



Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences

Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS)

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| Shady Hamadeh | Associate Dean of the Faculty |
| Wafa Khoury | Executive Officer |
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| Shady Hamadeh | Coordinator of Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) |
| Omar Obeid | Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies, ND-Program |
| Jala Makhzoumi | Coordinator of Landscape Program |
| Moatasim Sidahmed | Coordinator of Graduate Studies |
| Imad Toufeili | Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies, Food Science and Management Program |
| Rami Zurayk | Coordinator of Ecosystem Management Program |

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| Elie Skaff | Ex-Minister and Member of Lebanese Parliament |

Historical Background

University-level agricultural education was first initiated at AUB in 1914 when several basic courses in soils, horticulture, animal husbandry, agronomy, and vegetable and citrus fruit growing were offered. Interest in the field, however, was not widespread enough to continue this offering and it was phased out by the late 1920s. In 1930 the Institute of Rural Life was established by the University in collaboration with the Near East Foundation. The Institute kept the faculty and students of AUB in touch with the situation existing in the rural districts and stimulated their interest in improving the agricultural, health, and social conditions in rural areas. At the same time the Institute was cooperating with the Schools of Medicine and Nursing in conducting rural health programs in several villages in the Beká'a. The above work constituted one of the earliest agricultural extension activities carried out in the Middle East. During World War II the work of the Institute was severely curtailed until it was phased out in 1947.

The resurgence of true university-level education in agriculture took place in 1950. Participation in agricultural education was a necessary condition to allow AUB to benefit from the financial support of the US Technical Cooperation Administration. Through a grant from the Ford Foundation the School of Agriculture was established in 1952. A 100-hectare farm located 80 kilometers east of Beirut in the Beká'a was also purchased. The Agricultural Research and Education Center (AREC) includes a research farm, staff residences, classrooms, a small library, laboratories, men and women's dormitories, a dining hall, and recreational facilities. Facilities at AREC are used for teaching, research, and extension. Originally two programs were planned for agriculture: a four-year curriculum leading to the degree of BS in Agriculture and the Diploma of Ingénieur Agricole, and a one-year non-degree course in vocational education known as Technical Vocational Training (TVT). The first class consisting of 23 students graduated with BS degrees in 1956. In that same year a graduate program leading to the MS degree in agriculture with various specializations was initiated and the first MS was granted in 1958.

The TVT program, which was intended for training government extension agents from the region, was initiated in 1956 and discontinued in 1971. A total of 425 men were trained in this program. The name of the school was changed to the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences in 1958. During the late seventies, realizing the importance of the role of food in human life, the name of the faculty was changed in 1979 to the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS). A new three-year program leading to the degree of BS in Nutrition and Dietetics was initiated in 1980, and the first group of students graduated in 1983. In addition an 11-month Dietary Internship program was established at the AUB Medical Center, and the first group completed this program in 1984. The Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management Program, a four-year BS program, was started in October 2000. The newest addition to FAFS is the Food Science and Management Program, a three-year BS program, which was initiated in October 2002.

Mission

The mission of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences is to promote, through higher agricultural education, teaching, research, and extension in agriculture, food and nutrition, environment and natural resources, and community and rural development as a basis for sustainable improvement in the lives of people throughout Lebanon, the Middle East region, and the world.

Vision

The vision of FAFS is to be an institution committed to helping the Middle East region in improving agricultural practices with the aim of approaching self-sufficiency in food production. It is an institution committed to research, development, and the training of dedicated and highly motivated men and women to satisfy the needs of human power resources in the Middle East. FAFS conducts on-campus academic instruction, research through its on-campus facilities and AREC, as well as outreach education, all patterned after the land-grant college system of the USA. In the coming years the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences will develop as a center for excellence in higher agricultural education and research in the areas of sustainable and urban agriculture, environmental sciences related to agriculture and natural resources, arid land agriculture, food quality and safety, and nutrition. These areas are emphasized because they reflect important needs in agricultural education and development in the region we serve.

Graduate Programs

The faculty offers the MS degree, with or without thesis, in the following majors: agricultural economics, agricultural extension (not offered at present), animal sciences, food technology, irrigation, mechanization, nutrition, plant protection, plant science, poultry science, and soil science. The faculty also participates in the interfaculty graduate programs leading to the degrees of MS in Environmental Sciences (major: Ecosystem Management) and MS in Nutrition.

Rules and regulations for graduate programs are given in this catalogue in the Admissions section and include details about the environmental sciences program. Information is also available in the FAFS Graduate Study Manual. Changes made after the publication of this catalogue will be available through the academic advisers.

The Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU)

ESDU is an interdisciplinary research and development unit specializing in sustainable rural livelihoods. It was established at the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences to promote collaboration on sustainable development initiatives among departments at AUB and with a wide variety of other institutions and organizations undertaking related activities.

ESDU activities, including research, capacity building, and outreach, aim at

- providing opportunities for faculty and students to work on real-life rural development projects
- fostering partnerships between research, private and public sectors, and local communities in order to develop community-based solutions
- networking with national, regional, and international centers and institutes in the areas of integrated natural resource management and sustainable development

For more information refer to www.ecosystems.org.