

National dishes

Case studies of national dishes as part of a blended learning module

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AIM OF THIS TOOL

1.

To enhance students understanding of sustainability in food systems and diets through a multidisciplinary approach.

2.

To give the students an entry point for developing a personal approach to the sustainability of food systems and diets.

Intended learning outcomes

Knowledge:

- Describe a meal by applying a multi-disciplinary approach including identification of qualities, food origin and cultural background of recipes, preparation and eating

Skills:

- Analyze impact of food and meals on sustainability using a multi-disciplinary approach
- Compare food systems according their impact on sustainability
- Think in processes and systems according to agriculture, food, nutrition and health
- Use scientific language to discuss and explain problems in English, both in written and oral presentation

Competences:

- Independently solve problems related to current food systems and their impact on sustainability
- Systematic understanding of knowledge in food systems
- Conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate current research critically
- Critical awareness of current problems and new insights in food system
- Work independently with scientific literature within the field

Description of the task

Outline of the case study:

1. Select a traditional meal or dish from your home region
2. Describe the ingredients, their origin and production (incl. pre-processing)
3. Describe the recipes for each part of the meal, including tradition and cultural background
4. Describe the qualities of the dish, including ways of eating and preparation
5. Analyse the impact of the dish and the ingredients on sustainability and health indicators
6. Develop strategies for improvement of the dish, including the way of production towards better health and sustainability on all levels (ingredients, recipes, dishes)

The descriptions should include:

1. Why chosen (e.g. typical for the region or event)
2. Include the cultural context, recipe, food and ingredients, preparation and eating.
3. Origin of the food and ingredients, where bought, tracing them back to their origin and on the kind of pre-processing.
4. Process and product related qualities. Process related qualities are related to the production process and impact on sustainability, e.g. eco-friendly, CO₂-patterns. Product related qualities includes the food qualities such as nutritional values, taste, etc.
5. Waste: amount of waste during preparation (weight, what kind of) as well as the leftovers after eating (mostly done with family or friend).

Following a scientific approach to the sustainability of the Mediterranean diet (Donini et al. 2016), the following criteria should be included:

- Plant:animal protein ratio
- Fruit and vegetable consumption
- Degree of (pre-)processing
- Diversity of food/ingredients
- Rate of local food and seasonality
- Rate of eco-friendly food
- Adherence to Mediterranean diet

Outline of the assignment

The suggested format of the documentation/task:

- Title: A personal approach to sustainable diets – *Name of your meal/dish*
- Table of content
- Description of the meal
- Sustainability and health aspects of the meal
- Potential improvements towards enhanced sustainability
- Learning outcomes: Please shortly summarize what you have got from this task, information, reflexion, change of habits etc.
- References

Grading based on the individual written report and oral presentation and discussion of the assignment

A written report/presentation

7 minutes oral presentation

Discussion after the presentation

Unexpected learning outcomes

- Students discussing and teaching friends and family about the sustainability and health issue
- Using something familiar and personal to explore an unfamiliar and unknown issues made the task "easier to grasp"
- Task went beyond the level of everyday meals
- Students discussing the issues in relation to the environment and human health on both a local and a global level
- Presentations and discussions in plenum add knowledge about worldwide food availability, culture, values and perspective on everyday meals.

Students learning experience



- This task foster network and knowledge sharing
- We all have a huge impact on our environment even in such simple activities as preparing a meal
- Possible to recreate traditional dishes in a more sustainable way
 - Less meat, organic, local, more vegetables
- I enjoyed the research work with the recipe, because it required a lot of exchanging knowledge with friends and family
- Knowledge about everyday dishes and reflect upon their nutritional and sustainable content

How can this be implemented?

We suggest:

- Can be implemented as a case in new or existing courses or programs
- Used as a take-home task during the course or an exam assignment