



YALE SUSTAINABLE FOOD PROJECT

For immediate release
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Beginning of Academic Year 2009–10 Signals a New Phase for the Yale Sustainable Food Project and Yale Dining

Commitment to sustainable food continues; Yale Sustainable Food Project to offer feedback

The Yale Sustainable Food Project has, since 2003, worked with Yale Dining to create a sustainable dining program at Yale. The Project laid the groundwork for a truly ambitious program, piloting a test kitchen and sustainable catering operation, overseeing the expansion of sustainable food to each of Yale’s dining halls, and most recently aiding in the transition of Yale Dining to a self-operated organization. In fall 2009, the Yale Sustainable Food Project and Yale Dining are entering into a new phase. Yale Dining is self-directed, with a continued commitment to sustainable food, and the Yale Sustainable Food Project will provide feedback based on best sustainable practices. The Project continues to promote, recommend, and educate about sustainable food—meaning local, seasonal, and organic—and considers this change in our nation’s eating habits to be of critical importance to public health, the environment, and the global economy, as well as to the lives of our communities.

Background

In the fall of 2003, the Yale Sustainable Food Project and Yale Dining first piloted an entirely sustainable menu at Berkeley College, one of Yale’s undergraduate residential colleges. The results were impressive: students resoundingly asked for more of this food. In 2004, following student demand, the pilot was opened up to serve all twelve undergraduate dining halls and Commons. During this phase, from fall 2004 through spring 2008, residential colleges served up to 40% sustainable options at every meal. These options were recipe based and indicated by a “Yale Sustainable Food Project” label, guaranteeing that ingredients were seasonal and sourced using sustainable guidelines. Purchasing focused on supporting regional farms and farmer cooperatives, which effectively turned Yale’s grocery bill into a force for economic development within the region. In 2007 the Yale Sustainable Food Project recommended the University not renew its contract with Aramark food services. The Project worked with leaders throughout the University to create a self-operated dining program and to bring on a director of Yale Dining, who was hired in spring 2008.

2009–10

Yale Dining is committed to sustainable food and has created an ambitious plan. The comprehensive document looks beyond food, considering waste, energy, and water use through 2013. As the academic year begins, the Yale Sustainable Food Project is working to create a



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system for feedback on the food itself, which will take the form of a quarterly report card, focusing on our top ten recommendations. The first of these report cards will be issued in November. We are interested in hearing from students and appreciate comments. We recognize that Yale Dining is embarking on a new and challenging course, and we strongly encourage clarity in sourcing and labeling, a continued focus on seasonality, third-party certification, and high-quality ingredients, grown and purchased in a way that is good for our health, good for the land, and good for our regional economy.

About the Yale Sustainable Food Project

The Yale Sustainable Food Project is leading an ambitious program to change the way our country engages with food and agriculture. The Project was founded with the understanding that the world's most pressing questions regarding health, culture, the environment, education, and the global economy cannot be adequately addressed without considering the food we eat and the way we produce it. By creating opportunities for students to experience food, agriculture, and sustainability as integral parts of their education and everyday life, the Sustainable Food Project ensures that Yale graduates have the capacity to effect meaningful change as individuals and as leaders in their communities, their homes, and their life's work. For more information, visit yale.edu/sustainablefood.

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