UVM Real Food Working Group Meeting
April 14, 2015, 4:00-5:30pm
University Heights North Room 119

Attendees
Students
Alyssa Johnson, Ben Johnson, Olivia Peña, Olivia Percoco, Jennifer Porter

Staff/Administration
Alison Nihart, Joe Speidel

UVM Dining/Sodexo
Caylin McKee, Melissa Zelazny, Annie Rowell

Faculty
Calculator & Research Interns
Kayla Strom, Zachary Fayer

Agenda
Facilitator – Alyssa Johnson
Notetaker – Jennifer Porter

Group introductions

FINE debrief [Alison, Alyssa, Caylin, James, Jennifer, Olivia Percoco]
- Major takeaways
  - Other institutions are looking to UVM for leadership
- Specific next steps & goals
  - Put more information on the RFC website (i.e. what products are real in the dining halls)
  - Talk to UMASS about the class they had around RFC. Maybe we could use some of their lesson plans.
  - UMASS labels milks from farm on their local products
    - Maybe we could start by just labeling things from Catamount farm
    - Discussion of issues surrounding labeling of local food will be tabled until next meeting or will be discussed by a smaller group
    - VT Feed has a worksheet to help organizations determine their values and purchasing commitments—this may be a helpful exercise for us to do as a group
  - UMASS’s working group has two community members
    - There is so much knowledge about FTI at the conference, and it might be valuable for us to create an advisory board that we met with yearly
  - How do we embed real food more in the university, outside of our group
  - We might need to have deeper conversations about

Dining updates [Caylin]
- Calculator update
  - Cabot is owned by AgriMark, which is a private company and they make more than 1% of the industry leader (Dean Foods)
  - Cabot no longer counts as local according to the RFC
  - We are double checking that Dean Foods is the right standard by which to measure
This will drop our number by about 2%

Many of our new implementation projects rely on Cabot products

We don’t have a catchall company to replace all of the Cabot products we use on campus

Cabot is a B Corp, but that doesn’t count as fair as of now

Emma suggested that we submit a recommendation that B Corp companies count as Fair

Caylin talked to other schools and at least one other school is just counting it anyways, because they feel that it is local

The 1% benchmark seems very arbitrary

We need to follow-up with RFC national about this. Maybe we could get together (conference call?) a few people to work on this in May or June

It’s not worth going back and changing our old numbers, but we will change it going forward

Maybe the RFC interns this summer can work on researching alternatives, because national RFC reps gave Caylin a hard time for doing product research

Class partnership → NFS 295

This is for dietetic students and is their first look into food systems sustainability and institutional food service, but it is open to anyone

She is trying to get it to count for food systems minors

They will do some calculator work for their service-learning

Summer calculator internships → applications due April 24

Caylin and Alison will be reviewing these and interviewing candidates

Sodexo has a full-time summer internship listed

Battle of the Campus Chefs (April 27th)

Need RFWG members to hover around the ballet box to answer questions the RFC

Have a student do an announcement about real food at the event

Zach had a labeling training with James and Gina

UMASS had a paid student position just focused on labeling

Maybe we should use the RFWG budget to have an outreach intern year round

Product research updates [Kayla]

We have 4 student research projects going on:

Dairy (Olivia): Thomas Dairy could handle the volume we need and they could provide it bagged. Olivia is doing a background check on the eight farms to make up Thomas Dairy. If that pans out they will turn it over to UDS to see if it is economically feasible.

Yogurt (Gina): parfaits and smoothies

Produce (Ben): potatoes

Organic breads (Danielle)

Real Food Revolution update [Olivia Percoco]

Battle of the Campus Chefs- RFR has the New World chef

Milk with Dignity- no new updates

What role can we have as allies?

Doug suggested we get a group of UVM people together with Migrant Justice in order to hash these details out

By asking questions and showing support we may move them forward

Got 150 signatures on a letter to New England Fisheries Management Council
Outreach updates [Alison, Jennifer, Olivia Peña, Danielle]

- Review outreach plan
- Summer outreach intern position
  - We have so much work to do over the summer and we need someone to devoted to it
  - We could fund $10/hrs a week
  - Olivia is interested in this position, but if anyone else is interested follow-up with Alison

Review RFWG timeline [Alison & Alyssa]

Review draft budget [Alison & Alyssa]

- RFR would like to do one RFC workshop/retreat per semester, so that may need to be built into the budget
- We may want to ask for a guarantee of a base level commitment from the President, so we don’t have to fundraise every year
- Joe: what if we got someone to eat 100%/50% real/local for an entire year/week/month and write/tweet/post about it
  - How economically feasible is it for someone on a meal plan?
  - This might not be great press