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FEED IT FORWARD: ASU BRINGS SUSTAINABLE AWARENESS TO CAMPUS

Six organizations came together to bring sustainable food system awareness to the ASU community



ASU students try a variety of foods at the Food Systems and Beyond event at the Engrained Cafe patio in Tempe, Arizona on Wednesday, March 29, 2017. [Delia Johnson](#) and [Delia Johnson](#)

By [Quindrea Yazzie](#) | March 30, 2017 | 8:36pm MST



In honor of the upcoming earth month in April, six ASU organizations showed off the impact the University has on the environment to students outside the MU building as part of the annual **Food Systems & Beyond** event.

The event was focused around how consuming sustainable food reduces negative environmental aspects of food production and helps foster robust local economies and food security. It featured locally grown produce, which is used by ASU to create the dishes served in the dining halls.

The locally grown food shown off at the event was selected for the school by **Aramark**, a group responsible for dining options at ASU.

Krista Hicks, the sustainability manager at Aramark and [Sun Devil Dining](#), said the goal of bringing these foods to the dining halls is to give students healthier options.

“We (partnered) with the American Heart Association to increase fruit and vegetable consumption by 20 percent by 2020," Hicks said. "So we definitely focus more on implementing plant based options.”

Events like Food Systems & Beyond also raise awareness about what students eat and how they contribute to the carbon footprint, said Lesley Forst, the program coordinator for the University's sustainability program. The fact that vegetarian or vegan options are available to students means the school is producing a smaller environmental impact than it could.

“ASU in general is very fortunate to have local and sustainable food in their dining halls,” she said.

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Other tables at the event handed out samples from sustainable vendors who sell products in Sun Devil Dining’s on-campus markets, such as [Yerba Mate](#), Danzeisen Dairy, Bolthouse Farms and [Java City Coffee](#). These products are sold in most of the on-campus markets and the restaurants on campus.

Forst added the orange trees around the Tempe campus also contribute to the campus sustainability movement. Aramark harvests the blood oranges, sends them to a local juicer and boxes up the resulting "Devilade" juice to sell at markets on campus.

However, despite the push from the University to promote sustainability, many students are still unaware of the practices.

Integrative Sciences & Arts and Interdisciplinary Studies sophomore Preetpal Gill said she was more concerned with keeping the food affordable.

“I like that there are changes, but I did not know much about these new changes,” said Gill. “I would like to see more accessible food on campus, as well as more affordable options.”

Seeking to answer these concerns, vendors such as P.O.W.W.O.W (Produce on Wheels Without Waste) and the ASU Student Anti-Hunger Coalition provided information about affordable and healthy food that students can readily access.

Officials believe these events can raise awareness among students and promote a more sustainable culture among the students.

"It's not just the food offerings," said Hicks, "but the entire system that works together."

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