Memorandum

To: Jon Jensen

CC: Curtis Raddatz, Wayne Tudor

From: Allison Bansen, Connor Mattison, and Sam Thrun

Re: Labeling Local Food in the Cafeteria

Overview

Luther College prides itself on its local and sustainable focus and use of materials. With such a large focus on these local sources we thought it would be beneficial and in the best interest of both the consumer (the students) and the producer (the small local farms) to advocate for these products. We propose establishing a work study position that works on labeling local foods throughout the Cafeteria. This will contain two major sections, the physical labels and in digital labeling. Our goal is to make these labels effective and aesthetically pleasing to enhance students knowledge of what they’re consuming and the choices they have while dining. We hope to enhance the dining experience by issuing a practical and effective labeling initiative in the Cafeteria here at Luther College.

Background

As we, as a nation, have grown we slowly but surely became detached from our food and where it comes from. This detachment allowed us to slowly lose a sense of where our food comes from, what goes into our food and how our food is grown. At Luther College we have been trying to fight this by growing our own food with our own gardens, and educating people on what is grown and how much of it is grown. This is a great way to connect more to our food. Along with this connection we also have made the connection of having some farmer biographies on the sustainability website which is helpful in knowing who is growing your food and where it is coming from. The one problem with these things is that the website is in dire need of an update and students have to go online and look. The main problem is there is nothing in the cafeteria to allow students to know what is locally grown and what is not. This inhibits the customers of the cafeteria to make the choice of eating locally grown food.

Proposal:

We believe that the students at Luther College would benefit from an effective labeling system in the Cafeteria because it would be a good example of sustainability and support as well as promoting growth and change among our local community. To establish an effective labeling system we propose an
additional work study position be provided funded by the sustainability department to ensure that our labeling campaign is successful and continues on after this semester is over.

Description: Our proposal is for the student worker to utilize both television sets currently manned by Dining Services to display the local foods present in the Caf for that week as well as reinstating the laminated plaques to provide an immediate source of information about local products that are utilized.

Location: The student worker will be educating the different customers of the cafeteria from two different locations one inside the cafeteria and one outside the cafeteria. Outside the cafeteria we are going to be using the television screens as a way to reach out to the Luther campus and educate them on what is local in the cafeteria for that week. The second location is literally in the cafeteria itself. We want the worker to label everything in the cafeteria that is local with a local sign that states that an item is local.

Potential Resources: On top of using the televisions and the laminated plaques it could expand the outreach program to some more interactive avenues such as laminated sheets of paper that could easily be seen while students slide their trays over the counters or a magnetic board that had more aesthetically appealing to draw more attention to local foods awareness. The latter would likely be installed after our project gains some headway.

Labor: This local food marketing initiative will cost approximately $1000- 1500 at the most. This is accounting for one added work study position funded by the sustainability department. This will involve:

- creating content for the Dining Services T.V.
- Updating web content about local producers
- Assisting with signage/labeling within the servery area
- Assisting with the permanent signage project for the servery area of the cafeteria.

This project requires a dedicated worker who will work in close contact with Curtis Raddatz and will write up what is local in the cafeteria each week. Curtis is the person in charge of buying food for the cafeteria. The person will get a list of local foods each week from curtis and write up what is local in a pleasing manner and then format the writing in the proper way so it will fit on the television. Once it is in the correct format the person will just email the writing to Heather Williams and she will in turn upload it onto the tvs for everyone to see. This would be a work study position held through the sustainability department. The worker will also make the signs when needed for the cafeteria and be able to make a list for the cafeteria workers on what needs to be labeled locally each week.

Resources/Costs: There is minimal costs involved in this project. The main cost would be the establishment of a new work study position that involve paying the single position for about 4 to 5 hours a week. This will cost $1000-$1500 per year including J-term. This is a long term investment into the betterment of the campus and an improved quality of life for all students at Luther. The funding for the
work study position would originate from sustainability’s budget. The position requires working with multiple people simultaneously to achieve the final compilation of information to be posted on the computers and information boards. Good communication skills and a knowledge of computer programs is necessary for someone holding the work study position.

Curtis Raddatz and Maren Stumme-Diers are two major resources in the projects success. Curtis supplies us with all of the necessary information about what is currently local in the Caf on a weekly basis. Maren will provide the work study position along with feedback and support on the layout of the information. She would also give us more information on what we can do and how to be most effective with said information. Aside from the these resources and the work study position, there would potentially be a very small budget to provide a bulletin board or other cheap, small and inexpensive items that would come out of the Caf budget.

Timeline: This is acting as a base for what will hopefully end with every place that sells food on Luther College Campus having its local food being labeled for the customer to see. Perhaps even after that labeling all the local foods we could label where every single food came from.

Rationale:

*Education and Awareness*

Labeling local foods in the cafeteria would help promote the businesses in which Luther buys from and allow students to see how much food actually comes from our community. Students are always being told how much local food is being used, but never see it. This would allow for students to reconnect with those local businesses and also the food that Luther grows in their gardens.

Conclusions

Luther has started a huge initiative to go green, and in doing so promotes the buying of local food, and growing our own. Over the years the local food initiative has grown significantly. Students are always being told that local food is served in the cafeteria, but they never see it. Our project would promote all the hard work Luther and Sodexo has done to provide students with locally grown foods, and bring students closer to the food that they eat and where it comes from.

Contacts

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