

## (Local) Flavors of Fall

UNH hosts annual harvest dinner – 150 years, 150 miles

Monday, November 28, 2016



WHITE CLAM PIZZA, ONE OF HUNDREDS OF DISHES MADE USING INGREDIENTS FROM WITHIN A 150-MILE RADIUS OF CAMPUS FOR THE ANNUAL HARVEST DINNER CELEBRATION AT ALL THREE UNH DINING HALLS.

Grilled swordfish with roasted tomatoes, sliced London broil with mushroom potato hash, cheddar ale soup, sweet potato sage butter ravioli with toasted pumpkin seeds, BBQ venison pizza, chocolate explosion cake and many more mouth-watering items made an appearance in the UNH dining halls on Wednesday, Nov. 16. The best part of it all? Almost 70 percent of the dishes

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were made with local ingredients.

Held each fall, UNH's Local Harvest Dinner is an evening of gourmet dining using fresh, locally produced food. This hugely popular event aims to educate community members on the importance of supporting local food producers, while also giving them a taste of items that aren't typically offered. However, this year was special, as most of the ingredients came from within a 150-mile radius of UNH, in recognition of the university's 150-year celebration.

"The harvest dinner is a testament of our commitment to sustainability and supporting the local economy," said David Hill, assistant director for culinary operations at UNH Dining Services. The dining team plays a huge role in supporting UNH's promise to help the state's agricultural economy. On a daily basis, they source 25 percent of all purchases from local vendors, Hill noted, and they are trying to grow that number every year.

"It's important to make connections with local producers," Hill continued.

"When we started this event, we struggled to find enough vendors to contribute. Over the years, local producers have grown enormously, giving us more sources."

**"This whole event, and especially the ravioli, are by far my favorite."**

The Local Harvest Dinner began in 2005 on a much smaller scale. At first, it was only offered in Philbrook Hall. Due to its success, it now takes place in all three dining halls. Holloway Commons alone saw 3,400 diners during this year's event; HoCo staff assembled an upstairs buffet to prevent long lines.

The dining staff prepares months in advance for this dinner, meeting with vendors and creating recipes that will resonate with the community. Executive chef Christopher Kaschak noted that they brought in 1,200 pounds — twice the amount of any other

item — of the butternut squash ravioli because of its continued popularity.

“This whole event, and especially the ravioli, are by far my favorite,” said Brett Labnon '17 a marketing and management major. “It reminds me of my Thanksgiving at home.”



LAMB SLIDERS WITH LAMB FROM  
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“People really love this event,” said Deborah Scanlon, Holloway Commons’ manager.

“Students get stressed this time of year with finals, and we love doing something fun, while also educating

them.”

Locally produced food is better for the environment because it typically doesn’t travel as far to reach the consumer, requiring less fuel for transport. Local food is also fresher and, therefore, tastes better, as it hasn’t been packed away for days or weeks.

Freshness not only affects the taste of the food but the nutritional value as well; certain products lose nutrients the longer they are stored.

“Having meals like this highlight what we are already doing,” said Scanlon. “We just want a greater awareness of what we are serving in our halls, and how it promotes being sustainable. That’s why we’re here.”

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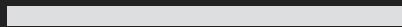
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