

# A scoping review of food-related interventions on post-secondary campuses

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## Background

- Post-secondary campuses provide ‘living labs’ to pilot and evaluate interventions to improve the healthfulness and/or environmental sustainability of food systems.
- To inform future research and the identification of best practices, a scoping review was undertaken to:
  - Characterize food-related interventions on campuses in terms of their focus and design; and,
  - Identify gaps in the existing literature.

## Methods

### SEARCH STRATEGY

- Databases: MEDLINE, CINAHL, Scopus, and ERIC.
- Search terms: nutrition, intervention, post-secondary, sustainability, and related concepts.
- Retrieved **34 articles** describing interventions.
- An additional 4 articles discussed frameworks to support assessment of campus food systems.

### DATA EXTRACTED

- Setting
- Target population
- Intervention policy action domain according to NOURISHING framework
- Intervention design type

## Results (n=34 interventions)



### SETTING

- Canada: 3
- US: 28
- Europe: 3



### TARGET

- 25 targeted specifically to students
- 9 targeted to consumers more broadly

- 28 interventions addressed health, 6 addressed environmental sustainability, and 1 (course-based) addressed both.
- The policy domains most frequently invoked were those addressing behaviour change (informing people, nutrition education and skills), and the implementation of nutrition label standards and regulations (Figure 1).
- Interventions commonly involved provision of point-of-purchase information (e.g., labels), courses, and marketing (Figure 2).



Figure 1:

Interventions (n=34) by focus (policy domain)

NOURISHING policy domain		n
Food environment	Nutrition label standards/regulations	11
	Offer healthy foods/set standards	0
	Use economic tools	2
	Restrict food advertising	0
	Improve quality of food supply	0
	Set incentives and rules	1
	Harness supply chain	6
Behaviour change	Inform people about food/nutrition	15
	Nutrition advice/counseling	3
	Give nutrition education and skills	11

† Interventions can have multiple policy action domains



Figure 2:

Interventions (n=34) by design type

Intervention design	n
Point-of-purchase nutrition/health information	11
Message-based marketing	10
On campus course	5
Electronic course	4
Counselling (e.g. peer-to-peer)	3
Changes to physical environment	2
Economic incentive	1
Self motivation	1

† Interventions with multiple design types are indicated with corresponding symbols (■◆)

## Conclusions

- The majority of existing research is narrowly focused on interventions that target individual dietary behaviour by providing information to educate and inform the consumer.
- There is a need for the evaluation of interventions that explicitly address environmental factors and the links between food, health, and the environment.

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