



SUSTAINABLE FOOD AT QUEEN'S

Introduction

In 2020 the College decided to respond to the *Lancet's* study "Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT-Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems" in two ways: by creating a College-wide working group to consider our own processes with respect to the sustainability of our dietary and planetary health in College, and by organising a series of discussions and meals that encourage us to think about food production, sustainability, nutrition, and waste, as they pertain to the health of our bodies and our planet.

As the heart of this programme of discussions and meals are innovative chefs of national and international stature who create meals in collaboration with the College chef and take part in our discussions. The series is open to the entire College community of students, staff, and academics and fosters greater collaboration and sensitivity to the planning, purchasing, preparation, consumption, and waste that is part of the College's food cycle. The series is designed to inspire and educate, as well as to inform future practices.

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Our kitchen

- The current College kitchen was opened in 2010 and was designed to be as environmentally-friendly as possible. It was a forerunner in Oxford and is often used as an example of how to be more energy efficient.
- All of our refrigeration is from a Danish company called Gram who only use hydrocarbon gas, which has no negative effect on the ozone layer. Their refrigeration has been voted the most energy efficient in the EU.
- We do not have any regular gas in the kitchen, which means we save money and we need less in the way of extraction and ventilation, thus saving more energy too.
- Our ventilated ceiling was a new concept when it was fitted; it cleans the air using a variety of methods, including ultra-violet light, and the air extracted from the kitchen has the grease and heat in turn extracted by the ceiling. Our ceiling was the third of its kind to be fitted in England, the other two being in the House of Lords and Lincoln's Inn.
- Our cooking suite is made by a Swiss company called Elro who are market leaders on energy conservation and quality. Our hobs are all induction hobs and only use energy when a pan is actually on the hob. This is estimated to save approximately 30% on energy costs and it also means that the kitchen is a lot cooler than a standard catering kitchen so we use less energy cooling the kitchen down. It also

makes the kitchen a much nicer environment in which to work.

- Our dishwasher is made by Meiko and uses the least water of any dishwasher on the market; it also has a heat exchanger which saves on energy.
- Food orders are placed daily during the week in order to cater specifically to the upcoming menus and events and limit wastage by only purchasing what we know we need. We aim to serve the same menus across the College community to alleviate waste.
- At the moment the kitchen is serving roughly 24% vegan/vegetarian meals (at lunchtime that figure is 38%). The College orders through the University buying group Foodbuy who are developing a carbon dashboard to help inform the ordering process.
- Students and senior members alike provide input on the food we serve and the College aims to ensure that all of our menus are seasonal and use local produce whenever that is possible. This not only saves money and air/road miles but also ensures that we are using ingredients at their best.
- In the past 12 months, Head Chef Sean Ducie and his team have focussed their efforts on using more plant-based ingredients to replace the traditional animal-based products. For example, we only use vegan mayonnaise, we use a lot of plant / nut milks, butter, and cream and we are using a lot more varieties of plant-based proteins such as tempeh, seitan, pulled oats, and Quorn. We use vegetarian gelatine instead of animal gelatine, so that our desserts can be eaten by both meat-eating and vegetarian diners.
- When recruiting new staff, the College emphasises its commitment to a more ethical and sustainable approach to dining. For example, our new sous chef has worked extensively on vegan cuisine and helped set up the vegan café at Oxford Brookes University.
- All of our disposables are now compostable and our disposable cutlery is made of bamboo. Our suppliers are running initiatives to reduce waste, such as collecting the boxes that the food is delivered in and then reusing them. We recycle all of our glass and cardboard and any plastic waste via Oxford City Council, along with our food waste which they collect on a daily basis.
- The College has its own Keepcups and gives a discount for each hot drink if you use one.
- In 2020, we were delighted to be one of five colleges included in [Oxford's Fairtrade University and College Award](#); this followed our Fairtrade accreditation in 2018.