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SVIC Spotlight Film: Plant Power at the University of New Hampshire

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SVIC Summary
5/6/2021
Applied Anth
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Summary:

Title: Plant Powered!! The Impact of Dietary Restrictions on UNH Students

The Issue:

The University of New Hampshire is one of the top colleges known for its sustainability. However we believe that UNH can do more to not only boost its sustainability but improve the quality of life for students. We believe that the University of New Hampshire should increase its food variety and options for its vegan, vegetarian, and food allergen students throughout its dining halls. The university should want to boost its eco-friendly footprint as having more sustainable food options would not only draw in new students, but it would show that UNH really does care about student feedback as well as their overall health and wellbeing.

The dining here at UNH has always been pretty good, but that is coming from two students who are fortunate enough not to have a severe food allergy and who do not live plant sustained lives. The reasons we chose to address this university issue is because while there are those students who are content with the food they are being served, there is a portion of students who do not get the privilege of such variety and food options. We also love having a campus that strives for sustainability and who have already received the Platinum star, the highest award for sustainability. The University of New Hampshire uses an Eco-line which is a gas line that uses methane gas from a local landfill, along with the university using 100% electric renewable energy.

The solutions that we propose to UNH are the following. From our interviews with students who are vegan, vegetarian, or have food allergies, the consensus was that they do not feel like the mainlines at the dining halls of Stillings, Holloway Commons, and Philbrook, have enough variety and options for them. Many of them stated that while they knew they had access to food, the food was not appetizing, and for a food allergy student the food would sometimes have something he was allergic to, so he would end up skipping meals. The first solution UNH could take could provide a vegan chef to take over the food allergy/vegan sections of UNH dining halls. This would provide food restricted students to have healthy foods that would not only be nutritious for them but would enable them to have the variety and quality that the rest of the campus students have, and let them know that there is food that is focused on just for them. Another solution that Unh could take is introducing and replacing regular mainline meals, that don't get positive reviews, with meals that don't use animal products and are vegetarian friendly. This would help the university boost its sustainable footprint since the use of animal products and meat in the kitchen increases the release of greenhouse gas production that institution has.

The University of New Hampshire already has a great sustainable outlook on life and continues to do so. If the University would like to choose to increase quality of life for its students and support its already thriving sustainability efforts, then we would highly recommend considering our outlook and solutions.

Sources used:

(for video)

I movie app

Google slides/slideshow

Interview snippets/in person guidance in the dining halls (chuck/claire)

(for research)

<https://genprogress.org/trials-tribulations-college-vegetarian/>

<https://www.unh.edu/dining/>

<https://viva.org.uk/lifestyle/why-go-vegan/>

<https://doi.org/10.3945/ajcn.2009.26736N>

Interviews from those interviewed for the draft