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UNH Gets Top Grade On Sustainability Report Card

Beth Potier

UNH Media Relations

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UNH Gets Top Grade On Sustainability Report Card



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Media Contact: [Beth Potier](#)

603-862-1566

UNH Media Relations

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REPORTERS AND EDITORS: Tom Kelly, UNH chief sustainability officer, can be reached by calling 603-862-8564 or e-mailing alaina.pritchard@unh.edu. Elisabeth Farrell, UNH Food & Society Initiative coordinator, can be reached by calling 603-862-5040 or e-mailing el.farrell@unh.edu.

DURHAM, N.H. - The University of New Hampshire is one of 15 universities nationwide to receive the highest score - an A-minus - on the Sustainable Endowments Institute's College Sustainability Report Card 2009. In addition, the SEI awarded UNH one of five national Champions of Sustainability in Communities Awards for the New Hampshire Farm to School Program, housed at UNH.

The Sustainable Endowments Institute (SEI), a special project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, evaluated the 300 U.S. and Canadian universities with the 300 largest endowments (UNH's endowment is \$285 million as of June 2007) for its third annual Report Card. The complete Report Card is available here: <http://www.greenreportcard.org>.

UNH received A grades (on a scale of A through F) in six of nine campus categories: administration, climate change and energy, food and recycling, transportation, and endowment transparency. UNH was specifically lauded for EcoLine, its innovative landfill gas-to-energy project that will significantly reduce energy use and emissions; its commitment to procuring local food for campus dining; and its significant alternative transportation efforts.

"At UNH, we organize everything we do around sustainability. This report card looks at a broad range of sustainability activities, including energy savings, food initiatives, transportation, endowment management, and student engagement. This is consistent with the systemic approach that we are committed to at UNH," said Tom Kelly, UNH's chief sustainability officer and director of the University Office of Sustainability. "Credit for this recognition goes to everyone on campus whose ongoing creative work is helping us model what we call the sustainable learning community."

The NH Farm to School (NHFTS) Program, housed within the University Office of Sustainability, connects New Hampshire farms and schools by facilitating the purchase of state-grown and -produced foods by New Hampshire schools. Its vision is to develop a healthy, community-based, community-supported school food system by integrating agricultural production, school food procurement and school curriculum. NHFTS currently serves 258 K-12 schools and five colleges.

"NH Farm to School brings UNH's sustainability initiatives into our community, supporting local farmers and our rich farm heritage while promoting health and nutrition in our state's students," says Elisabeth Farrell, coordinator of UNH's Food & Society Initiative, under which NHFTS resides. "Helping facilitate farm-to-school connections is just one of the ways we're

working to create a more sustainable food system in our state, sparking a renaissance of food and agriculture at UNH, in New Hampshire and beyond."

In addition to UNH, other New England universities to receive the top score on the College Sustainability Report Card are Dartmouth College, Brown University (R.I.), Harvard University (Mass.), Middlebury College (Vt.) and the University of Vermont. Rounding out the list of the 15 top-scoring universities are Carleton College, Columbia University, Dickinson College, Oberlin College, Stanford University, University of British Columbia, University of Colorado, University of Pennsylvania, and University of Washington.

UNH, home of the nation's first endowed office of sustainability in higher education, is a leader in integrating sustainability throughout its curricula, operations, research, and engagement efforts through initiatives in biodiversity, climate, food and culture. Committed to being a model sustainable learning community that prepares students to advance sustainability in their civic and professional lives, UNH has earned several awards for its sustainability initiatives, which range from innovative academic programs and research in fields like ecogastronomy and marine science to the largest transit system in the state of New Hampshire (run mainly on alternative fuels) to EPA Energy Star buildings. Discover the sustainable learning community at UNH at sustainableunh.unh.edu and discoversustainability.org.

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