



Fifth Annual Local Harvest Feast Offers Sustainable Fare, Education

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UNH chief sustainability officer Tom Kelly enjoys a recent Local Harvest Dinner. Credit: Ron Bergeron, UNH Photo Services.

DURHAM, N.H. –The University of New Hampshire hosts its fifth annual Local Harvest Feast Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2009. The popular and award-winning event, which is open to the public, serves breakfast at Stillings Marketplace (7:15 – 11:30 a.m.), lunch at Elements at Philbrook Hall (11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.), and dinner at Holloway Commons (4:30 – 9 p.m.), all on the UNH campus in Durham. The Local Harvest Feast is offered to all students on the UNH meal plan as well as to the general public (breakfast \$8, lunch \$12, dinner \$16, plus tax). For information, visit

<http://www.sustainableunh.unh.edu/fas/unhlocalharvest.html>.

Last year, a record 7,000 diners enjoyed local gourmet food at the Local Harvest Feast. “I learned so much about how many different local products there are,” said one guest. “The food was great and felt healthier and better. There was an amazing selection,” said another.

“More than ever, students and community members are concerned and curious about the origins of their food. These Local Harvest meals help them connect them to local producers and learn more about our region's vibrant agricultural landscape,” says Elisabeth Farrell, a program coordinator for the University Office of Sustainability, which partners with UNH Dining in Local Harvest.

The day's menus feature tastes both exotic and familiar, from French toast, blueberry pie and corn on the cob to venison burgers, braised organic root vegetable stew, and pumpkin cheesecake. Vendors include Lasting Legacy Farm (Barrington), Bonnie Brae Farm (Plymouth), and Pete & Gerry's Eggs (Monroe). In addition, UNH's student-run Organic Garden Club and horticulture farms provide produce. Some of the vendors will be on hand to meet with guests as they enter dining halls at each of the meals.

“At UNH Dining, we're pleased and gratified that so many patrons enjoy this day of local cuisines from around the state and region,” says Jon Plodzick, director of dining at UNH.

The popular Local Harvest Feast, which was honored by the National Association of College & University Food Services, is part of UNH's Local Harvest Initiative, a partnership of the UNH Office of Sustainability and UNH Dining. The initiative brings local food and organic produce to UNH's three student dining halls regularly. Last year, more than 20 percent of UNH's total food purchases were grown, processed, or manufactured within 250 miles of campus. In addition, the renovated Dairy Bar reopened last fall with a focus on local and sustainable food. Under this initiative, dining runs a food waste composting program and integrates other sustainability efforts into their operations, such as recycling, green cleaning, and energy efficiency.

The Local Harvest Initiative is one of many sustainable food projects on campus, including a dual major in EcoGastronomy, the first such program at an American university. This unique academic program emphasizes the connections between sustainable agriculture, hospitality management, and nutrition and health. UNH is also home to the first organic research dairy at a land-grant university, an active student Organic Garden Club, and the New Hampshire Farm to School Program, which connects state K-12 schools with New Hampshire farms. For more information, go to <http://www.unh.edu/dining/community/local-harvest.html> or www.sustainableunh.unh.edu.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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Photographs available to download:

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/localharvestkelly.jpg>

Caption: UNH chief sustainability officer Tom Kelly enjoys a recent Local Harvest Dinner. Credit: Ron Bergeron, UNH Photo Services.

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/localharveststudents.jpg>

Caption: UNH students feast on the bounty at a recent Local Harvest Dinner. Credit: Ron Bergeron, UNH Photo Services.