

From: Bullard, Autumn R

To: Fabrizio, Jonnie

Jonnie,

Growing up my family had a very large garden, growing most of our vegetables. So I could have control over my food I would pack my own lunch every day. Cafeteria food never was very tasty at my high school. When you and I decided to research our own college dining hall it got me thinking, how do big institutions provide food for every person's dietary needs?

Now that I am a college student, I am limited to eating only what St. John Fisher's dining hall provides. I would like to be happy with what I am eating. Don't get me wrong our dining hall has delicious food, but I'm concerned about where this food is coming from, and how willing Lackmann Culinary Service (our dining halls food service) is at providing for everybody. People should be concerned about institutions providing food that meets their standards and ethics. It is a problem that I am eating food, and I do not know where it is coming from. We know that large institutions have trouble meeting everyone's needs. Our mission is to get our dining hall more involved in organic and locally grown food.

From: Fabrizio, Jonnie

To: Bullard, Autumn R

Autumn,

Like you my mom have always encouraged eating farm fresh foods, but I never really did understand the importance. My mom has always taken pride in her garden, which contains

everything from hot banana peppers to lavender. As a child, my mom would have my siblings and I help her weed and manage the garden, even sneaking a cherry tomato or two when she turned away. My summer months have always consisted of picking fruit with my mom at the local farm down the road from me. And then the process of canning begins in the hot summer heat. A sweet aroma sweeps throughout the house of fresh fruit and warm sugar. Not only jams, but our family makes salsa, marinara sauce, pickles, and much more, all from local produce.

Now I am here at college, and Autumn I completely can relate to your curiosity about the dining services provided at St. John Fisher College. Halfway through the English 101 course, we both decided to become vegetarians, mainly from learning about the factory farmed meat, and the brutal truth underlying the industry. At St. John Fisher College, this responsibility is lies in the hands of Lackmann Culinary Services, and I agree that the students rely heavily on their services. College students are vulnerable individual who are typically very limited to the foods that they consume. Every college student has the right to be informed of what they are eating, as well as where it is coming from.

Organic, farm fresh food has multiple advantages as well. Utilizing local farms and their crops is a great boost for the economy. Also, before the factory farming industry took over the food industry, the sense of community was strong. It is important to bring this feeling of community back before it is too late by purchasing food from local farms. Besides these reasons, I had not realized the damage that factory farms, or even purchasing food from afar has on the world. It is hopeful that a greener future lies ahead, but how can that happen with the consumption trends as of now? Lastly, as a college student, I am so young, and organic foods have so many health benefits which would improve my future health.

From: Bullard, Autumn R

To: Fabrizio, Jonnie

Jonnie,

You bring up some great points, and these are things that have helped to encourage us to eat organic and locally grown foods. When I told my mother about this "project" and trying to get more organic foods into our college she seemed worried. She feels that buying organic is very expensive and does not see the point. Of course she is willing to support me, but this seems to be the reaction you and I usually get when we tell someone that we prefer eating organic food. In the article, "Happy Meat/ Animal Products: A step in the Right Direction or An Easier Access Point Back to Eating Animals," Gary L. Francione, talks about how thousands of people these days have switched to eating local meat instead of factory farmed meat (Francione). Francione is trying to say that the people that buy "happy" meat are "stupid" and that they are wasting their money. "Indeed, all that it [free-range meat] is doing is making the privileges few who can afford to buy organic at upscale shops feel morally superior an offering many an excuse to go back to eating flesh and other animal products." I would like to counter this article by saying that every choice a person makes about the food they digest is just that, a choice. His attitude on local meat consuming is just one opinion, in my opinion; I think morals play a big role in what a person chooses to eat.

Colleges have to consider every food option for diverse people eating in their dining hall. America is a country of individual, unique people. If we as consumers are not willing to fight for our beliefs then, nothing will change. Colleges can play a big role in helping to boost the local

economy, especially in times where farmers are suffering. Colleges can help make one step towards a better future by buying local and organic.

From: Fabrizio, Jonnie

To: Bullard, Autumn R

Autumn,

I would also have to counter the article you discussed by Francione. Francione encourages vegan eating to be the ideal diet, and suggests that eating meat, no matter how it is produced, is not acceptable. He views people who consider themselves as a "conscientious omnivore", meaning they eat only "happy" meat, are just using that excuse to eat meat. Francione blames many vegetarians who have converted to being a "conscientious omnivore" because of new movements making organic meat more readily available. He then however states his opinion that the "happy meat" movement is "encouraging animal consumption by people who have bought into the nonsense that we can 'consume with conscience'" and that it killing animals is immoral no matter how it is done (Francione). Though this idea explored is his opinion. Personally I choose to switch to only eating meat that is organic and local raised for health reasons. I do not want to eat food that could potentially harm me by how it is produced.

Though for many people, buying organic and local foods may seem a little more expensive, but in the end it can prove to be an investment. The case study by Betty T. Izumi, "Farm-to-School Programs; Perspectives of School Food Service Professionals", involves research done by school dining services in order to provide farm grown food in cafeterias. The study states that one of the motivators for buying locally is that "the price is right" (Izumi 87).

Izumi examines the concept that money is saved by purchasing local foods. For one, shipping and handling is significantly reduced. If food is bought with a shorter supply chain, the cost of transportation would be decreased. As the study also mentions that if the food is shipped, "the product must be packaged in boxes with cardboard trays and foam liners, all of which adds to the final price", but locally produced food can save that "\$2.00 per case" (88).

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Jonnie,

Even though buying local and organic food is an investment it is an investment into a better health. Betty Izumi describes the great outcomes of buying organic, "Benefits such as increased consumption of fruits and vegetables" (Izumi). Plus, paying a little extra for safer food seems to be a nice compromise. While I was online the other day I stumbled upon a chart showing the benefits of buying organic compared to buying "conventionally grown" fruits and vegetables.

<http://news.medill.northwestern.edu/chicago/news.aspx?id=92269>

This data suggests that buying organic is highly beneficial (Watson). This information alone should encourage people to buy organic more often. I mean if you think about it when people learn that something is healthier for them (skim milk vs. whole milk) they start to change the way they buy these products. America is an obese country, but many are trying to fight this statistic. Organic foods can help to keep a person healthy. In Izumi's article it said "health professionals agree that schools can and should play a key role in improving children's dietary

habits." Schools seem to have an obligation to provide healthy options to their students and organic is one way they can do that. Also in the article it suggests that according to one report "buying produce directly from farmers allows schools to buy fresher food than they [schools] can purchase through broad line distributors." If organic is so much better for one's body why is it so difficult to convince colleges to buy it?

From: Fabrizio, Jonnie

To: Bullard, Autumn R

Autumn,

I completely agree; colleges should provide organic foods, especially because of the health benefits. The chart you forward are beneficial when comparing the nutritional value of organic food to conventional food. It is obvious that nutrients are more prevalent in fresh organic produce. Eating organic is an investment for the overall health of an individual.

Produce that is grown in quantities from large industrial farms can be very dangerous for one's health. There have been an incredible amount of outbreaks such as E. coli bacteria. Warren Leon and Caroline Smith DeWaal write in their book *Is Our Food Safe?* about how food safety begins on the farm in which it is cultivated. Leon and DeWaal examine the problems that can occur due to sanitation failures on industrial farms. On factory farms, the quantity of meat is the central goal, not the quality. Animals are confined into small areas, even becoming ill and dying upon each other. Leon and DeWaal reference mad cow disease as a perfect example of how the lack of cleanliness on farms has led to outbreaks affecting the entire world. I know that no one wants another outbreak such as that to occur again. The authors note that due to these

conditions, as well as the lack of governmental restrictions on agriculture, "These farms can become a breeding ground for human pathogens like Salmonella and Campylobacter" (25). Though animals are injected with antibiotics on these farms, over time the animals develop a resistance to them, causing them to become less effective (27).

In *Food Inc.*, a personal story is told of the effect of an E. coli outbreak caused by the lack of care in factory farms. The clip below tells of the devastating loss of a mother's young son to these bacteria in the food he had eaten, and her quest to transform the food industry so this does not occur again:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOydgOV8mOk&feature=related>

The mother tells her story of her son Kevin who innocently lost his life due to a terrible disease caused by the faults in which food is produced. This is unacceptable, and I commend his mother for fighting to change the way in which food is produced. When a student walks into their college dining hall, they should not have to worry about whether or not what they eat will potentially harm them. They should enjoy their meal and not let the food they eat scare them.

From: Bullard, Autumn R

To: Fabrizio, Jonnie

Jonnie,

I agree that people should not have to worry about getting harmful or even deadly diseases from the food they eat. Locally grown food can dramatically decrease the odds of getting these diseases because most organic and locally grown vegetables and fruits do not have

chemicals or pesticides in them. When I saw the clip from Food Inc., it made me very upset. The fact that this has even happened to one person is devastating. In the following clip Michael Pollan, author of Omnivore's Dilemma, expresses his opinion on the issue:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5LVkGWMG20&feature=>

Pollan talked about the importance of people consuming healthier grown and made food. Something you and I feel strongly about. If industries bought local, they could rewind to the way things used to be, a time when people knew the farmers that grew their food. By regaining relationships with the farmers, we could bring back a sense of community. Connecting back to "Farm-to-School Programs: Perspectives of School Food Service Professionals," Izumi talks about the importance of "helping our local farmers" (Izumi). She expresses that people want to have the connection with where their food comes from. Having a sense of community can even have a positive effect on students that go to this school by having this personal connection. Izumi reaffirms this thought when she states, "buying locally grown food is not just a business decision" (Izumi). When a person eats locally grown, organic food they are eating healthy for their bodies, but they are also able to say that they are helping out their community instead of a greedy company. They are helping out a person who cares about them, not a company that doesn't even know who they are.

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To: Bullard, Autumn R

Autumn,

The clip provided of an interview with Michael Pollan tells of the honest truth of what many school cafeterias are doing. He comments that schools are treating children as "human garbage disposals" when they feed them unhealthy foods (*Michael Pollan on What Kids Should Eat*). Pollan urges the school food industry to provide locally produced products, and stresses the need to educate schoolchildren on the importance and truths of healthy eating. I think educating the youth on what they are eating and the dangers of various foods is very beneficial to the future of not only the individual, but communities and the world.

It is evident that our world is being negatively affected by the inhumane act of the food industry. Warren Leon and Caroline Smith DeWaal examine the ecological effects of how society is growing and consuming food. The authors state that eating less meat can provide many benefits in the strides for a greener future. DeWaal and Leon state, "The hamburger generates 5 times the greenhouse gases that contribute to [overall] greenhouse gases" (Leon and DeWaal). Cattle waste is extremely harmful to the environment and can contaminate water supply because the grains given to the cows are loaded with chemicals that add toxins to the water when excreted (Leon and DeWaal). They recommend that one should only eat USDA approved organic meat. This meat is grown freshly without antibiotics, hormones, raised in an outdoor environment, and the feed the animals are raised on does not include synthetic pesticides or fertilizers (Leon and DeWaal).

Now that we are in a generation urging to improve the environment, schools should provide education as well as organic foods in dining halls. Alice Waters, a chef from Berkeley, California saw the need to help school cafeterias as well (Leon and DeWaal 122). Waters recognized the need to transform school cafeteria foods to meet the goal of providing organic

foods for students. She started "The Edible Schoolyard" project at an inner-city school in California, and is now inspiring schools across the country. Students are included in the growing process as produce is grown right on campus. Some schools even provide courses educating students on the impact of what they eat and how it is grown by incorporating these gardens (122).

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Jonnie,

Alice Waters is doing an extraordinary thing because she is educating students. She gets teachers, students, chefs, gardeners, farmers, donors, volunteer, neighbors, and parents all to help out. A hand on approach to healthy eating is something colleges should look at. If students learn the benefits of eating organic and locally grown food, and even help to grow these foods it makes a bigger impact.

Mr. Ackerman-Leist in "Colleges Chew on Local-Food Phenomenon" thinks that educating the future generations in of the utmost importance:

While we have the heat of the moment, we have got to capture that and build the infrastructure, so this will work not just now, but also in another decade or two. It would be a shame to have all this energy and then lose it in another four or five year (Ackerman-Leist).

Ackerman-Leist proves a good point, if we are not educating the future generations on the benefits of local foods then this idea will not continue on. If we do not take advantage of these great changes being made in our society with local and organic foods the opportunity could diminish and never start up again.

With global warming being a hot topic, no pun intended, we really have to look at the overall effect of consuming factory farmed meat. The emissions given off from these factories are what cause a lot of the global warming to increase. Should we be trying to stop global warming? Should we reduce the effect that these places have on our environment?

From: Fabrizio, Jonnie

To: Bullard, Autumn R

Autumn,

As you state, global warming is a "hot topic" in our world today. As we have gathered, factory farmed meat production is extremely harmful in many ways. As humans in this world, we should be working together in order to end this crisis. We are the youth, and as youths in college with our peers, we should be able to promote this idea of eating organic foods. It is a shame that many dining halls across the nation are serving food that contains many preservatives, bacteria, and unnecessary and unhealthy ingredients. What type of food does Lackmann Culinary Services at St. John Fisher provide?

As a college student residing on campus, my diet is limited to the food provided by the local dining hall. At St. John Fisher College, this responsibility lies in the hands of Lackmann Culinary Services. Leon and DeWaal note, "Our schools have unconsciously started to train our

children in bad nutrition" (Leon and DeWaal 9). Enthusiasm grows in me as I long for the answers to questions such as, what am I really eating in the dining hall? Where does it come from? Are students aware of what they are consuming? Is it locally grown or safely produced? And does Lackmann serve all dietary restrictions, as they promise on their website? In search for these answers, we needed to investigate our dining hall. Last Friday, when we spoke with the manager and executive chef of Lackmann, they gladly informed us about what Fisher students are being served.

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To: Fabrizio, Jonnie

Jonnie,

On Lackmann's website they state, "We provide organically grown foods such as produce, meat and poultry, and packaged goods that were grown or produced using no pesticides or chemical fertilizers" ("Why Lackmann"). We wanted to find out if what was written was the truth. In the interview with director Andrea Maccarone and executive chef Joel Kraft, they willingly told us that during the early fall semester they served around 90% organic vegetables in the dining hall. They also have tried to serve organic meat, but it was unsuccessful because of several problems. I was pleasantly surprised to hear how determined they are to keep the students happy, and they really seem to have our health in mind. Unfortunately the meat that they serve is from a "farm" down South, but they did attempt to make "happy" meat available, which is very nice to see. We learned so much from the interview, such as all the places they have gotten all their organic food from.

Our whole point in meeting with the dining hall was to have a better understanding of what we are consuming. I can say after this interview I was content with the food I was putting in my mouth.

From: Fabrizio, Jonnie

To: Bullard, Autumn R

Autumn,

The meeting with Lackmann was a success! As you mentioned, talking with director Andrea Maccarone and executive chef Joel Kraft put my worries concerning the food at St. John Fisher at ease. I am delighted to know how much local produce our dining hall provides. The milk, cheeses, fruit, coffee, vegetables, pastries, and breads all come from local providers. For Maccarone, local is defined as "anywhere we can drive to in order to pick up the food" (Maccarone). Some of the area businesses the dining services work with include Byrne Dairy, Yancy Fancy Cheeses, CornHill Ice Cream, Finicki, and Little Bakery. Most of these names are very familiar to me. It is comforting to know that Lackmann does follow through with its mission of providing "organically grown foods", and that as students we can eat this freely with no worries.

However, the meat at Fisher is from a general provider and not local. Kraft stated that because of the bountiful governmental restrictions, a campus such as Fisher would have trouble working with local meat farms. When we asked whether or not Fisher has tried to provide "happy" meat, Kraft and Maccarone replied yes, yet the results were unsuccessful. The meat farm Fisher tried contracting with one year was Seven Bridges. The problem with Seven Bridges

was that the meat did not come in on a weekly basis, therefore predicting the quantity of meat needed was very difficult. They also stated that because they had ordered at times too much meat, "the quality of the meat was reduced after being frozen for long periods of time" (Kraft). Fisher attempted to negotiate with Adam's Hen House and other Rochester area meat farms, however many of them declined because the college is too large to provide for.

So does Lackmann accept Kraft and Maccarone working with local farms? Kraft and Maccarone said, "absolutely, in fact Lackmann encourage it" (Maccarone). Kraft commented saying that Lackmann is the main company that runs the dining services at Fisher, though it is Fisher's responsibility to alter the menu as needed to fit the student body. Fortunately, our school provides organic locally grown produce, and a vegan option daily at the Nature's Bounty food station in the main dining hall on campus.

From: Bullard, Autumn R

To: Fabrizio, Jonnie

Jonnie,

It is truly was a relief learning that our very own college campus is so accommodating to everyone's dietary needs. Of course finding out that the "happy" meat option is not possible was a bit of a letdown, but the fact that they tried to make this option available puts my mind at ease. Looking back at my questions at the beginning of our discussion I am happy to say, that with our research we were able to answer those questions. Big institutions provide for everybody's dietary needs by providing what is convenient, but at least in our case they provide for as many people as possible. I know that not every college campus is as lucky as ours, and there is always room for improvement, but big institutions try their best at providing for everyone.

Over Thanksgiving Break this year, my family enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner. I being a vegetarian was worried that there would not be any food for me, but my family stepped it up and made special foods just for me. I felt very grateful for this, and it made me realize that our college is doing the same thing. This feeling alone gives me a very happy disposition. I am proud to say St. John Fisher really does consider the people consuming the food when they pick out a menu. For a better future it is crucial that improvements are still made. Though, with the current progress of institutions I have researched, I hope these changes come.

From: Fabrizio, Jonnie

To: Bullard, Autumn R

Autumn,

After doing all this research, I have come to realize that it truly is important to fully understand what one is eating. As college students, we are forced to contract ourselves with the food that large corporations are providing. The success of St. John Fisher College for providing healthy locally grown produce gives me confident in the safety of what I am eating. With such a small school on board with such a large food movement in this nation, I have faith that other schools can accommodate to better fit the needs of their students.

Thanksgiving was a day I know that both you and I worried about. Like you, my Thanksgiving dinner was a success! Throughout this research I have done, I have been sharing my concerns about the dangerous foods that people consume everyday with my family. I am grateful that my mom listened to what I was saying. She surprised me and cooked a turkey that had been locally raised at a farm very close to where we live. The pies she made were all made

from local fruit and much of the vegetables on the table as well. This was an ideal dinner I had been long awaiting. It was a wonderful day, and it is comforting to know that I can return back to campus and still be able to eat fresh!