A Resolution to Support the Signing and Implementation of the Real Food Campus Commitment

Sophie Chang (for herself, Mikayla Bodey, Caroline Gonzalez, and Andrew Jackson) introduced the following resolution to steering.

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Whereas the Undergraduate Student Government represents all undergraduate students at The Ohio State University, and

Whereas The Ohio State University has 30 dining locations across its Columbus campus, including three Traditions dining locations that offer all-you-care-to-eat options for students,¹ and

Whereas The Ohio State University dining workers orchestrate the remarkable feat of serving some 40,000 meals nearly every day, and

Whereas OSU is one of the largest institutional purchasers of food in the Midwest,² and

Whereas OSU has a self-operating dining system that coordinates food purchases from over 30 distributors,³ and

Whereas OSU procures meat, dairy, and some vegetables from OSU’s vast agricultural campus, and

Whereas the OSU food system leadership is a collaboration between Dining Services, the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, the Board of Trustees, and the upper administration of the University, and

Whereas The Ohio State University is a land-grant institution⁴ and was founded on the values of agriculture and investment in community,⁵ and

Whereas the Senior Director of Dining Services, Zia Ahmed, has stated that “production, preparation and operations related to food” should be done “as locally as possible and by the people whose primary motivation is the well-being of our students,”⁶ and

Whereas the “Strategic Vision” of the Ohio State Sustainability Goals includes the goal of utilizing internal and external stakeholders such as “students, staff, faculty, alumni/ae,

¹ https://dining.osu.edu/locations/
³ Ibid.
⁴ https://www.osu.edu/academicplan/vision.php
⁵ https://news.osu.edu/history.html
companies, non-governmental organizations, agencies” to “serve in an advisory capacity for the ongoing formulation, development, implementation, and assessment of goals, initiatives, and outcomes,” and

Whereas the “Strategic Vision” also includes the goal of conducting “research on our progress by developing and/or adapting research methodology to review and assess operational goals, and evaluate and publish the results with the aim of developing best practices and innovation for sustainability measurement,” and

Whereas the President and Provost’s Council on Sustainability has recently declared the goal of “producing and purchasing 40% local and sustainable foods by 2025,” and

Whereas despite these goals and the aforementioned “Strategic Vision,” the Ohio State Sustainability Goals have not established clear, student-sanctioned criteria for what constitute “local” and “sustainable” foods, and

Whereas there is no transparency, measurability, or baseline measure for the process in achieving this sustainability goal, and

Whereas the Real Food Challenge is a nation-wide, student-led movement whose goal is to shift $1 billion of existing university food budgets away from industrial farms and junk food and towards real food by the year 2020, and

Whereas the Real Food Challenge has a network of over 5,000 students at more than 350 schools throughout the United States, and

Whereas Real Food OSU, formerly known as Local Matters Student Ambassadors, is part of Real Food Challenge and has been working on the campaign for real food for the past two years, and

Whereas the campaign for real food entails the signing and implementation of the Real Food Campus Commitment to direct 20% of University food purchases to the purchase of “real food,” and

Whereas “real food” is defined as local/community-based, fair, ecologically sound, and/or humane, and

Whereas the Real Food Campus Commitment is comprised of five key tenets, and

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7 https://www.osu.edu/initiatives/sustainability/
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 http://www.realfoodchallenge.org/about-real-food-challenge
12 http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/a-critical-mass-for-real-food
13 Ibid.
Whereas the Real Food Campus Commitment believes “colleges and universities must exercise leadership in our communities and throughout society by modeling ways to support ecologically sustainable, humane and socially equitable food systems,”\(^{15}\) and

Whereas the Real Food Campus Commitment believes that investing in “the use of local/regional, ecologically sustainable, humane and fair foods” can benefit old and new students, and foster “university-community relations by supporting the livelihoods of family farmers and food chain workers,”\(^ {16}\) and

Whereas the qualifications for local and community-based, fair, ecologically sound, and humane foods are listed in the “Real Food Guide,”\(^ {17}\) and

Whereas “real food” would be measured by a research-developed, proven food systems calculator\(^{18}\) that already exists to measure and track progress towards a given food systems goal, and

Whereas this calculator would be run and maintained by Ohio State students, and

Whereas the Ohio State University is a research institution dedicated to engaging students in the academic process, and

Whereas the Real Food Campus Commitment is currently endorsed by the Community Alliance for Global Justice, the Cooperative Food Empowerment Directive, Equal Exchange, the Fair Food Network, Green America, the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, the Northwest Agriculture Business Center, Red Tomato, Roots of Change, Sierra Student Coalition, the Student/Farmworker Alliance, and UniteHERE!,\(^ {19}\) and

Whereas the Ohio Farmers Union, Slow Food Columbus, Ohio Environmental Council, North Market Development Authority, Local Matters, the Humane Society of the United States Agriculture Advisory Council for Ohio, Environment Ohio/Environment America, and Ohio Fair Food also endorse the Real Food Campus Commitment, and

Whereas local producers such as Snowville Creamery, Great River Organics, Sanfillipo Produce, Marshy Meadows Farm, Fox Hollow Farm, Kossuth Street Garden, Yellowbird Foodshed, Harris-Miller Farm, Red Roots Community Garden, and Bird’s Haven Farms also endorse the Real Food Campus Commitment,\(^ {20}\) and


\(^{16}\) Ibid.

\(^{17}\) [http://www.realfoodchallenge.org/sites/g/files/g809971/f/201403/Real%20Food%20Guide%20Version%201.0%20March%202014_0.pdf](http://www.realfoodchallenge.org/sites/g/files/g809971/f/201403/Real%20Food%20Guide%20Version%201.0%20March%202014_0.pdf)

\(^{18}\) [http://calculator.realfoodchallenge.org](http://calculator.realfoodchallenge.org)

\(^{19}\) [http://www.realfoodchallenge.org/participating-schools#overlay-context](http://www.realfoodchallenge.org/participating-schools#overlay-context)

\(^{20}\) [http://u.osu.edu/realfoodchallenge/2016/02/29/thank-you/](http://u.osu.edu/realfoodchallenge/2016/02/29/thank-you/)
Whereas the Real Food Campus Commitment is also endorsed by individuals such as Cornell William Brooks, President and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Dr. Barbara Galantowicz of Nationwide Children’s Hospital, and

Whereas Will Allen, community leader of Growing Power and author of the 2015-2016 Buckeye Book Community book at Ohio State, The Good Food Revolution, also endorses the Real Food Commitment and the mission of Real Food Challenge, and

Whereas the Real Food Challenge has facilitated a pilot program between OSU Dining and Great River Organics, the largest cooperative of Ohio’s organic growers, and

Whereas this pilot program has been implemented in partnership with Chef Lesa Holford, Corporate Executive Chef at Ohio State since last spring, and

Whereas the success of Great River Organics shows that local farmers can scale up their production to meet the needs of our University, and

Whereas the further success and increase in production by producers such as Great River Organics requires a commitment from the Ohio State University, and

Whereas The Ohio State University Dining Services has an annual budget of $55 million, and

Whereas by signing and implementing the Real Food Campus Commitment OSU will be purchasing at least 20% local and sustainable food by 2020, thus ensuring greater success in meeting 40% local and sustainable food by 2025, and

Whereas the criteria offered by Real Food Challenge illustrates an expanded vision of sustainability, much like Ohio State’s Sustainability Goals, and

Whereas signing and implementing the Real Food Campus Commitment would ensure accountability, measurability, and transparency in our food system going forward, and

Whereas signing and implementing the Real Food Campus Commitment is in direct alignment with President Drake’s 2020 Vision, Discovery Themes of Health and Wellness, Energy and Environment, and Food and Production Safety, and his goal of alleviating food security, and

Whereas adopting the Real Food Campus Commitment would give student further options and build bridges with the local community of producers, without alienating current corporate partnerships and contracts, and

21 https://fye.osu.edu/bbc.html
22 http://www.greatriverfarms.org
23 Chef Lesa Holford at the Spring into Real Food: Strengthening the Campus Food System through Campus Purchasing Conference on April 3, 2015 http://senr.osu.edu/about-us/events/spring-real-food-strengthening-food-system-through-campus-purchasing
24 http://thelantern.com/2014/02/ohio-state-dining-services-waste-minimizing-efforts-challenged/
Whereas 60 institutions across the United States have signed and committed to implementing the Real Food Campus Commitment, including but not limited to the entire University of California and California State University systems, Northwestern University, and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, \(^{26}\) and

Whereas The University of Michigan also has a real food team working with the Real Food Challenge, \(^{27}\) and

Whereas OSU signing the Real Food Campus Commitment would likely help produce a domino effect and encourage other universities to sign it as well, and

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government General Assembly recognizes the benefits of signing and implementing the Real Food Campus Commitment, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government encourages the administration to sign and implement the Real Food Campus Commitment, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that the USG does not support increasing the price of the meal plans in order to achieve the Real Food Campus Goals, and

Let it Further Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government encourages the administration to work with Real Food OSU in the entirety of the Real Food Campus Commitment process.

Floor Vote: PASSED WITH ONE ABSTENTION

Abby Grossman
President

Abby Waidelich
Vice President

Date Adopted: March 2, 2016

Date Terminated: ________________

\(^{26}\) http://www.realfoodchallenge.org/participating-schools#overlay-context=

\(^{27}\) http://www.umsp.com