

HOBART CENTER
FOR
FOODSERVICE
SUSTAINABILITY

Bon Appétit's Farm-to-Fork Program Benefits Oberlin College and the Community

PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA

Bon Appétit Management Company serves 80 million meals in 400 cafés nationwide each year. The large-impact company has developed its own definition of sustainability as it relates to foodservice. It believes sustainability to be food choices that celebrate flavor, affirm regional cultural traditions and support local communities without compromising air, water or soil, now and in the future.

With that definition in mind, Bon Appétit implemented a Farm-to-Fork program to buy locally and invest in the health of the community. Bon Appétit supports local sustainable farming practices that steer away from pesticides, hormones and antibiotics. Also, they can be sure the profits are kept with the local grower, not a distant importer, and therefore reinvested into the community.



Oberlin College was struggling to implement a program to support local farmers prior to the arrival of Bon Appétit in 2001. Since Bon Appétit's involvement, a strong relationship has been built between the college and local farmers. By 2006, local food purchasing had increased to 35 percent.



Bon Appétit and Oberlin College have also partnered with the New Agrarian Center (NAC) to regenerate the regional food system in Northwest Ohio. Bon Appétit donated \$9,485 for a waste-oil-heated greenhouse to be erected on a local farm. The produce grown on the farm will then be sold for use at Oberlin College. Waste oil from cafés is also donated to heat the greenhouses. Currently, students from Oberlin College deliver an average of 315 liquid pounds of food-grade oil to the farm.

HOBART CENTER FOR FOODSERVICE SUSTAINABILITY

Additionally, Bon Appétit strongly supports local business by keeping their operations financially sustainable. A local beekeeper receives 40 percent of his total business from Oberlin College. The college also purchased 500 pounds of shrimp from a local nursery last year and has already ordered 800 pounds of his products this year. The relationship with the local shrimp farmer provided the Oberlin team the opportunity to visit the shrimp nursery to learn about the growing, handling and harvesting of shrimp.

Bon Appétit also supports a family-owned farm that sells high-quality, flavorful chicken. The chickens are fed only natural corn and soybean with the necessary nutrients. The Oberlin team was also invited to visit the Amish chicken farm to learn more about how the chickens are raised.

In addition to healthy chickens, Bon Appétit at Oberlin College purchases naturally grown and antibiotic-free dairy cows from a local dairy. The milk from the dairy can be found in all dining halls at Oberlin College. The college purchases between 500 and 600 gallons of milk per week.

Bon Appétit did not stop at just farms. They also built a relationship with a local canning company. At the canning company, tomatoes are harvested and processed within six to 10 hours to best capture the nutritional benefits of the fruit. Bon Appétit purchases an average of 1,200 pounds of tomato produce per week.

Other sustainable practices include serving fair-trade coffee on campus, taking advantage of reusable dish-ware in dining halls, serving milk free of recombinant bovine growth hormones and sustainable, mercury-free seafood.

In the future, Bon Appétit at Oberlin College plans to expand composting abilities. They are investigating the process of grinding or pulping food waste into high-quality composting matter.



HOBART CENTER
FOR
FOODSERVICE
SUSTAINABILITY

Bon Appétit has helped fund several major projects at local farms. They donated money for greenhouse construction and waste-oil heaters to warm the greenhouse. They also donated \$7,500 for the purchase of a waste-oil-operated, refrigerated box truck.

Investing approximately \$16,000 per year on produce to a local farm benefits the farm, Bon Appétit and the Oberlin community. Initially, Bon Appétit's Farm-to-Fork program required 20 percent of food served in cafés to be purchased within a 150-mile radius. Last year, Bon Appétit surpassed the goal by 5 percent.