

# UC San Diego

## Books and Book Chapters

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See How Our Garden Grows: Cultivating Community through a Fruit and Veggie Exchange

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# ***The Sustainable Library's Cookbook***

*edited by Raymond Pun and Gary L. Shaffer*

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## Introduction

By Raymond Pun and Gary L. Shaffer

Sustainability is a big topic. How and where do we start to talk about sustainability in academic libraries? From the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to local environmental challenges, what can academic libraries do to foster a culture and awareness of sustainability in their communities? We envision this cookbook as a conversation starter for academic librarians to read, consider, and experiment within their contexts.

In 2019, the American Library Association (ALA) added sustainability to its Core Values of Librarianship to foster community awareness and engagement on climate change, resilience, environmental impact and a sustainable future. This cookbook was intended to create a series of engaging activities for academic libraries interested in implementing sustainability practices in three different areas: sustainability thinking and development; teaching, learning, and research services; and community engagement, outreach, and partnerships. Many of these recipes also have included learning outcomes and goals from ACRL's *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, disciplinary focuses, and the United Nations' SDGs.

- **Applying Sustainability Thinking and Development.** In the first section, recipes are focused on applying sustainable thinking processes to library functions and services. This may include open educational resources, seed libraries, or reusable supplies and resources. The goal of this section is to foster a culture of sustainability in library services.
- **Teaching, Learning, and Research Services.** In the second section, recipes cover lesson plans, learning guides, research activities, and projects to focus on sustainability in disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. From STEM data literacy to campus sustainability projects to Indigenous environmental justice, these recipes can be applied to any number of classes to engage students with sustainability research.

- **Community Engagement, Outreach, and Partnerships.** In the final section, recipes emphasize how community partnerships and outreach can be effective ways to inform and foster sustainability practices in the library and beyond. From environmental movie nights to bike-lending programs, the goal of this section is to encourage academic libraries to foster environmental and sustainability awareness issues on campus and in the communities at large.

The cookbook was designed to provide librarians a series of best practices, case studies, and approaches to support sustainability efforts in the library and collaboratively across campus. For academic libraries that do not have a specific policy, committee, or resource to encourage sustainability practices, this cookbook may be extremely helpful in promoting awareness of a sustainable culture. The *Sustainable Library's Cookbook* is dedicated to the memory of Gayatri Singh who, along with colleagues, has five recipes featured in this book. May her work sustain you.



## About the Editors

**Raymond Pun** is the Instruction/Research Librarian at Alder Graduate School of Education. Ray has presented widely at conferences such as ALA, SLA, IFLA WLIC, and the American Historical Association. His work has appeared in many publications, including the *Huffington Post*, *Library Hi Tech*, *Reference Services Review*, and *Library Trends*. He is also the co-editor of several volumes including *Asian American Librarians and Library Services* and *The First-Year Experience Cookbook*. He is also an ALA member of the Sustainability Round Table (SustainRT), an ALA Emerging Leader (2014) and a *Library Journal's* Mover and Shaker (2012).

**Gary L. Shaffer**, PhD, is the Director of Library Arts and Culture for the City of Glendale, California. He also serves as an adjunct professor for the Library and Information Management program at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business. He is the former head of that program, as well as a former assistant dean of USC Libraries, where he directed the Center for Library Leadership and Management. A 2006 *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker, he is the author of *Creating the Sustainable Public Library: The Triple Bottom Line Approach*.

## Section 1.

# Applying Sustainability Thinking and Development

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# See How Our Garden Grows

## *Cultivating Community through a Fruit and Veggie Exchange*

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### **NUTRITION INFORMATION**

Celebrate local food, community, and the bounty of harvest as library folks gather to share fruits, vegetables, seeds, preserves, gardening and food publications, and their own knowledge. Promote sustainability and nurture a robust community by bringing co-workers together to share produce from their own gardens. Gardeners often have a surplus that they share with friends. A fruit and veggie exchange widens the circle and invites conversation and connections as participants exchange tips about gardening, cooking, and sustainability. People coming together for the event have fun and find just one more thing we all have in common, a love for local, fresh food that sustains us.

### **OUTCOMES**

Community engagement and outreach: Participants share their knowledge of sustainable food and growing along with produce from their own gardens.

### **NUMBER SERVED**

5–500. Adjust ingredients to accommodate the number of participants. Grow the tradition by making this an annual event.

### **COOKING TIME**

Allow enough time so all can attend. From 1½ to 2 hours generally suffices before everything is gone.

### **MAIN INGREDIENTS**

- Fruits, herbs, vegetables, seeds, seedlings, cookbooks, and gardening books donated by participants.
- Area that will accommodate tables for donations and groups of participants where socializing will not distract library users. (This could be a room or even a picnic spot outdoors.) No chairs are necessary.
- Enough tables to display the donations.
- Signage for anticipated categories of items (produce, books, plants, and seeds).
- Paper and pens for last-minute labeling.
- Volunteers to set up, clean up, and stay during the event.
- Table coverings (optional).
- Reusable bags or boxes (optional).

### **PREPARATION**

Choose a date to coincide with the current growing season. Preheat by publicizing early and sending a gentle reminder a few days

before the actual day. Emphasize that all are welcome whether they bring something or not, but do request RSVPs from those bringing goodies so that the space and number of tables can be adjusted based on anticipated attendance. Arrange for folks with donations to bring them prior to the event, and ask all to bring their own boxes and bags for their booty.

On the day of the event, set up and label the tables. As the donations arrive, additional item labels can be added. When the time comes, throw open the doors.

### **MAIN COOKING TECHNIQUE**

Start slow and simmering, then bring to a rolling boil. As people arrive, they look around and then the conversation starts about the tomatoes, gardening, recipes, seeds, and CSAs (community supported agriculture). Soon the room is abuzz with people talking and laughing.

### **ALLERGY WARNING**

Sometimes folks who didn't bring anything are hesitant to attend. Encourage them to come: there is bounty enough for all. Then there are literal allergies. Provide paper and pens for donors to label items that are

uncommon, particularly hot or spicy, or need further explanation, such as names and growing instructions for seedlings.

**CLEANUP**

Leftovers may be donated directly to appropriate charities or placed in staff areas for those who couldn't attend.

**CHEF'S NOTES**

Make this an annual event and watch the participation grow. Note that the fruit and veggie exchange, while never invasive, tends to spread on its own throughout the year. Produce arrives in staff kitchens unannounced, and gardeners who have connected exchange tips and seedlings and inspire others to start gardening, even if that means one plant on a windowsill.

Depending on the library, this event can be opened to the public. The timing of the event will depend on the growing season in your area.