



The Open University of Sri Lanka

# EXPOSURE TO SUSTAINABLE CATERING AT OUSL





# Sustainability Catering Report of Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)

Catering to student Well-Being: OUSL canteens meticulously crafted daily menus encompass a comprehensive spectrum of food groups. OUSL canteens take pride in offering an array of choices, including cereals, vegetables, local fruits, animal proteins, and legumes. Our commitment to animal welfare ensures our meat options align with our values. The diversity in our daily offerings remains consistent, providing students with a multitude of options. Additionally, we've established a dedicated milk bar, committed to serving wholesome dairy products free from artificial additives, supporting to rise the health of students.

At OUSL, we strictly adhere to our food and drink policy when it comes to storing and displaying food. This involves keeping food in glass cupboards within appropriate containers to prevent contamination from insects and dust. Cooked food is securely stored in covered containers or enclosed cupboards. For items available for sale, transparent glass or metal covers are used. We maintain hygiene by placing containers with cooked food on stands, ensuring they are at least three feet above the ground. Frozen foods are consistently kept at the correct temperature levels. In addition, we maintain separation between cooked and uncooked food items and avoid using printed paper for food storage or wrapping.

The drinking water supplied to the university canteens undergoes rigorous testing at university laboratories. This process ensures that the water used for both cooking and drinking complies with established standards, guaranteeing its safety by confirming the absence of harmful bacteria and chemicals.



## Canteen Environment

The canteens at OUSL are designed to create a sustainable and mentally enriching environment both inside and outside their premises. The exterior spaces are thoughtfully landscaped with lush greenery, while the interior areas are meticulously ventilated. OUSL prioritizes the mental well-being of its students and staff, and the canteen facilities contribute to this by providing an eco-friendly, stress-free, and serene atmosphere.



## Zero plastic canteen

OUSL has initiated the 'Zero -Plastic OUSL' program, successfully replacing all plastic plates and cups with glassware in all canteen. Banners are displayed throughout the university premises, serving as a reminder to promote sustainable food practices, encouraging the use of lunch boxes instead of disposable lunch sheets and facilitating the convenient takeaway of meals from the university.





## Canteen waste

At the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), we have implemented a comprehensive canteen waste management system, embodying our commitment to sustainability. Central to this system are the specially designated waste bins, meticulously placed to enable the efficient separation of waste into distinct categories. This practice is pivotal, ensuring that waste is sorted at the source, safeguarding the integrity of the entire waste management process and contributing to our eco-friendly goals.

Organic waste, a substantial byproduct of our food services, is not discarded. Instead, OUSL redirects it towards sustainable applications. It serves as valuable feed for pig farming, reducing our environmental footprint while supporting local agriculture and food production. Additionally, this process yields organic fertilizers, promoting sustainable agriculture in our university and its neighboring communities.



## Canteen waste

Simultaneously, we harness organic waste for biogas production, a renewable energy source. This biogas becomes a clean cooking fuel within our canteen, markedly decreasing reliance on conventional fossil fuels or electricity. By adopting biogas technology, we not only reduce emissions but also exemplify the potential for renewable energy integration in daily food service operations.

Besides the ecological advantages, our efficient canteen waste management system generates supplementary income, reflecting OUSL's pioneering approach to sustainability. Furthermore, we ensure the responsible disposal or recycling of non-organic waste, generating revenue that offsets operational costs while bolstering our commitment to financial sustainability.



## Sustainable food education for future generation

The OUSL has undertaken a commendable initiative known as the "I am Eco Smart" program. This visionary program has been designed to impart knowledge about food security and promote sustainable food practices among younger generations. In a world grappling with food waste and dwindling resources, educating our youth about the importance of responsible food consumption is vital. The "Eco Smart" program employs a multifaceted approach to engage and educate. It integrates informative sessions with a plethora of engaging activities and interactive games, all aimed at minimizing food wastage and promoting eco-friendly food practices. These activities make learning fun, fostering a deeper understanding of how our food choices impact the environment and our future. One highlight of the program is the unique dining experience it offers. Participants get to enjoy meals prepared with sustainability in mind, helping them appreciate that delicious food and responsible food practices can go hand in hand. What sets the "I am Eco Smart" program apart is its commitment to reaching various segments of the younger generation. It tailors its educational approach to suit the diverse needs and preferences of different age groups.







Sustainable Catering, nourishing OUSL ' community  
while safeguarding our collective well-being

