

Food Studies Newsletter

May 2022

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Student Groups on Campus

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Nutrition Outreach Mentoring - *student group focused on food education*
Charter House - *local non-profit dedicated to providing food and housing*
Sunday Night Environmental Group - *student group for climate justice*



Update on Juntos

Juntos is the student-migrant labor solidarity network on campus, in charge of providing a variety of services to the local migrant community. Juntos's largest program is the Compañeros program which pairs Middlebury students with migrant workers to help them learn English. Volunteers and participants get matched based on language levels and interests and the two stay together for as long they participate in the program. This free, accessible program has doubled in size over the past year, now supporting 20-30 matches. Additionally, this past year, Juntos has initiated power dynamic workshops which strive to decolonize teaching English and engage volunteers in conversations around privilege and access. Juntos also hosts events for the broader community that bring migrants and Middlebury students together to form connections and learn from one another. This semester, Juntos revamped its "Stories that Migrate" event, an open mic night that highlights the voices of migrant workers in our community. Juntos works with the Addison Allies Network, Migrant Justice, and the Open Door Clinic to expand its reach and support workers by providing rides to doctor's appointments, translating documents, and more. Juntos also helped organize students to attend the rally for Milk with Dignity at Hannaford on May 1. Juntos is always looking for more student volunteers to come engage in their work.

To learn more, email juntos@middlebury.edu.

What can you do in food studies?

Alumni Profile

Charlie DiPrinzio '21

Charlie has always been interested in food. During his gap year, he worked in restaurants and on farms where he experienced different parts of the food system. At Middlebury, after taking “Introduction to Food Systems”, Charlie decided to be an Independent Scholar, focusing on the different approaches to addressing local and national food insecurity issues. Now, Charlie works as a line cook at Blue Hill at Stone Barns, a restaurant focused on local food, regenerative agriculture, and community engagement (see below). Charlie explains that working at Stone Barns gives him a unique opportunity to engage with the kitchen, the farm, and the guests. He says Stone Barns emphasizes the collaboration of farmers, chefs, and everyone in between to encourage a holistic understanding of the food system. Thus, while Charlie spends most of his time working in the kitchen, he also helps farmers with harvesting and interacts with guests. Blue Hill, Charlie explains, involves guests in conversations around food system change by moving tables into the kitchen so guests can meet with the chefs and learn about how the food is grown and prepared. Charlie loves these interactions because they give him a chance to be himself and talk about topics that excite him.



Farm Profile

Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture

Stone Barns is an educational center and farm in Westchester County, New York focused on regenerative agriculture, a farming practice that focuses on working in partnership with nature to restore soil health, support ecosystems, and promote biodiversity while growing nutrient dense food for human consumption. Stone Barns centers its approach on three primary operation groups: crops, livestock, and ecosystems. Through practices such as rotational grazing, seed cultivation, and crop rotation, Stone Barns emphasizes the importance of focusing on the intersections of all three operations to cultivate a farming system that regenerates the soil, promotes biodiversity, and improves land resilience, all while growing delicious food. Stone Barns also works in direct partnership with Blue Hill, the onsite restaurant, to create innovative dishes that reflect the values of the farm. Together, Stone Barns and Blue Hill try to spark conversations on how growing and preparing food can turn from an extractive to regenerative practice. Stone Barns emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of the food system by encouraging guests, cooks, and farmers to interact and learn from each other.

What's Happening on Campus

Green Design at the Knoll

As part of the class “Architecture and the Environment”, students Annalise Johnson, Galen von Wodtke, Jude Seo, and Laney Sullivan are working with the Knoll to integrate buildings that satisfy the requirements of the Living Building Challenge in hopes to expand potential uses of the Knoll. The Living Building Challenge (LBC) is an international framework for designing buildings that cultivates both environmentally and socially regenerative spaces. The Knoll stands as a great place to implement LBC standards because of the farm’s current regenerative practices of organic no-till practices, affinity spaces, and donating to the HOPE organization. However, the plan is to expand the Knoll’s positive impact to produce even more food while regenerating soil and serving as an accessible place for people to gather.

The project at the Knoll has two phases: immediate needs, and future goals. Phase one focuses on needs such as accessibility, potable water, wind shelter, bathrooms, and a classroom/multipurpose space. Then, phase two includes thinking about an expanded garden space, livestock integration, an agroecology residency, and ultimately becoming a demonstrational facility for regenerative practices. By designing new spaces in line with the Living Building Challenge, Annalise, Galen, Jude, and Laney are helping the college think through how to expand the Knoll in ways that encourage environmental and social regeneration.



Food Security Plan

Food insecurity, or the lack of physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life, affects about 1 in 11 Vermont households. During the early months of the pandemic, a UVM study found that as much as 30% of Vermonters were food-insecure, with the worst incidence among people of color and low-income populations. Although federal food and income assistance brought that percentage down, no household should experience food insecurity in our state. The Vermont Farm to Plate Network is developing a Food Security Plan for the state, centered around a thriving food system and inspired by community-based responses to food insecurity and disruptive events. We will be involving food-insecure people as well as farmers in the planning, and addressing how the lack of affordable housing, adequate healthcare, transportation, siting of retail grocery stores and food distribution intersect with food insecurity. Priority populations include those identifying as Black, Indigenous and persons of color; those identifying as LGBTQ; those with disabilities; those living in poverty; and those in rural areas, especially in the north of the state. The team will develop short-term and long-term recommendations, with the first draft to be completed next summer. If you'd like more information, please contact Molly Anderson, who is part of the Research Sub-group.

Classes Relevant to Food Studies

Fall 2022

Middlebury's Foodscape: Introduction to Food System Issues - *understanding how to achieve sustainable food systems*
Agroecology - *studying agroecology as a set of practices, a science, and a social movement*
Economics of Agricultural Transition - *examining farm production, resources, technology, and agricultural policy*
Natural Science and the Environment - *exploring global environmental issues and how to forge effective, sustainable, solutions*
Gender, Health, Environment - *studying how access to, control over, and distribution of resources influence outcomes*
Environmental Change in Latin America - *exploring global environmental change and human-environmental geography*
Applied Remote Sensing: Land Use in Sub-Saharan Africa - *investigating land uses and social contexts to generate land use maps*
Navigating a Toxic World - *exploring environmental health and justice topics relevant to our daily lives*
Earth's Oceans and Coastlines - *exploring how humans are fundamentally altering coastal and marine ecosystems*
State of Emergency and its Aftermaths - *discovering how conflicts have manifested spacially*
Soils and the Environment - *analyzing soil composition, pollution, erosion, and implications for land-use planning*
Ecology and Evolution - *introducing ecology and evolutionary biology*
Entomology - *examining several aspects of organismal biology in insects and related arthropods*

Winter 2023

School Lunches - *exploring the production and consumption of school lunches*
Vermont's Farms, Food & Future - *understanding perspectives related to agriculture and land use*
Culinary History of Italy - *exploring Italian history and culture*
Health, Food & Poverty: Critical Frameworks for Social Change - *critically examining a variety of frameworks for social impact*

Spring 2023

Food Security in Lebanon - *looking into the historical and contemporary food systems in Lebanon*
Food Power & Justice - *analyzing power and justice in relation to the food system*
Literary Feasts - *analyzing the realistic, symbolic, religious, erotic, and political functions of food preparation and consumption*
Grassroots Perspectives on Sustainable Development - *reviewing "sustainable development" and its social justice implications*
Microbiology - *integrating basic and applied aspects of microbiology into a study of the prokaryotic microorganisms*
Economics of Africa - *exploring the opportunities, challenges, and policy options for sustained, inclusive economic growth*
Environment & Development - *exploring the complex relationship between environment and development*
Natural Science and the Environment - *exploring global environmental issues and how to forge effective, sustainable, solutions*
Environmental Health - *exploring the science underlying reciprocal relationships between human health and the environment*
The Perennial Turn - *exploring notions of perennial thinking and actions*
History of US Food Politics - *understanding developments in political economy, changes in the role of the state, and evolving attitudes*
Animals in Middle Eastern History - *examining attitudes towards animals in Middle Eastern history, emphasizing Muslim settings*
With Flavor: Food & Brazilian Culture - *focusing on the food being produced and consumed in Brazil*