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Collegians Getting Down and Dirty For Food's Sake

By Julia Silverman

Plenty of college kids still subsist on a steady diet of ramen noodles, cold cereal and beer.

Not Nate France. The crop and soil sciences major at Oregon State University wouldn't dream of following the well-beaten path to the local fast-food restaurants for cheap, mammoth burgers.

Instead, every Thursday afternoon until the sun sets, France helps till and tend a pocket-size, student-run organic farm on a couple of soil-rich acres just outside the western Oregon college town of Corvallis.

"I sowed some corn while it was raining, and then I tamped down the soil too much; it caked up, hard as a brick, and the corn plants couldn't come up," said France, 27, who dreams out loud about farming his own land someday. "This next time, I know to mix manure in. This is like a trial by fire, a way to make mistakes before it matters too much."

In the last decade or so, student-run farms have cropped up at almost 60 schools in 27 states. Foodies call it the latest sign of the seasonal, regional food movement's influence, even on a collegiate landscape that's virtually paved with Hot Pockets, Pop Tarts and leftover pizza.

Over the past few years, about 200 schools have signed up with farm-to-college programs, which match local farmers with area universities, according to the Venice, Calif.-based Community Food Security Coalition. The University of Montana-Missoula, for example, allocates about \$425,000 for local

meat, dairy and wheat products, about 17 percent of its overall food budget.

At Brown University in Providence, R.I., dining hall purchasers started replacing Granny Smiths and Red Delicious with locally grown Macouns and Pippins. Apple consumption tripled, and the experiment



extended to locally grown tomatoes and peaches, milk from Rhode Island dairies and, eventually, a farmers' market that set up shop outside the dining hall.

"I was carrying a flat of local peaches into the dining hall once; it was like having bread at the beach and having seagulls following me," said Louella Hill, a recent Brown graduate who helped organized the on-campus farmers' market. "People were grabbing peaches and eating them before I could get to the fruit bowl."

Student farms, which range from half an acre to 200, turn students into growers.

Some student farmers, like those at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, sell the fruits of their labor at on-campus farm stands. The bounty from the University of Idaho at Moscow gets parceled out each week to community members who have prepaid for baskets of whatever's fresh.

Some student farms supply their dining halls with fresh produce, while others sell directly to restaurants. At Colorado State University's student farm, what isn't sold on campus or eaten by volunteers is donated to food pantries.

Harvest Blend Regular

- Broccoli
- Celery
- Cauliflower
- Rapini
- Jumbo Carrots
- Romaine Lettuce
- Red Potatoes
- Yellow Squash
- White Jumbo Garlic
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Dapple Dandy Pluots
- Flame Seedless Grapes
- Green Wickson Plums

See the web site for details on our other options. Produce bag contents are subject to change based on availability.

You Don't Say

"I do not like broccoli. And I haven't liked it since I was a little kid and my mother made me eat it. And I'm President of the United States and I'm not going to eat any more broccoli." - George H.W. Bush

"A bagel creation that would have my parents turning over in their graves is the oat-bran bagel with blueberries and strawberries. It's a bagel nightmare, an ill-conceived bagel form if there ever was one." - Ed Levine, New York Eats

"Doubtless God could have made a better berry than the strawberry, but doubtless God never did." - Dr. William Butler, 17th century English writer

"A diet that consists predominantly of rice leads to the use of opium, just as a diet that consists predominantly of potatoes leads to the use of liquor." - Friedrich Nietzsche

Recipes

Rapini and Garlic

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 bunch rapini, about 2 pounds, bottom 3 or 4 inches of stems trimmed away
- 1/2 cup low sodium, no-fat chicken broth

Heat garlic in oil over medium heat in a large skillet until garlic sizzles in oil. Add the rapini, as much as you can fit in pan at a time.



Turn and coat with oil as you wilt the greens. Add broth. Bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer 10 to 12 minutes to soften the bitterness of the greens.

Rapini Pasta

- 1/2 large onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 3-4 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 bunch of rapini
- 1/2 lb. of penne pasta
- 1/4 cup freshly grated romano or parmesan cheese
- olive oil
- red pepper flakes
- red wine vinegar
- salt to taste

Wash the rapini and remove the heavy stems and chop the leaves and sprouts coarsely. Put on a large pot of water to boil. Liberally cover the bottom of large frying pan with olive oil and sauté the onion over high heat. When the onion has begun to brown a little, add the garlic, a sprinkle of red pepper flakes and salt to taste.

Toss briefly, then add the rapini and a splash of water. Lower the heat and cook until tender, stirring and tossing frequently. Meanwhile, cook the pasta until tender. Taste the rapini for seasoning and add more olive oil as needed and a splash of red wine vinegar. Toss with the pasta and garnish with the grated cheese.

Roasted Potato Cauliflower Pasta

- 1 lb red potatoes
- 1 medium onion, cut into chunks
- 6 cloves garlic
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 small head cauliflower, cut into florets
- 1 (8 ounce) package dry penne pasta
- grated Parmesan cheese for topping (optional)

Preheat oven to 375F. Line a medium baking pan with heavy duty aluminum foil, and spray foil with cooking spray. Place potatoes

in the prepared pan. Mix with onion, garlic, thyme, and rosemary. Drizzle with 1/3 cup water and 1/4 cup olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Seal pan with aluminum foil. Bake potatoes 30 minutes in the preheated oven, or until tender. Remove foil, mix in cauliflower, and drizzle with remaining oil. Cover, and continue baking 15 minutes.

Increase oven temperature to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C), remove foil, and continue baking 10 minutes, or until potatoes are crisp and cauliflower is lightly browned. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Place pasta in the pot. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes, until al dente, and drain. In a large bowl, gently toss the potato mixture with the cooked pasta. Serve topped with Parmesan cheese.

The Starving Student's Leftover Potato & Squash Burritos

- 2-3 small yellow squash
- 1/2 large tomato, beefsteak
- salt & pepper
- 2 8-inch tortillas, red chile flour
- 1/2 cup mashed potatoes, smashed red skin
- 1/4 cup cheese, yellow cheddar, freshly grated
- 8 slices jalapeño, jarred, hot pickled, sliced, drained
- chipotle salsa

Rinse the squash and pat dry and slice the ends off. Cut each squash into chunks and place in a microwave safe bowl with half a tablespoon of water. Cover with plastic wrap and cook in the microwave on the "Fresh Vegetables" setting. When cooked, remove the plastic wrap and stir in the tomatoes. Add some salt and pepper to taste.

Prepare the burritos one at a time. Lay out a tortilla on a microwave-safe dinner plate and put half of the potatoes in the middle. Top with a quarter of the cheese and then some of the vegetable mixture. Spoon out the tomato and yellow squash, leaving the liquid behind in the bowl. Top with another quarter of the cheese and half of the pickled jalapeño slices. Place in the microwave, uncovered, for a minute to heat the ingredients and melt the cheese. Carefully, roll them up. Repeat on the second dinner plate with the other burrito. Serve with salsa, reserving any leftover filling for another use.

Oven-Roasted Squash and Potatoes

- 1 lb yellow squash, cut into chunks
- 1 lb zucchini, cut into chunks
- 1/2 pound tiny red potatoes, whole
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon pepper seasoning
- 1 onion, cut into wedges

Pour the oil and lemon pepper into a large bowl. Add the potatoes and squash. To ensure the squash and potatoes cook evenly, cut the squash into chunks a little big bigger than the potatoes. Toss to coat. Spread into a baking dish and cook at 400 F for about 30 minutes. Stir, then turn the oven up to 450 F. Cook until browned.