

PEANUTS *on the* MENU

*A Campus Dining Guide to Serving Peanuts
Safely and Confidently*



UMassAmherst

UMass Dining



TABLE OF CONTENTS

P.04

1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Why Peanuts Matter

P.06

2 UNDERSTANDING TODAY'S STUDENTS

A Generation Seeking Balance and Purpose

Transparency, Sustainability, and Social Values

Craveability and Cultural Authenticity

Convenience and Competition

Setting the Stage for Culinary Innovation

P.10

3 NUTRITION AND DIETETICS STORY

A Plant-Based Protein with Broad Appeal

Flexible Across Dietary Patterns

Supporting Focus and Mental Well-Being

Health Equity and Affordability

P.12

4 MANAGING ALLERGENS IN CAMPUS DINING

Overview of Allergen Management at Scale

Staff Training and Standard Operating Procedures

Labeling, Signage, and Station Design

Preventing Cross-Contact

Student Preferences and Menu Integration

Next Steps and Considerations for Peer Institutions

P.16

5 CULINARY INSPIRATION & RECIPE DEVELOPMENT

Methodology: Testing and Refining Recipes at UMass Amherst

Cost-effectiveness and Versatility of Peanuts

Culinary Diversity and Recipe Authenticity

Leveraging a Broad Range of Peanut Products

Practical Applications in Campus Kitchens

Recipes

P.32

6 RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES

Maximizing Peanuts in Retail

Promotions at Retail Locations

P.34

7 COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Allergen Safety and Peanut Inclusion at UMass Amherst Dining

Building Policy and Stakeholder Alignment

Communicating a Consistent, Evidence-Based Message

P.39

8 PLANNING & PROMOTING SPECIAL EVENTS - MARKETING

Student Voices

Large Special Events

Pop Up Events

Community Collaborations

P.40

9 MEASURING SUCCESS

Collecting Feedback

Tracking Event Performance

Using Data to Improve Menu Development and Promotions

P.42

10 GETTING STARTED

Partner With Us



1 INTRODUCTION



Today's students expect more from campus dining programs, including global flavors, plant-forward options, and a clear commitment to health, dietary inclusion, and sustainability. For many college and university dining operations, peanuts represent an underutilized opportunity to meet these expectations.

Developed by the National Peanut Board in collaboration with UMass Dining, this guide shares practical insights and tested best practices from one of the nation's leading collegiate dining programs. UMass Dining's approach—grounded in culinary innovation, cultural authenticity, and a strong

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guidebook is to:

- Provide chefs, nutritionists, and dining managers with guidance for serving peanuts safely and inclusively
- Illustrate how peanuts align with student interest in flavor, nutrition, affordability, and sustainability
- Offer practical tools and adaptable ideas for use in dining halls, retail locations, catering, and grab-and-go formats

commitment to student well-being—demonstrates how peanuts, when managed with appropriate protocols and transparency, can be safely and thoughtfully integrated into campus menus in ways that support both student satisfaction and institutional priorities.

Whether the goal is to refresh menus, strengthen allergen training, or expand the use of plant-based proteins, this resource is designed to support dining teams in confidently and responsibly incorporating peanuts across campus dining operations.

When thoughtfully incorporated, peanuts offer dining programs a versatile ingredient that supports operational goals while meeting evolving student expectations. Without peanuts, something is missing from your menu.



WHY PEANUTS MATTER

Peanuts align with several key trends shaping today's higher education dining landscape. In a 2025 survey of nearly 500 UMass students, peanuts emerged as a high-frequency, flavor-forward, protein-driven staple, with students expressing strong interest in more diverse menu applications and broader availability across campus.

FLAVOR AND VERSATILITY

Peanuts are widely used across global cuisines, including Asian, African, and Latin American food traditions, allowing for diverse and culturally authentic menu applications.

NUTRITION AND FUNCTIONALITY

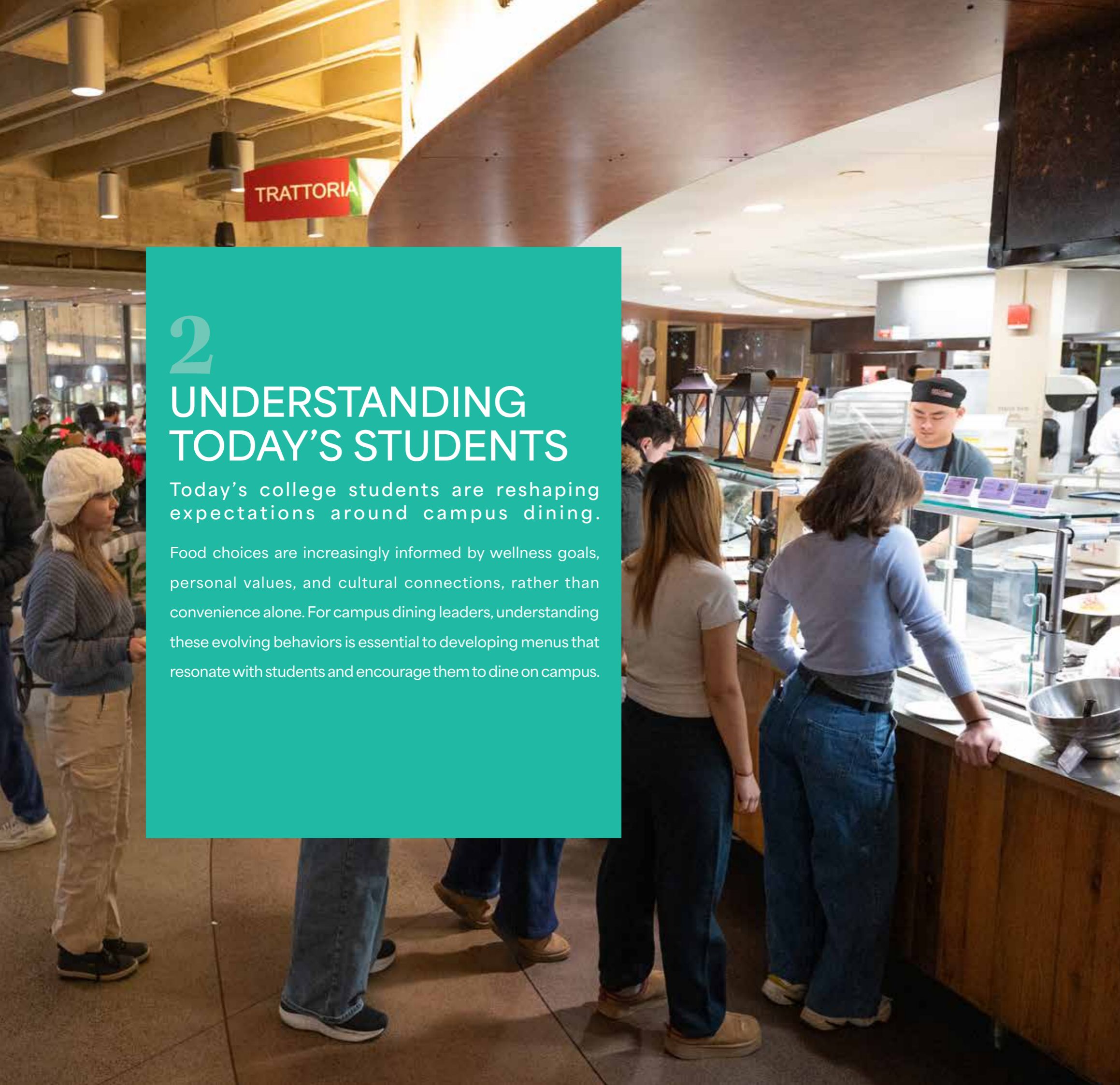
As a plant-based protein, peanuts support energy, satiety, and cognitive performance—important considerations for student populations.

AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESS

Peanuts provide a cost-effective plant-based protein for both operators and students, supporting value-driven menu planning.

SUSTAINABILITY

Peanuts are among the most sustainable foods on the planet, grown and sourced from family farms across America.



2

UNDERSTANDING TODAY'S STUDENTS

Today's college students are reshaping expectations around campus dining.

Food choices are increasingly informed by wellness goals, personal values, and cultural connections, rather than convenience alone. For campus dining leaders, understanding these evolving behaviors is essential to developing menus that resonate with students and encourage them to dine on campus.

A GENERATION SEEKING BALANCE & PURPOSE

Students' relationships with food reflect a balance of function and experience. Research from Technomic indicates that energy, mood, and mental focus are among the top wellness outcomes students seek from their meals. Ingredients that support sustained energy, stress management, and academic performance are particularly relevant in the campus environment. Peanuts, which provide plant-based protein, healthy fats, and key nutrients, align well with these functional priorities.

Dining programs that clearly communicate these attributes tend to resonate most with students. That alignment is reflected in student behavior, with seven in 10 students at UMass Amherst consuming peanuts at least weekly, according to a recent campus survey. Many campuses incorporate peanuts and peanut butter into breakfast offerings, salad stations, or targeted messaging during high-demand periods such as finals week. These approaches link nutrition to performance in a way that feels practical and relevant to students' daily routines.



TRANSPARENCY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND SOCIAL VALUES

Transparency and responsibility are central to how today's students evaluate campus dining programs. Students expect clarity around sourcing practices, environmental impact, and inclusive operations.

Peanuts support these expectations through their sustainability profile. Compared to most other nuts, peanuts require less water (3.2 gallons per one ounce)* and contribute to soil health through nitrogen-fixing root systems, which enrich the soil and reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers.

Their underground growth and nitrogen-fixing biology further supports sustainable agriculture by improving soil quality over time. Every part of the peanut plant serves a purpose within a fully utilized

system: peanut kernels are eaten or processed into oil, skins add bioactive compounds to food, hulls are repurposed for fiber and livestock feed, and vines and hay are used for animal bedding or returned to the soil to restore nutrients. This whole-crop utilization results in a near zero-waste agricultural system with a smaller environmental footprint.

In addition, more than 80% of peanuts grown in the U.S. are consumed domestically, making them one of the most locally rooted ingredients a dining program can offer. These attributes allow dining programs to communicate a clear and credible sourcing story that aligns with student values and institutional sustainability goals.

CRAVEABILITY AND CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY

While wellness remains important, flavor continues to drive student satisfaction and repeat visits. Industry trend reporting from Sodexo highlights strong student interest in bold, globally inspired, and culturally authentic foods. Peanuts offer broad culinary relevance, appearing in cuisines across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and provide chefs with a versatile and cost-effective ingredient for building authentic flavor profiles. This is reinforced by their popularity in the U.S., where peanuts are the most consumed nut at approximately 7.2 pounds per capita annually (USDA)*, and peanut butter is found in roughly 94% of American homes.

The emphasis on cultural authenticity is reinforced by the diversity of campus culinary teams. When staff draw on their own cultural knowledge and experience, menus become more representative and engaging, an outcome that students readily recognize and appreciate.

CONVENIENCE AND COMPETITION

Convenience remains a critical factor in student dining decisions. Technomic's 2025 College & University Multi Client Study indicates that a majority of student food purchases occur off campus, underscoring the competitive landscape facing campus dining programs. This dynamic places increased importance on speed, portability, and format flexibility.

Peanuts and peanut butter adapt well to these needs, performing effectively in grab-and-go items, snack packs, protein powders, handheld formats, and globally inspired sauces for quick-service lines. UMass Amherst's hybrid retail concepts reflect this shift, combining limited hot food offerings with convenience-driven items to meet student expectations for efficiency and variety.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR CULINARY INNOVATION

Taken together, these trends point to a new framework for campus dining. Students are seeking food that supports wellness, reflects cultural identity, and fits into fast-paced schedules. The sections that follow translate these insights into practical strategies designed to help operators respond to three core, student-driven priorities:

AUTHENTIC GLOBAL

Culturally rooted dishes that emphasize flavor and representation

PLANT-FORWARD

Menus that highlight sustainable, American grown plant-based proteins such as peanuts

ON-THE-GO WELLNESS

Portable, protein-rich options that support physical and mental well-being

*This data presents U.S. water usage per ounce based on blue water (irrigation) for the period 2000/2016 and grey water (to assimilate applied nitrogen) for 2004/2013. The sources of the data are the [California Department of Food and Agriculture](#); [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#); [Mekonnen, M.M.](#) of the University of Alabama; and the [United States Department of Agriculture](#). Limitations of the results include the quality and availability of data.

Sources

1. [Chartwells Higher Education, 2025 Campus Dining Index \(April 2025\)](#).
2. [Technomic, 2025 College & University Multi Client Study](#).
3. Sodexo, 2025 Campus Dining Trends. us.sodexo.com/newsroom/2024/campus-dining-trends-2025.
4. Technomic, Gen Z Habits and Behaviors: MCURC Sponsor Breakout Presentation (October 2025).

3 NUTRITION AND DIETETICS STORY

A PLANT-BASED PROTEIN WITH BROAD APPEAL

Peanuts, increasingly recognized among the ranks of superfoods, offer a strong nutritional profile that aligns well with the priorities of today's students. With seven grams of protein per ounce, peanuts provide more protein than any other nut, making them a practical plant-based option for campus menus. They also deliver more than 30 essential vitamins and minerals, including magnesium, phosphorus, copper, and niacin, which support energy metabolism, muscle function, and immune health. The majority of fat in peanuts is unsaturated, contributing to heart health when used in place of saturated fats.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration notes that scientific evidence suggests, though does not conclusively prove, that consuming 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, including peanuts, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. This positioning allows dining programs to responsibly communicate health benefits without overstating claims.

FLEXIBLE ACROSS DIETARY PATTERNS

Peanuts fit seamlessly into a wide range of dietary preferences, including vegan, vegetarian, flexitarian, and omnivorous eating patterns. Their affordability, nutrient density, and culinary versatility make them easy to incorporate into smoothies, sauces, entrées, and snacks across multiple service formats. The combination of protein, fiber, and healthy fats supports satiety and sustained energy, qualities that are especially relevant for students navigating long academic days.



SUPPORTING FOCUS AND MENTAL WELL-BEING

The demands of college life place a premium on foods that support both physical and cognitive performance. Research summarized by The Peanut Institute indicates that peanuts and peanut butter may support mental well-being when included as part of a balanced diet. For example, a randomized controlled trial conducted in 63 healthy young adults found that regular consumption of peanut products was associated with improvements in memory and stress response in healthy adults.

Peanuts provide 7 grams of plant-based protein, healthy fats, and a range of vitamins, minerals, and bioactive compounds that support overall nutrition. These nutrients play roles in energy metabolism, circulation, and normal brain function, all of which are important for concentration and sustained mental performance.

Peanuts also contain naturally occurring antioxidants and plant compounds that have been studied for their potential roles in supporting cognitive health and stress response. While these nutrients are most beneficial as part of an overall healthy dietary pattern, their presence contributes to the nutritional profile that makes peanuts a practical, satisfying food for students managing demanding academic schedules.

HEALTH EQUITY AND AFFORDABILITY

From an operational perspective, peanuts are among the most cost-effective sources of protein available. Their ability to deliver flavor, nutrition, and satiety at a relatively low cost supports dining programs working to balance budget constraints with nutrition equity goals. Incorporating peanuts into menus can help ensure that satisfying, nutrient-rich foods remain accessible to a broad student population.

Sources

The Peanut Institute. Peanuts: Grab Happiness by the Handful. <https://peanut-institute.com/peanuts-grab-happiness-by-the-handful/>

Kvan Vught, A.J.A.H., et al., Dietary arginine and linear growth: the Copenhagen School Child Intervention Study. *British Journal of Nutrition*, 2013, 109(6): p. 1031- 1039.

Kennedy D. O. (2016). B Vitamins and the Brain: Mechanisms, Dose and Efficacy—A Review. *Nutrients*, 8(2), 68. doi:10.3390/nu8020068.

La Fata G, Weber P, Mohajeri MH. Effects of vitamin E on cognitive performance during ageing and in Alzheimer's disease. *Nutrients*. 2014;6(12):5453-5472. Published 2014 Nov 28. doi:10.3390/nu6125453

Shayganfard M. Molecular and biological functions of resveratrol in psychiatric disorders: a review of recent evidence. *Cell Biosci*. 2020 Nov 7;10(1):128. doi: 10.1186/s13578-020-00491-3. PMID: 33292508; PMCID: PMC7648996.

"The Role of Peanuts in Global Food Security." H. Valentine. Peanuts: Genetics, Processing, and Utilization. H.T. Stalker and R.F. Wilson, eds. London: Academic Press and AOCSS Press, 2016, pp. 447-61.

Scheepens A, Bisson JF, Skinner M. p-Coumaric acid activates the GABA-A receptor in vitro and is orally anxiolytic in vivo. *Phytother Res*. 2014 Feb;28(2):207-11. doi: 10.1002/ptr.4968. Epub 2013 Mar 26. PMID: 23533066.

Parilli-Moser, I., et al., Consumption of peanut products improves memory and stress response in healthy adults from the ARISTOTLE study: A 6-month randomized controlled trial. *Clinical Nutrition*, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clnu.2021.09.020>

Salari-Moghaddam A, Keshteli AH, Mousavi SM, Afshar H, Esmailzadeh A, Adibi P. Adherence to the MIND diet and prevalence of psychological disorders in adults. *J Affect Disord*. 2019 Sep 1;256:96-102. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2019.05.056. Epub 2019 May 28. PMID: 31170621.

Areni Altun, Helen Brown, Cassandra Szoeko, Alicia M Goodwill, The Mediterranean dietary pattern and depression risk: A systematic review. *Neurology, Psychiatry and Brain Research*. Volume 33, 2019.

Pages 1-10, ISSN 0941-9500, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.npbr.2019.05.007>

4 MANAGING ALLERGENS IN CAMPUS DINING



OVERVIEW OF ALLERGEN MANAGEMENT AT SCALE

At large campus dining programs, allergen safety is most effective when embedded into everyday operations rather than treated as a standalone initiative. At UMass Amherst, Dining Services serves more than 50,000 meals daily across multiple dining commons, retail locations, cafés, and food trucks. Within this scale, allergen management is integrated into standard workflows, ensuring safety practices are consistent across all venues and service formats.

Transparency and student choice are central to this approach. Allergen information is made available through online menus, mobile apps, and point-of-service signage, allowing students to make informed decisions independently. For those with more complex dietary needs, direct access to registered dietitians and mobile ordering options provides additional layers of support. This model allows students with and without food allergies to dine confidently, balancing safety with menu diversity and avoiding unnecessary restrictions.

STAFF TRAINING AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Consistent and comprehensive staff training is foundational to maintaining allergen safety at scale. All culinary and front-of-house staff complete annual allergen training that covers ingredient awareness, proper food handling, cross-contact prevention, and emergency response procedures. Training is reinforced through ongoing supervision, daily pre-meal briefings, and clearly documented standard operating procedures.

Accountability is built into daily operations. Supervisors routinely verify ingredient labels, review standardized recipes for allergen content, and ensure sanitation and separation protocols are followed. Regular evaluations and hands-on oversight help reinforce expectations and maintain a strong culture of safety within kitchens and service areas.

LABELING, SIGNAGE, AND STATION DESIGN

Clear labeling and intentional station design play a critical role in reducing cross-contact and building student confidence. At UMass Amherst, allergen information is consistently presented across dining hall signage, menus, and mobile platforms, all generated from a centralized menu management system to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Stations are designed to visually and operationally distinguish allergen-containing foods, helping students quickly identify appropriate options while supporting staff adherence to safe preparation practices. This clarity enables students to navigate dining spaces independently and supports informed decision-making without requiring constant staff intervention.

PREVENTING CROSS-CONTACT

Effective cross-contact prevention relies on a combination of physical separation, disciplined workflows, and staff accountability. Dedicated utensils, cookware, cutting boards, and storage areas are used to manage allergens such as peanuts. When feasible, higher-risk items are prepared in separate zones, and all equipment is thoroughly washed, sanitized, and properly stored after use.

Daily oversight, pre-meal reviews, and coordination with campus health services help ensure these practices are consistently applied and trusted by students and families. Education and transparency reinforce the message that allergen safety and menu inclusion can coexist when appropriate protocols are in place.





STUDENT PREFERENCES AND MENU INTEGRATION

Incorporating allergens such as peanuts into campus menus supports both nutritional variety and cultural authenticity. Student response has been particularly strong for global cuisines where peanuts are a traditional ingredient, including Thai, Indian, and Southeast Asian dishes. Menu items such as chicken satay, Pad Thai, peanut sauces, and energy-focused snacks consistently perform well.

Maintaining these offerings reflects student demand while reinforcing the dining program's commitment to inclusive, culturally representative menus supported by rigorous safety standards. At UMass Amherst, the nutrition and culinary teams demonstrate how this comes to life in practice, outlining their approach to safely incorporating peanuts into menus in this [video](#).



NEXT STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR PEER INSTITUTIONS

Institutions seeking to strengthen allergen management while preserving menu diversity may consider the following practices:

- Embed allergen safety into routine operations rather than treating it as a separate program
- Provide recurring, comprehensive training for all staff with clear accountability measures
- Implement consistent labeling and station design to reduce cross-contact risks
- Balance inclusion and safety by allowing allergen-containing foods when protocols are followed
- Collaborate closely with dietitians, health services, and student support teams

This integrated approach has proven effective at UMass Amherst and can be adapted by other campus dining programs seeking to deliver safe, inclusive, and culturally relevant dining experiences without requiring constant staff intervention.



5 CULINARY INSPIRATION & RECIPE DEVELOPMENT

UMass Amherst Dining approaches recipe development as a collaborative and iterative process rooted in culinary creativity, nutritional review, and student feedback. New ideas are encouraged at all levels of the culinary team, supporting ongoing innovation across menus.

METHODOLOGY: TESTING & REFINING RECIPES AT UMASS AMHERST

UMass Amherst Dining approaches recipe development as a collaborative and iterative process rooted in culinary creativity, nutritional review, and student feedback. New ideas are encouraged at all levels of the culinary team, supporting ongoing innovation across menus. Initial concepts are developed and tested by Head Chefs and Executive Chefs, then reviewed and standardized in partnership with campus dietitians to ensure consistency, nutritional integrity, and alignment with allergen protocols.

New recipes are often piloted during special events and limited-time activations within the dining halls. These controlled launches allow dining teams to evaluate operational feasibility while gathering real-time feedback from students and staff. Recipes that perform well in these settings are refined as needed and, based on demand and feedback, may be incorporated into the regular menu cycle.



COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND VERSATILITY OF PEANUTS

Peanuts offer a rare combination of cost-effectiveness and versatility that makes them especially well-suited for campus dining operations. As one of the most affordable sources of plant-based protein, peanuts help dining programs manage food costs while still delivering flavor, nutrition, and student satisfaction. Their adaptability across menu types, including dining hall entrées, retail items, grab-and-go snacks, beverages, sauces, and bakery applications, allows operators to leverage a single ingredient in multiple formats. This flexibility supports streamlined purchasing and inventory management while giving culinary teams the ability to respond to changing student preferences without increasing complexity or cost.

CULINARY DIVERSITY & RECIPE AUTHENTICITY

UMass Amherst's culinary team reflects a wide range of cultural backgrounds and cooking traditions, creating a strong foundation for authentic recipe development. This diversity supports research and development efforts by bringing lived culinary knowledge into the kitchen. Peanuts, which appear in food traditions across China, Southeast Asia, Africa, Latin America and the United States, lend themselves naturally to this approach, enabling chefs to develop globally inspired dishes with cultural credibility and broad student appeal.

Recipe development is guided by an understanding of student preferences, with an emphasis on global flavors, craveability, customization, and responsible sourcing. Peanuts support these goals by offering a nutrient-dense ingredient that has 7 grams of protein, 2.5 grams fiber, and healthy fats, while also aligning with sustainability priorities as a resource-efficient crop.

LEVERAGING A BROAD RANGE OF PEANUT PRODUCTS

A wide variety of peanut products are incorporated into menu development, including peanut oil, peanut powder, peanut flour, green peanuts, and blanched, roasted, and granulated formats. This range allows culinary teams to adapt peanuts across multiple applications and service formats.

During special events such as Peanut Day, chefs have demonstrated the versatility of these products, using peanut oil for frying and sautéing, peanut powder in smoothies, and peanut butter in sauces and dressings. Several items introduced through these activations have shown strong student response, including the Acai Peanut Cup, which has since been incorporated into UMass Grab & Go offerings.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS IN CAMPUS KITCHENS

Peanuts can be integrated into campus menus in simple, operationally efficient ways. Candied peanuts add texture and protein to salads and grain bowls, while roasted ground peanuts or peanut powder can be used to thicken soups and sauces, contributing both flavor and creaminess. These applications allow dining teams to enhance menu variety without adding significant complexity to kitchen operations.



ACAI PEANUT BOWL

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Acai berry sorbet | Fresh blueberries |
| Whole milk Greek yogurt | Diced mango |
| Ground roasted peanuts | Candied peanuts ½ oz per serving |
| Whole milk | <i>Allergens:</i> |
| Granulated sugar | Milk, Peanuts, Corn |
| Sliced strawberries | |

RECIPES

Mocha Peanut Smoothie

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

6 lb 4 oz	Almond milk
6 lb 4 oz	Coffee - chilled
3 lb 2 oz	Dairy-free yogurt
3 lb 2 oz	Ripe banana
3 cups + 2 tbsp.	Peanut butter powder
1½ cups + 1 tbsp.	Cocoa powder
1 cup + 2 tsp.	Sugar
4 tbsp. + ½ tsp.	Vanilla extract
to garnish	Peanuts - crushed

METHOD OF PREPARATION

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.

Garnish with crushed peanuts and serve cold.



Brûléed Banana & Peanut Sundae

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

5 qt	Maple ice cream
3 lb 2 oz	Peanut butter drizzle sauce
6 lb 4 oz	Brûléed banana
6 lb 4 oz	Peanut oat crunch

METHOD OF PREPARATION

In your favorite ice cream bowl add maple ice cream, peanut butter drizzle sauce, Brûléed banana and peanut oat crunch.



Chicken Banh Mi Sandwich with Spicy Peanut Sauce

INGREDIENTS - 100 Servings

100 ea.	Hoagie sub roll (8")
100 oz	Peanut sauce Thai
100 oz	Curry sauce Thai, yellow
350 oz	Chicken Thai BBQ
2 oz	Jalapeño pepper, sliced thin
3 lb 2 oz	Pickled carrots
3 lb 2 oz	Pickled daikon
3 lb 2 oz	Cucumbers, sliced ¼"
1 cup + 2 tsp.	Cilantro

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Spread peanut sauce on the bottom side of the cut sub roll.
2. Arrange BBQ chicken on top, making sure to spread over the entire length of the bread.
3. Toast the sub roll until crisp on the outside.
4. Add jalapeño, pickled daikon, pickled carrot, cucumber, and cilantro to the meat.
5. Slice the sandwich in half and transfer to the serving container or wrap with sandwich wrap.



Salmon Peanut Poke Bowl

TO ASSEMBLE 100 Bowls

12 lb 8 oz	Cooked sushi rice
12 lb 8 oz	Salmon & soy braised peanuts
3 lb 2 oz	Avocado, diced
3 lb 2 oz	Cucumber, diced
1 lb 9 oz	Scallion, sliced
3 lb 2 oz	Seaweed salad
500-600	Strips of nori

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Place the cooked sushi rice in a bowl and arrange the salmon and braised peanuts on top.
2. Garnish with avocado, cucumber, scallions, seaweed salad and strips of nori.

SALMON & SOY BRAISED PEANUTS

INGREDIENTS - 25 Portions

8 lb	Salmon
3 lb	Soy braised peanuts
1 lb	Low sodium soy sauce
4 oz	Sesame oil
2 tsp	Salt
4 oz	Red onions, minced
4 oz	Scallions, chopped fine
4 oz	Lime juice
8 oz	Rice vinegar
1½ cups	Peanut butter powder

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Cut the salmon into about 4" portions, wrap tightly and freeze for at least 24 hours.
2. Thaw salmon and dice into ½" pieces.
3. Toss the salmon, braised peanuts, and remaining ingredients together and reserve cold.

SOY BRAISED PEANUTS

INGREDIENTS

1 lb 4 oz	Skin on peanuts
48 oz	Water
1½ qt.	Low sodium soy sauce
½ cup	Dark soy sauce
4 oz	Mirin
1 tbsp. + 1 tsp.	Brown sugar
½ cup	Honey
12 oz	Water
1 tbsp. + 1 tsp.	Toasted white sesame seeds
1 tbsp. + 1 tsp.	Sesame oil

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. In a sauce pot, boil the water and peanuts together for about 5 minutes. Strain peanuts and discard the water.
2. Return the peanuts to the pot and add the soy sauces, mirin, sugar, honey and water. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, until most of the liquid has evaporated, about 20-25 minutes.
3. Remove from heat, mix in sesame seeds and sesame oil, then cool completely.

Cold Peanut Butter Udon with Pork Katsu

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

16 lb 10 ⅜ oz	Udon noodles
½ cup + 1 tbsp. + 1 ½ tsp.	Salt
4 lb 2 ⅜ oz	Cabbage - thinly julienned
16 lb 10 ⅜ oz	Pork loins - sliced
1 lb ⅜ oz	Flour
16 ⅜ ea.	Egg
4 qt. + ⅜ cup	Panko
½ cup + 1 tsp.	Salt
2 tbsp. + 2 ½ tsp.	Black pepper
½ cup + 1 ½ tsp.	Canola oil
to garnish	Peanuts - roasted, chopped
to garnish	Scallion - chopped
to garnish	Sesame seeds - toasted

PEANUT BUTTER SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

2 qt. + ⅜ cup	Soy sauce
1 qt. + 1 ½ cups	Creamy peanut butter
2 cups + 1 ½ tbsp.	Sesame oil
1 qt. + 1 ½ cups	Water
1 cup + ⅜ tbsp.	Garlic - minced
1 cup + ⅜ tbsp.	Ginger - minced
1 cup + 1 ½ tsp.	Brown sugar
1 cup + 1 ½ tsp.	Mirin

METHOD OF PREPARATION

FOR UDON: Bring a pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add salt and udon into the pot and cook for 3 minutes or until it's cooked. Remove from heat. Drain and shock in ice water for a couple minutes. Reserve chilled.

FOR THE SAUCE: In a saucepan over medium heat, warm the sesame oil and sauté the minced garlic and ginger for 1-2 minutes. Add the remaining sauce ingredients and whisk until smooth. Reduce the heat and simmer for 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely.

FOR PORK KATSU: Toast the panko in a frying pan over medium heat until they're slightly brown. Remove from heat and drizzle in the oil. Mix until the breadcrumbs are coated in oil. Let cool completely.

Season the pork slices with salt and pepper, then dredge in flour, dip in beaten egg and coat in the toasted panko.

Arrange the pork slices on an oven rack on top of a sheet pan. Bake in the oven at 400°F until the pork is cooked. About 13-15 minutes. Slice into ½" wide strips. Reserve hot.

TO ASSEMBLE: Ladle the sauce over the udon, reserving 2 tbsp. for the pork. Add the cabbage and toss to coat. Place the pork strips on top and drizzle with the reserved sauce. Garnish with roasted peanuts, sesame seeds and scallions and serve immediately.





Xi'an Smash Lamb Burger with Peanut Chili Crisps

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

25 lb	Ground lamb
3 lb 2 oz	Red bell pepper - julienned
3 lb 2 oz	Yellow onion - julienned
12 1/2 oz	Chili de Arbol - thinly sliced
1 cup + 2 tsp.	Peanut oil
100 ea.	English muffins - toasted
3 lb 2 oz	Peanut yogurt sauce - sub recipe
12 1/2 oz	Peanut chili crisp - sub recipe
to garnish	Cilantro - sprig

Spice Mix

2 cups + 5½ tbsp.	Cumin seeds
1 cup + 2 tsp.	Sichuan peppercorn
½ cup + 1 tsp.	Red chili flakes
½ cup + 1 tsp.	Onion powder
1 cup + 2 tsp.	Salt

METHOD OF PREPARATION

Toast the cumin seeds, peppercorn and chili flakes in a frying pan on high heat until they become fragrant. Coarsely grind in a spice grinder. Divide in halves and set aside.

Add half of the spice mix to the ground lamb and mix well by hand. Divide into 4 loose balls.

Heat up a griddle on high heat then add the lamb balls onto it. Sprinkle some salt & pepper on top if needed. Use a metal spatula to smash/flatten each ball into ¼" to ½" thick patties. Let cook for 1-2 minutes or until the edges start to brown. Flip the burgers and cook until well browned. Another 1-2 minutes. Remove from heat and let sit at room temperature for a couple minutes to rest.

In a frying pan or wok, heat up peanut oil on high heat and stir fry the bell pepper, onion and chili de Arbol with the rest of the spice mix. Remove from heat once it's cooked.

Assemble: Spread ½ oz of yogurt sauce on each muffin. Place the smashed patties in between, followed by the stir fried vegetables. Drizzle with peanut chili crisp. Garnish with cilantro sprigs. Serve hot.

PEANUT YOGURT SAUCE

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

1 lb 9 oz	Creamy peanut butter
1 lb 9 oz	Greek yogurt
½ cup + 1 tsp.	Lemon juice
½ cup + 1 tsp.	Ginger - grated
4 tbsp. + ½ tsp.	Salt

METHOD OF PREPARATION

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Reserve chilled.

PEANUT CHILI CRISP

INGREDIENTS - Yield 12½ cups

10 cups	Canola oil
5 cups	Shallot - julienned
2½ cups	Garlic - thinly sliced
1¼ cups	Chili de Arbol - thinly sliced
10 tbsp.	Chili flakes
2½ cups	Peanuts - roasted
1 tbsp. + 2 tsp.	Sichuan peppercorn
10 ea.	Star anise
10 ea.	Cinnamon stick
3 tbsp. + 1 tsp.	Sugar
2 tbsp. + 1½ tsp.	Salt

METHOD OF PREPARATION

In a sauce pot, heat 2 cups oil over medium/low heat. Add shallot & garlic to fry, stirring occasionally until they're golden brown & crispy. About 10-15 minutes. Remove the shallot & garlic with slotted spoon and transfer them to paper towel-lined tray.

Add the peanuts to the hot oil and fry for 3-5 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer to the same tray with the fried shallot and garlic.

Reduce the heat to low and add the chili de Arbol, chili flakes, Sichuan peppercorn, star anise and cinnamon sticks to the oil. Cook for 10-15 minutes to allow the flavors to infuse.

Remove and discard the star anise and cinnamon sticks. Stir in the salt and sugar until dissolved, then remove from heat.

Pour the oil into a bowl and fold in the fried garlic, shallots and peanuts. Allow to cool completely before transferring to an airtight container. Store at room temperature until ready to serve.

Sweet Chili Peanut Butter Glazed Ribs

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

40 lb	Pork spare ribs
½ cup	Ground cumin
½ cup	Ground coriander
2 tbsp. + 2 tsp.	Cayenne pepper
½ cup	Garam masala
2 tbsp. + 2 tsp.	Fennel seed, ground
¼ cup	Ground black pepper
½ cup	Brown sugar
½ cup	Salt
1 lb 4 oz	Mae Ploy sweet chili sauce
1 lb	Peanut butter
8 oz	Warm water

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Combine all of the spices, sugar, and salt and rub onto the ribs.
2. Bake the ribs in a 325°F Combi oven for about 1½ to 2 hours or until tender.
3. While the ribs are baking, whisk together the sweet chili sauce, peanut butter and warm water until smooth. Thin with additional water if needed.
4. Once the ribs are done, brush the sauce onto the ribs and bake for an additional 10 minutes.

Baked Sweet Potatoes with African Peanut Sauce

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

31 ¼ lb	Sweet potatoes
6¼ tbsp.	Canola oil
AFRICAN PEANUT SAUCE	
12 ½ oz	Shallots, minced
6 ¼ oz	Ginger, minced
6 ¼ oz	Garlic, minced
4 tbsp. + ½ tsp.	Ground cumin
4 tbsp. + ½ tsp.	Ground coriander
1½ tsp	Cayenne pepper
2 lb 5 ½ oz	Water
2 lb 5 ½ oz	Local crushed tomatoes
1 lb 9 oz	Peanut butter
4 tbsp. + ½ tsp.	Sugar
1 tbsp. + ¼ tsp.	Salt
3 ¼ oz	Cilantro, chopped
2 lb 5 ½ oz	Honey roasted peanuts, chopped

METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. For the African peanut sauce, heat oil in a pot over medium heat and sauté the shallots, ginger and garlic for 2-3 minutes. Add the spices and cook for another minute. Stir in the water, tomatoes, peanut butter, salt and sugar, and bring to a simmer. Cook for 5-10 minutes, or until slightly thickened. Reserve warm.
2. Bake sweet potatoes whole in a 375°F oven until very tender.
3. Cut into halves or quarters (depending on size) and place onto decorative pans.
4. Spoon the African peanut sauce generously over the top and garnish with cilantro and chopped peanuts.





Chicken Tikka Meatball with Peanut Sauce

INGREDIENTS - 100 servings

16 ½ lb	Chicken thigh, boneless halal - roughly chopped
2 tbsp. + 2 ½ tsp.	Paprika
1 tbsp. + 1 ½ tsp.	Mild chili powder
1 tbsp. + 1 ½ tsp.	Ground cumin seed
1 tbsp. + 1 ½ tsp.	Ground coriander
2 cups + 1 ½ tbsp.	Fresh ginger root, minced
¾ cup + 1 ½ tsp.	Garlic, peeled whole cloves, minced
4 ½ oz	Serrano fresh chili pepper, minced
1 tbsp. + 1 ½ tsp.	Kosher salt, coarse
3 lb 2 oz	Peanut sauce Thai
2 tbsp. + 2 ½ tsp.	Cilantro, coarsely chopped
1 lb ¾ oz	Breadcrumbs (Japanese panko)

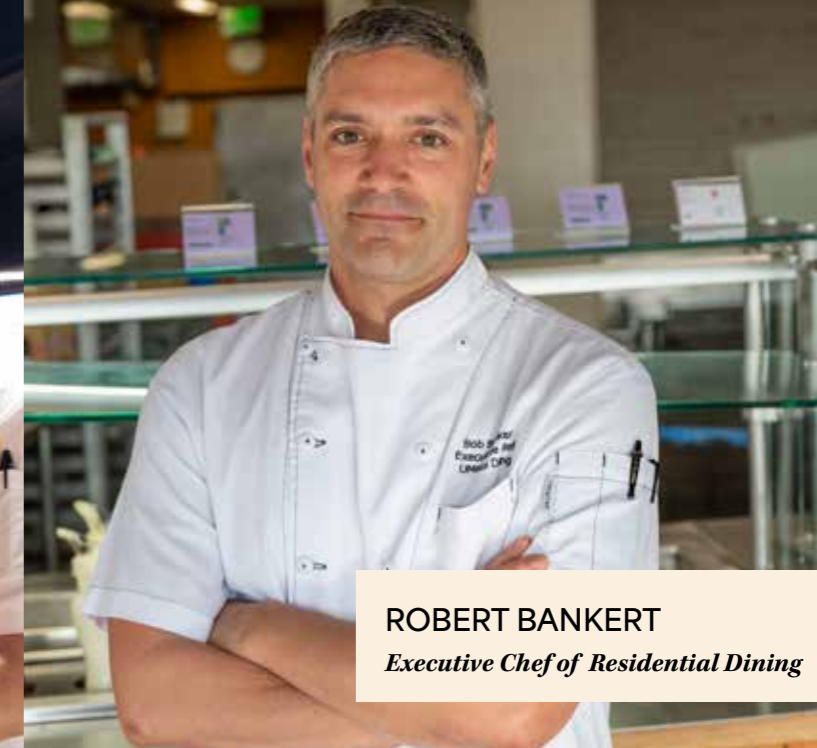
METHOD OF PREPARATION

1. Place the chicken in a meat grinder and grind using a medium die.
2. Place in a mixing bowl along with the spices, ginger, garlic, peppers, and salt and mix well.
3. Portion into 2 oz meatballs and griddle until cooked through or 165°F.
4. Serve with peanut sauce and fresh cilantro.

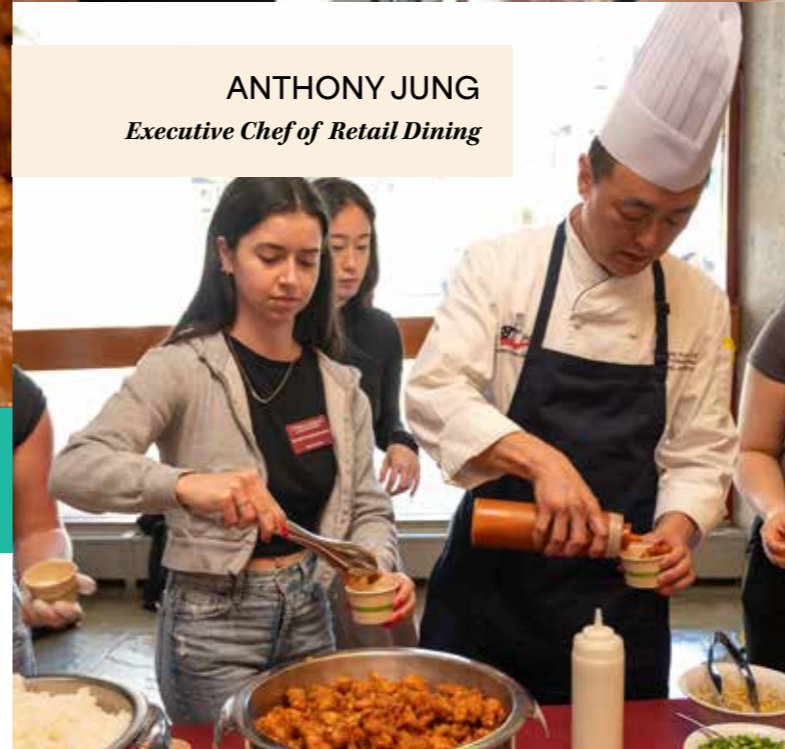
ALEXANDER ONG
Director of Culinary Excellence



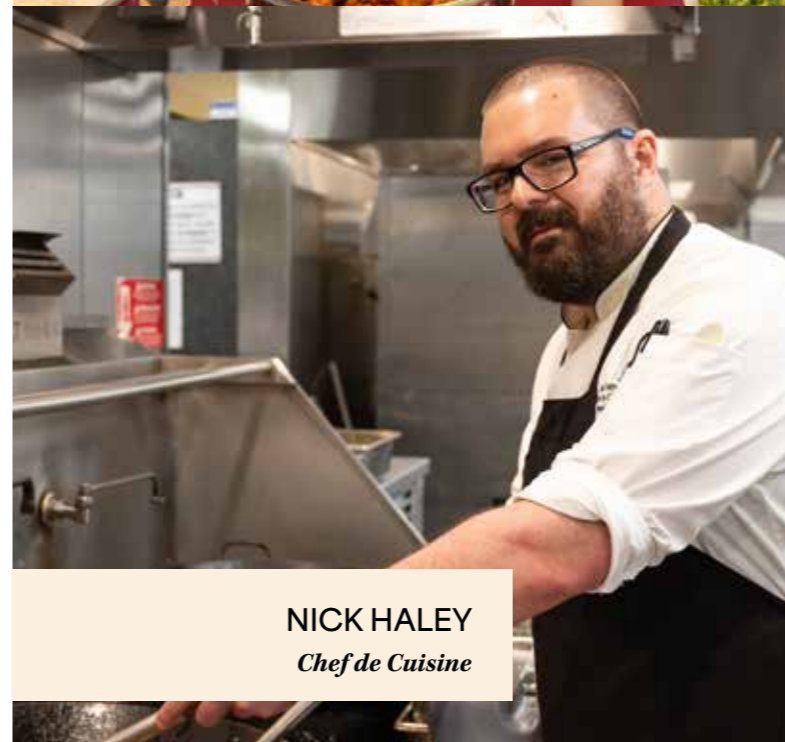
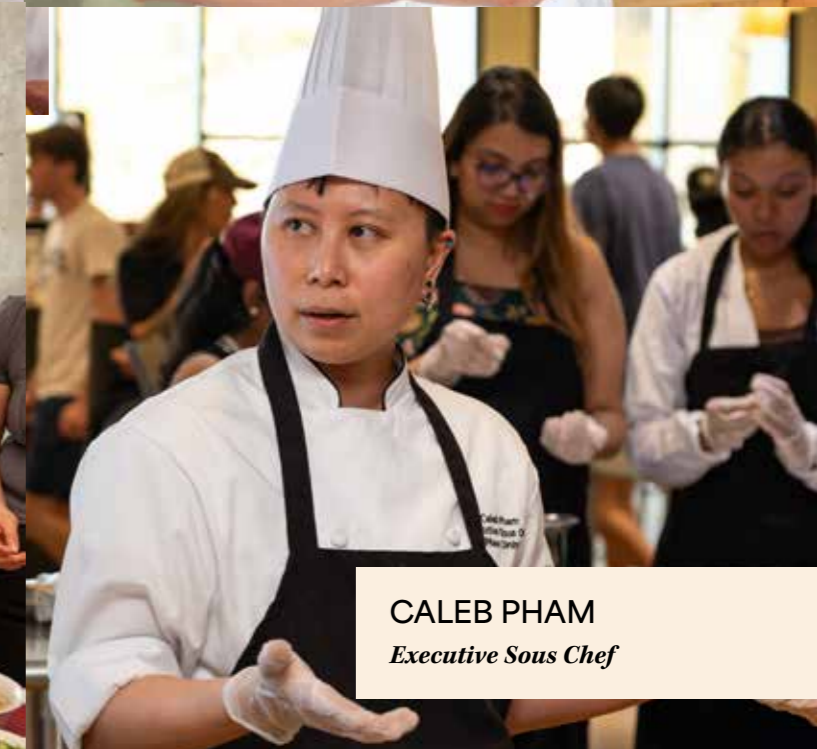
ROBERT BANKERT
Executive Chef of Residential Dining



ANTHONY JUNG
Executive Chef of Retail Dining



CALEB PHAM
Executive Sous Chef



NICK HALEY
Chef de Cuisine

“Great chefs don’t just prepare meals—they create experiences. At UMass, the chefs turn imagination into flavor, bringing bold creativity, passion, and fabulous recipes to every table they touch.”

6 RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES

MAXIMIZING PEANUTS IN RETAIL

Retail formats provide a high-impact opportunity to maximize the versatility of peanuts across campus dining.

Packaged snacks, spreads, grab-and-go items, and meal kits allow peanuts to be incorporated in ways that align with student demand for convenience, portability, and value. Peanut-centric options such as protein bars, protein shakes, peanut butter to-go packs, and pre-made peanut butter sandwiches offer simple, high-demand formats that fit well within retail environments. Peanut butter-based spreads and ready-to-eat or heat meal components also perform well in retail settings, particularly when paired with clear allergen labeling and consistent nutritional information. Meal kits and take-home options further extend peanut applications by offering students flexible solutions that fit varied schedules while supporting repeat purchases.

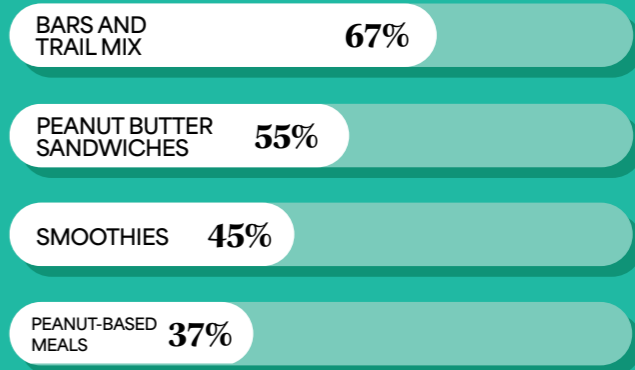
PROMOTIONS AT RETAIL LOCATIONS

Promotions within retail locations help reinforce awareness and trial of peanut-based items. Bundled offerings, limited-time offerings, and recipe tie-ins encourage students to explore new formats while providing a clear value proposition. Point-of-sale signage and menu boards support these efforts by highlighting featured ingredients, flavor profiles, and use occasions without overwhelming the customer. When aligned with campus events or seasonal programming, retail promotions create continuity between dining halls and retail spaces, strengthening visibility and driving sustained engagement with peanut-forward offerings. In some cases, strong-performing retail items may also be introduced into dining hall offerings, helping align menus more closely with demonstrated student preferences.

Recent campus survey data highlights how students consume peanuts across campus dining, with snack formats such as bars and trail mix leading at 67%, followed by peanut butter sandwiches at 55%, smoothies at 45%, and peanut-based meals at 37%. This pattern reinforces the importance of grab-and-go and convenience-driven formats within campus retail strategy, creating opportunities to expand peanut snack offerings, smoothie offerings, and incorporate peanut based items into breakfast concepts while supporting consistent retail performance.



Peanut consumption across campus dining



7 COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES



ALLERGEN SAFETY AND PEANUT INCLUSION AT UMASS AMHERST DINING

UMass Amherst Dining approaches allergen management with an emphasis on safety, transparency, and individualized support. Approximately 11 percent of UMass Amherst students participating in a meal plan report a food allergy or intolerance, with peanut allergies accounting for 25 percent of those cases. Most of these students can dine safely within standard campus dining operations due to established protocols and clear communication practices.

All recipes and ingredients are labeled for major allergens across dining halls, retail locations, catered events, online menus, and the UMass Dining mobile app. Dining staff are trained to respond to ingredient questions and assist students in real time. For students with more complex needs, UMass Amherst offers one-on-one nutrition consultations, individualized dining plans, and access to isolated meal preparation through a mobile ordering platform. Parents and families are encouraged to participate in consultations with the dining Nutrition Team of Registered Dietitians, reinforcing confidence that students' nutritional and medical needs are understood and supported.

BUILDING POLICY AND STAKEHOLDER ALIGNMENT

Allergen safety at UMass Amherst is supported through cross-functional collaboration across campus. Dining operations work closely between their in-house nutrition team, health services, disability and accessibility services, residential life, and new student orientation to ensure consistent practices and shared accountability. Health Services collaborates with the UMass Dining nutrition team to support students with medically documented allergies, while risk management considerations are addressed through comprehensive staff training, emergency response protocols, sanitation standards, and clear allergen labeling.

Early engagement during new student orientation establishes expectations, educates students about available resources, and promotes self-advocacy. This coordinated approach helps embed allergen safety into campus systems rather than treating it as a standalone dining issue.



COMMUNICATING A CONSISTENT, EVIDENCE-BASED MESSAGE

UMass Amherst has a long history of serving peanuts safely as part of a diverse and culturally representative menu. Rather than relying on blanket bans, the university emphasizes education, transparency, and operational controls to manage risk and prevent cross-contact. Peanut-containing items appear across campus menus, including global entrées, snacks, and self-serve stations, reflecting both culinary tradition and student demand.

Clear labeling and well-trained staff enable students with allergies to make informed choices while preserving menu variety for the broader campus population. This approach demonstrates that allergen safety and inclusion can coexist and helps prepare students to navigate food environments beyond the campus setting with confidence.





8

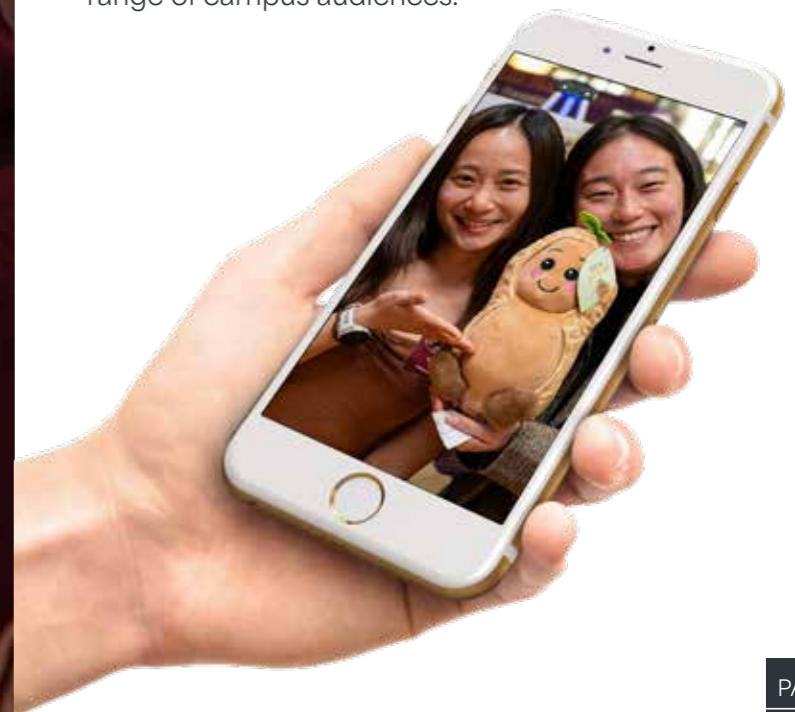
PLANNING & PROMOTING SPECIAL EVENTS - MARKETING

UMass Amherst promotes campus dining events by leveraging student voices, social media storytelling, and collaborations with campus groups to create authentic, engaging marketing that aligns with student interests and campus initiatives. Through large themed events, pop-ups, and partnerships, dining programs drive awareness, encourage participation, and integrate dining into the broader student experience.

STUDENT VOICES

Students at UMass Amherst play a central role in social media storytelling that supports the promotion of campus dining events. Marketing interns, dining brand ambassadors, and local student influencers are often involved in creating and sharing this content, extending its reach through trusted and familiar channels. A recent campus survey reinforces why this matters: 65% of students want more diverse menu options, 45.6% want more promotions, and 30.5% want better marketing, signaling a clear interest in engagement that goes beyond the classroom.

Student-generated posts highlight event details, benefits of attending, and behind-the-scenes moments that help generate interest and momentum leading up to an activation. This approach allows dining programs to communicate in a way that feels natural within students' daily media habits. By using student-created content to document and promote events, dining teams build authenticity and trust while encouraging participation across a broad range of campus audiences.



By working alongside student groups and wellness partners, campus dining reinforces its role as an active contributor to student life beyond the dining hall.



LARGE SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events are designed to drive awareness and engagement. Activations may align with existing initiatives such as Earth Week or Guest Chef series. Others take the form of themed programming, including a Global Peanut Festival, or focused campaigns like “Fuel with Peanuts” week. These formats allow dining teams to highlight peanuts in ways that feel timely and relevant. They also align with academic priorities, wellness goals, and sustainability themes already familiar to students. Using established campus moments helps ensure events feel intentional and integrated, rather than standalone promotions.

POP-UP EVENTS

Pop-up stations, tabling events, and guided sampling opportunities in high-traffic areas on campus are used to introduce students to featured packaged food and menu items in low-barrier, educational settings. These formats allow students to engage at their own pace while providing opportunities for conversation, ingredient transparency, and allergen education. Sampling and pop-ups are particularly effective in building awareness and acceptance, as they encourage trial without requiring a full meal commitment and support informed decision-making.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

Collaboration strengthens each of these efforts. Partnerships with cultural clubs, student organizations, athletic teams and campus wellness programs help ground events in student-led communities and shared priorities. These collaborations expand reach, increase credibility, and ensure programming reflects the diversity of campus experiences. For students, co-creating these moments fosters a sense of investment and pride, transforming campus dining from a daily necessity into a meaningful part of their college experience. By working alongside student groups and wellness partners, campus dining reinforces its role as an active contributor to student life beyond the dining hall.

9 MEASURING SUCCESS

COLLECTING FEEDBACK

Measuring success is essential to understanding how peanut-forward programming performs across dining operations.

Evaluation focuses on both student response and operational outcomes, allowing dining teams to assess awareness, engagement, and feasibility. By using consistent measurement tools across events and retail settings, programs can compare results over time and refine future activations.

Student feedback is collected through structured surveys administered before and after each activation, as well as during the event period. These surveys are designed to measure changes in brand awareness and perception, along with student satisfaction related to featured peanut menu items. Using a consistent survey framework allows for reliable comparison of student perceptions across activations.

TRACKING EVENT PERFORMANCE

Operational performance is tracked through participation metrics such as attendance at events, sampling volume, and the number of menu items prepared and served. Retail performance during promotional periods is also reviewed, including unit sales and sell-through rates.

Social media performance supports this evaluation by documenting reach and engagement. Metrics such as views, interactions, and content shares help dining teams understand how effectively events are being communicated and where messaging can be improved.

USING DATA TO IMPROVE MENU DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTIONS

Analyzing survey feedback with event performance helps to provide a clear picture of student demand and inform decisions about which items are candidates for broader menu integration. When reviewed alongside sales data, these insights help guide future planning and resource allocation.





10 GETTING STARTED

Incorporating peanuts into your campus menu does not have to be an all-or-nothing approach. It can be phased, strategic and measurable. Here are some suggested steps to help you get started.

Step 1. *Align on strategy*

Clarify why peanuts matter for your campus (support plant-forward, sustainability, nutrition and/or budget goals or deliver authentic global flavors)

Engage dining leadership, culinary, nutrition, and health services early

Step 2. *Validate your safety protocols*

Confirm your allergen training is current and well documented

Reinforce your cross-contact prevention measures

Audit labeling across both your print and digital platforms

Ensure dietitian consultation pathways are clear

Step 3. *Listen to students*

Consider a short survey to gauge interest and concerns

Use informational pop-ups or “Ask a dietitian” tabling event to answer questions

Establish baseline perception data before piloting

Step 4. *Conduct a pilot test*

Introduce packaged peanut options in retail if you haven't already

Test 1-3 peanut-forward dishes in one dining hall

Launch a Peanut Day or a limited-time-only global or wellness activation

Evaluate in-house peanut butter grinding as a retail engagement concept

Seek approval for single-location testing before scaling

Step 5. *Communicate clearly and comprehensively*

Share consistent messaging on allergen protocols and labeling

Reinforce nutrition, plant-based protein, and sustainability benefits

Proactively communicate with students who have declared a peanut allergy, outlining safety protocols and available support

Equip staff to confidently respond to questions

Step 6. *Measure and refine*

Track student feedback, participation, and retail sales

Monitor recipe performance and repeat demand

Review results before expanding campus-wide



PARTNER WITH US

The National Peanut Board is available to support your campus team with:

- Access to training tools and allergen management best practices
- Culinary inspiration and adaptable recipe concepts
- Nutrition, sustainability, and sourcing resources
- Student engagement and promotional planning guidance
- Case studies and insights from peers

To request guidance or share how your campus serves peanuts, contact:

Valeri Lea
Email: valeri@shermanmoritz.com

UMass Dining

University of Massachusetts Amherst
Amherst, MA 01003

umassdining.com

IG: @umassdining

FB: UMass Dining

National Peanut Board

3350 Riverwood Pkwy

Suite 1150

Atlanta, GA 30339

Nationalpeanutboard.org

IG: @usapeanuts

FB: @nationalpeanutboard

