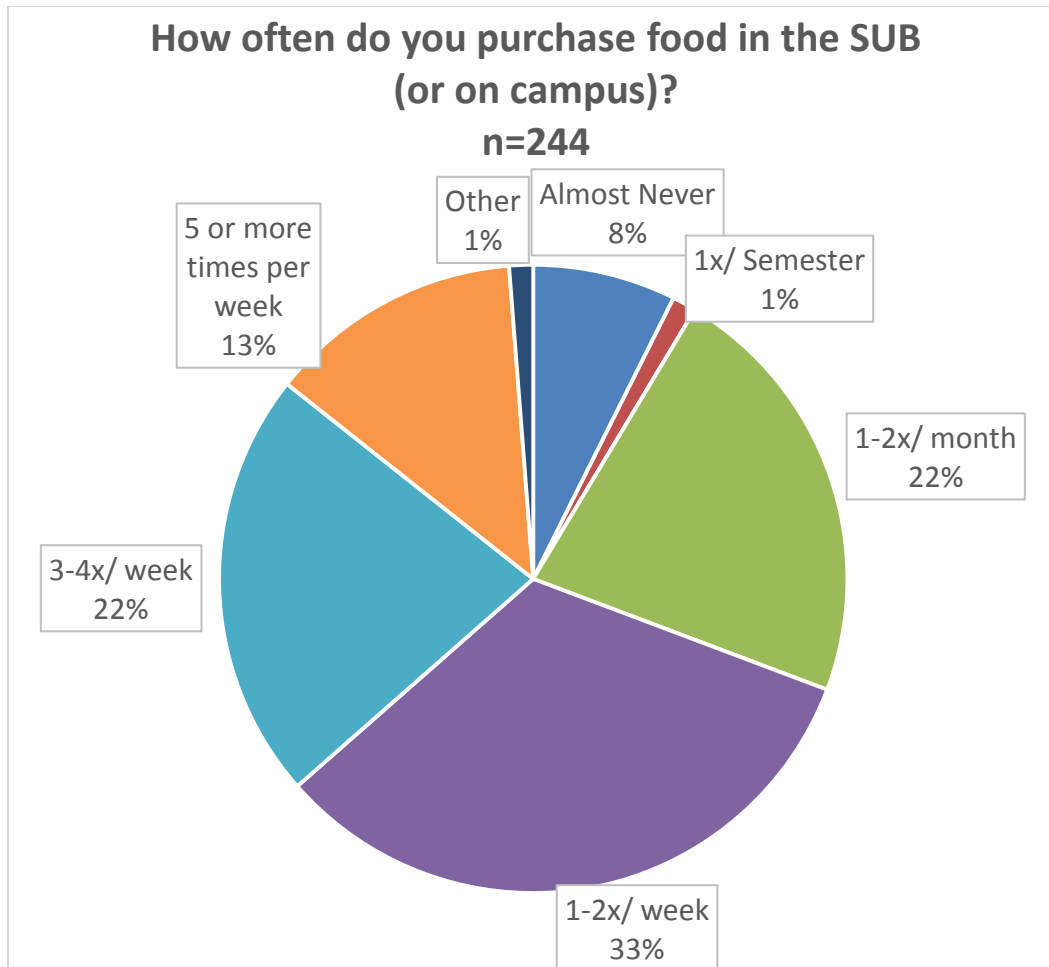
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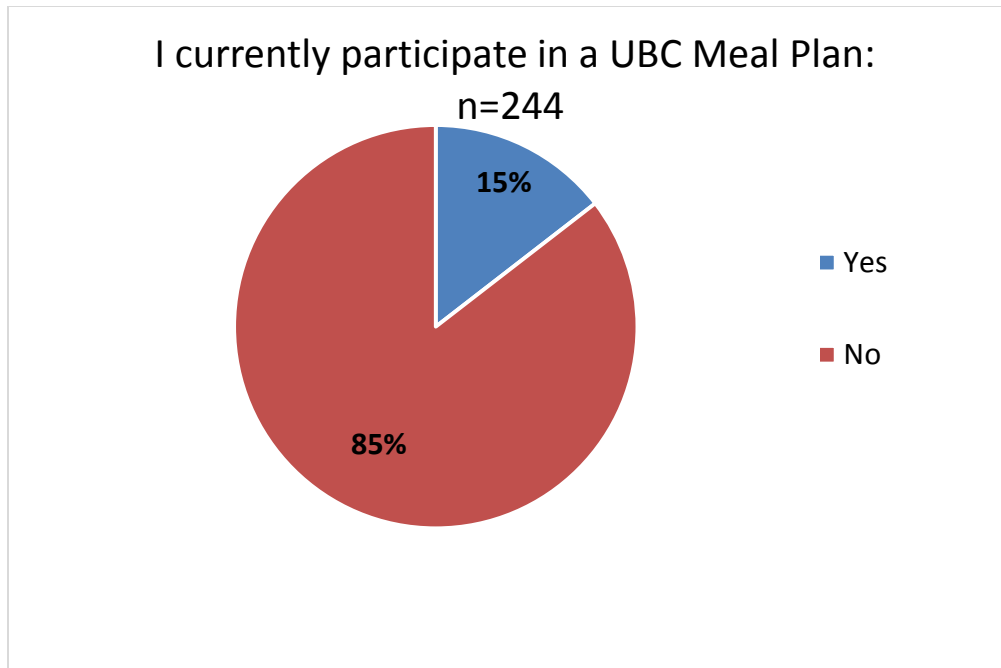
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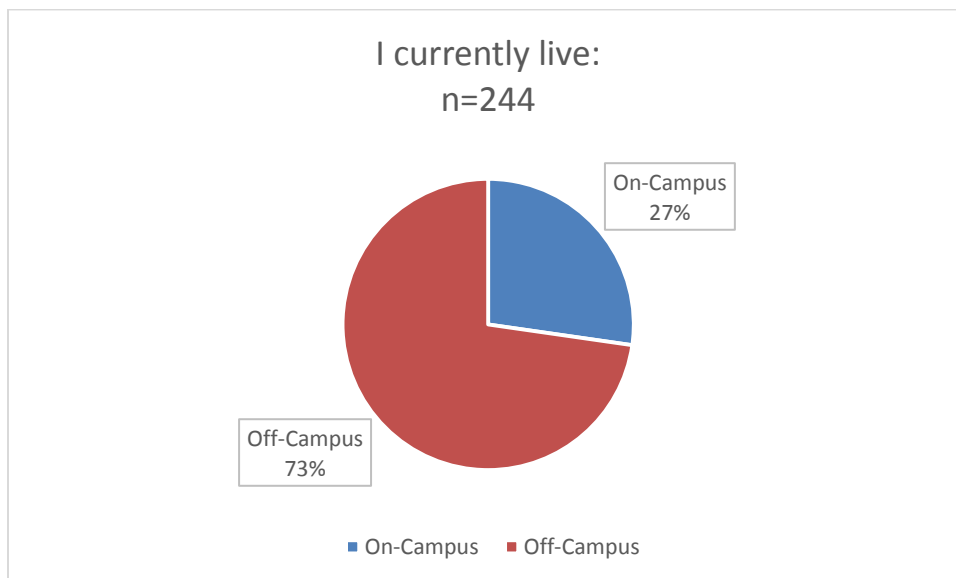
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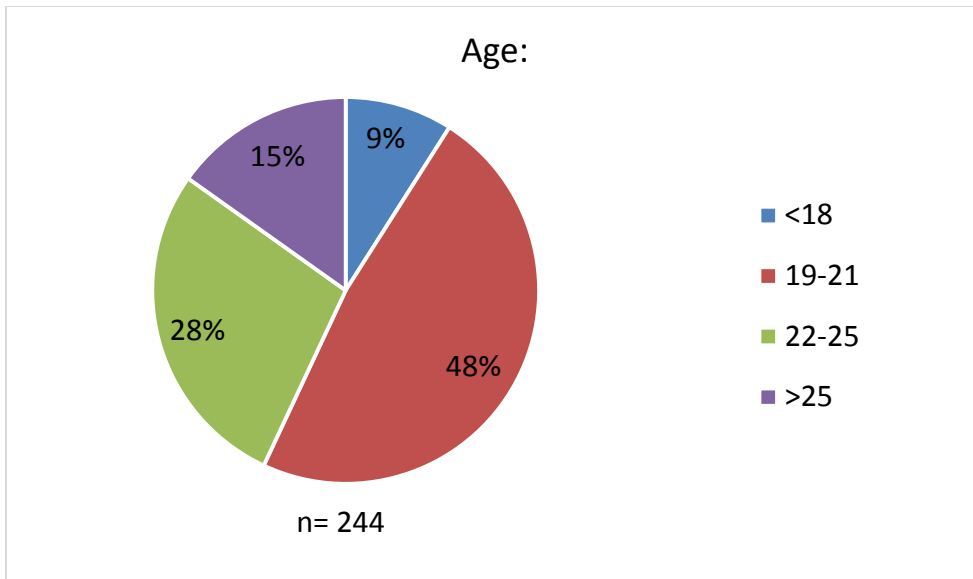
Section 2, Question 4:



Section 2, Question 5:



Section 2, Question 6:



Section 2, Question 7:

