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Food waste being fed into the Bio-Regen unit. Photo: Daryl Kang



Food waste being pumped from the Bio-Regen unit into a large tank...

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The insides of the Bio-Regen unit. Photo: Daryl Kang



International and local students from SMU gathered at the SMU GROW plot...

SINGAPORE — To get its students to think twice before wasting food, the Singapore Management University (SMU) launched a pilot project to recycle food waste on campus today (Oct 16).

Unwanted food from its food courts will be collected and taken to a machine at SMU's bin centre to be converted into bio-fertilisers, which will then be used for its urban farming initiative.

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The Bio-Regen Unit, supplied by food waste bio-technology firm VRM Biologik, is able to handle 300kg of food waste a day and requires only half the amount of electricity needed by a household toaster.

Ms Bernadette Toh, director of SMU's Office of Global Learning said: "The most important thing for us now is to bring about the awareness and consciousness about wanting to be mindful about the food, and wanting to at least put that waste to better use, instead of sending it to an incinerator."

SMU, whose efforts were in commemoration of World Food Day, did not have an estimate of how much food is wasted on campus daily.

VRM Biologik's chief executive John Ang, 27, said his firm is testing a larger version of the food conversion machine at Tiong Bahru Market, which generates over a tonne of food waste daily.

The bio-fertilisers generated by the machine at SMU will benefit the plants grown in the university's urban farm launched in January.

SMU's International Connections student group, which advocates diversity and the appreciation of different cultures, also planted 12 seedlings, representing different countries including South Korea and Israel, on campus today.

Fourth-year Information Systems student Michelle Teo, 23, chose the tapioca plant to represent Singapore. It is used in local dishes, and nourished Singaporeans in World War Two, she said.