

Concept of edible campus takes place in Australia

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A team of nutrition and dietetics experts in Australia are promoting the concept of edible campuses by introducing an aquaponics system at the University of Wollongong (UOW). The Farmwall aquaponics system, located at the Aspire cafe on the campus, showcases the circular economy and urban farming at its best.

The system uses nutrient-rich water from tropical fish to grow microgreens on vertical shelves. The water is filtered by the plant roots before it flows back into the fish tank to start the cycle again. This initiative aims to promote environmental sustainability and address food insecurity on campus.

The researchers leading this project, Professor Karen Charlton and Dr Anne McMahon, are passionate about food quality, affordability and sustainability for students and staff. They have also partnered with UOW Pulse to make Farmwall produce available at the Pulse Pantry, Unibar, Aspire cafe and catering services on campus.

The Pulse Pantry is a free food support system for students who are experiencing financial difficulties. The pantry displays the products on shelves, with their values represented as points instead of dollars. Professor Charlton believes initiatives like Pulse Pantry are essential to reducing food insecurity and alleviating financial hardship among UOW students.