



## **24 Sustainability Success Stories in 2024**

Story 3 of 24: Sustainability in Food & Nutrition

### **Culinary Sustainability: UPMC Hospitals and the Cool Food Transformation**

Chefs at UPMC are orchestrating a symphony of change and commitment to sustainability.

In 2021, [UPMC Magee Women's Hospital](#) was the first UPMC hospital to join the World Resources Institute's "[Cool Food Pledge.](#)" Signatories pledge to "provide delicious food that is better for the planet" and commit to a collective target of reducing the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with food by 25% by 2030.

The production of animal-based foods is a significant driver of deforestation and accounts for two-thirds of agricultural GHG emissions, while plant-based foods generally have lower environmental impacts. According to scientific studies, replacing 50% of meat and dairy intake with plant-based alternatives could result in significant climate benefits, reducing GHG emissions, as well as halting the destruction of forests and natural land.

In the three years of participation in the "Cool Food Pledge," UPMC Magee-Womens reduced its emissions associated with animal protein purchases by 23% and is well on its way to the 25% reduction goal by 2030. Far from merely taking things away, the culinary team at UPMC Magee-Womens embraced innovation, increasing sales of plant-based proteins and achieving a 109% increase in nuts, seeds, and legume offerings.

In 2022, all 12 UPMC hospitals in Allegheny County signed on to the "Cool Food Pledge." Thanks to a collaboration between UPMC Food & Nutrition Services and the [UPMC Center for Sustainability](#), the commitment continues to expand with more plans to reduce protein sources associated with heavy GHG emissions underway in various forms.