



Dining Services Proposal for Sustainable CU funding – Phase 3

Introduction:

Dining Services at CU, Boulder has been working for many years to continually increase the sustainability of its operations, introducing new initiatives and making new strides each year. Dining Services has addressed issues in a wide range of areas within the realm of sustainability, from water and energy conservation to waste management to customer and staff education. The department has a track record of reacting to opportunities to increase its sustainability as they arise, including introducing pre- and post-consumer composting, recycling commingled and cardboard packaging generated by its vendors, and holding customer education events such as Scrape Your Plate Day and Fall Harvest Fest, just to name a few! Dining Services also recognizes that the field of sustainability is an every-changing and developing field, with new information and innovative ideas constantly emerging. It finds itself in an exciting and challenging position...

Description of Project:

Deliverable: "Treasure Chest" of possible education/outreach activities that Dining Services can use to promote food sustainability, mostly for students but also for staff.

Dining Services would like to develop educational, awareness-raising opportunities for students related to sustainable food concepts, therefore we would like to conduct a feasibility study to see if models that currently exist at other universities could be adapted to work at CU Dining Services.

Necessary background research may include, but not necessarily be limited to developing a farm-to-table educational tour, offered to both students and staff; and developing a special event series that might include activities such as a "highlighting seasonality" cooking event for which CU chefs prepare a meal display-cooking-style using local, seasonal foods - ideally also bringing in the local farmers who produced the food for that particular event.

Models that would be researched include, but are not limited to: the Sustainable Food Project at UCSD, the role of Real Food Challenge in the UC system's adoption of RFC's sustainable food goals, the Stanford Sustainable Food Project, the Yale Sustainable Food Project, and many more. Key people who would be contacted for meetings/interviews would be Kelsey Meagher, California coordinator of RFC and CASFS fellow; Hai Vo, RFC alumni leader; Matt St.Clair, Sustainability Manager, UC Office of the President; Tim Galarnreau, Sustainable Agrifood System Fellowship Coordinator, Food Systems Education & Research Program Specialist, CASFS, Santa Cruz, CA; and Scott Berlin, Director of Dining and Hospitality Services at UC Santa Cruz; and Global Exchange, an organization that has worked with summer student interns to put together farm-to-fork trips and supplementary educational materials.

Student Involvement:

Dining Services would invite student input into the research process to find out what they/their peers would most be interested in learning about and/or may find most impactful.

Budget:

The cost of doing a feasibility study just focused on the above-named ideas utilizing an in-house research assistant on a consultant basis is estimated at the following:

Consultant fees of \$20/hr. x 120 hrs. = \$2400 (includes setting up logistics of travel, meetings/interviews/visits, travel time, meetings with individuals/groups in San Diego, Santa Cruz, Palo Alto, and San Francisco, and completion of report synthesizing information and making recommendations)

Matching funds: All travel expenses would be paid by consultant



University of Colorado at Boulder

Housing & Dining Services

Feasibility:

This project could be completed in three weeks beginning in mid-May and concluding in early June – after the end of the regular CU academic year, but prior to the close of the regular academic year in the UC system, making it possible to meet with “key players” in the UC system before they leave to pursue summer plans.

Student Impact:

This project is specifically created for student impact! We believe that the more people know about sustainable food, the better choices they are able to make to keep themselves, their community, and the environment (both natural and social) healthy. The potential student impact of this project would be all of the residents on the CU Boulder campus who eat in the dining halls (~6000 students), in addition to the potential impact on CU Boulder staff and administration. If the feasibility study demonstrates that it would be possible for CUDS to undertake these types of events, additional student impact could occur for any students who are involved in putting together the events themselves.

Sustainability:

Sustainability in all its forms would be paramount in this process, taking into consideration the social, environmental, and financial ramifications of where/how our food is produced, processed, distributed, and prepared, both in terms of the larger food system of which CUDS is a part, as well as with a particular focus on the food that we have access to through our CU-system procurement networks.

Innovation:

There is a lot of potential for innovation here, and we look forward to the opportunity to work with energetic and interested students to come up with the most creative education/outreach campaigns possible.