

Food Studies Newsletter

November 2022



In This Issue:

Weybridge House Update
Alum Feature
Student Feature
Upcoming Classes

Weybridge House

Weybridge House, located across from the CCI on Weybridge Street, is Middlebury's local food house! Twice a week, residents cook meals together using all local ingredients, with the exception of oil and spices, and share the food with anyone in Middlebury who wants to join for a meal on Thursdays at 6pm and with house residents on Sunday nights. During these gatherings, everyone spends time thinking about their connection with food, their stewardship of the land, and how engaging consciously with the food system strengthens our relationships. In the day to day, Weybridge works to build a community of mutual support and joy.

In addition to weekly meals, this fall Weybridge hosted Fall Feast at the end of October. Feast occurs once a semester and is a time where residents cook an immense amount of food (all local!) to share with the community. Turnout often surpasses 100 hungry bellies, and the yard in front of Weybridge turns into a giant picnic of happy, nourished people. Thanks to house member Alden, homemade sourdough bread and fresh pressed cider have filled Weybridge this fall alongside a bountiful stock of preserved goods including jams, pickles, sauces, and frozen produce preserved by summer interns and house members Robin, Max, and Nora. In the future, Weybridge residents hope to build a bench and start a garden.

It is such a privilege to have such beautiful, delicious, nourishing food on hand. But most of all, Weybridge is a community that genuinely loves each other and the work they do. Rose, one of the heads of Weybridge house, explains, "At the end of the day, I am always so glad to return home to such a peaceful, sweet space." During house meals, residents write and read out "secret sunshines" (anonymous appreciations for each other and the house). This past week, someone wrote that they want to carry Weybridge house on their back like a snail, a sentiment to which Rose remarked, "I'd say that summarizes the Weybridge vibe."

Bring a bowl to eat delicious food at community meals on Thursdays at 6pm! Weybridge is also currently looking for people who want to come live in the house for this J-Term and Spring semesters! Applications are due November 11. Apply at [go/WeybS23!](https://go/WeybS23)



[Apply Now](#)

Come live in Weybridge house next semester! Applications are due **November 12**.

Reach out to Zev York (zyork@middlebury.edu) or
Rose Robinson (rrobinson@middlebury.edu) with any questions.

Student Feature: Anika Jessup '23



Anika's interest in food studies started when she was eight years old and attended a birthday party that handed out potentially fertilized chicken eggs as a party favor. Desperate to make her eggs hatch, eight-year-old Anika searched for an incubator, eventually making her own out of a heating pad and a bowl of water. Despite her efforts, no eggs hatched, but the experience sparked Anika's interest in livestock at an early age. After five years of convincing her parents, Anika finally got chickens in her backyard and her years of research introduced her to the idea of urban agriculture. Urban agriculture, Anika explains, stands as an interesting place to step into food studies because it exists at the intersection of dense populations, disconnected with the food system, and small scale farms in people's backyards. As she continued to learn more, Anika became interested in how agriculture intersects with nutrition and food insecurity, and the potential for sustainable agriculture initiatives.

Coming into college, Anika knew she wanted to continue to study sustainable agriculture but was unsure of how to approach the topic. She eventually settled on majoring in biology, as biology allows her to investigate sustainable agriculture through a livestock conservation and gene analysis lens. For her senior thesis, Anika is studying the distribution and frequency of genes that dictate grazing behavior in different cattle species. Her research interests stem from an understanding of the impact of breeding on agriculture. Anika explained both crop and livestock breeding have historically impacted what humans decide to produce, how people farm, and who gets access to the food. Anika hopes her thesis will shed light on the genetic components that impact grazing behavior in hopes to understand the potential for sustainable grazing practices.

Anika has taken close to a dozen food studies classes at Middlebury, providing her with a broad understanding of the issues in our food system. Anika explained, "there is no singular thing I can think of that is more universal and controversial," and hopes to apply her biology degree towards sustainable agriculture development.

Alum Feature: Charlie Mitchell '18

After a summer job on a farm, Charlie became interested in food systems. At the time, Middlebury did not have a food studies department, so Charlie took classes in environmental studies, worked at the student-run grocery store, and worked with AACORN on some of their food outreach projects. When Molly Anderson joined the faculty in 2015, Charlie worked with her and Jon Isham to develop an Independent Scholar major focused on food studies. Charlie explained, "food was something I was trying to bring into my academic world," and he did so by combining his interests in food with journalism.

After graduation, Charlie connected with Mark Bittman, a leading food author, and began working as a researcher for one of Bittman's books. Now, Charlie works as a freelance journalist, writing articles appearing in *Sierra*, *Mother Jones*, *Vox*, *The Guardian*, and more under the pen-name Charlie Hope-D'Anieri. The majority of Charlie's articles focus on food policy and rural politics. Charlie explains his work aims to highlight the failures in our current food system to elevate awareness and spark change. Currently, much of his work focuses on the fake meat sector, highlighting the position that investors are framing fake meat as sustainable to benefit short term profits.

To read more about Charlie's work, visit his website at <https://www.charliehopedanieri.me>

Upcoming Classes

Winter 2023

AMST 1020

Asian American Food Studies

In this course we will discuss how food shapes a sense of belonging and identity in Asian America. Going beyond how Asian American cultures are consumed through food items and restaurants, we will focus on how Asian Americans have defined themselves through food. Required readings will engage questions about the production, circulation, and consumption of food. We will critically engage the genres of memoir, recipe books, fiction, historical accounts, cultural criticism, and food criticism as we write pieces in each of these styles. There will also be a limited amount of cooking involved in the course.

FOOD 1044

Vermont's Farms, Food & Future

What crops make sense to grow in Vermont? Where is the best land to farm? Who owns land and capital, and who grows the food? What systems and interests shape the answers to these questions? We will examine Vermont agriculture through lenses of climate change, racial equity, and socioeconomic viability. Through reading, discussion, and meeting with food system practitioners, students will understand intersecting and conflicting perspectives related to agriculture and land use. The final project will be a proposed policy, program or enterprise that would contribute to the agricultural future each student believes in for Vermont.

Spring 2023

ANTH 0345: Anthropology of Food - *examining the relationship between food and culture*

BIOL 0140: Ecology and Evolution - *introduction to ecology and evolutionary biology*

BIOL 0323: Plant Community Ecology - *exploring the structure and dynamics of plant communities*

ECON 0234: Economics of Africa - *examining economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa*

ECON 0466: Environment and Development - *exploring the relationship between environment and development*

ECSC 0355: Water Resources and Hydrogeology - *understanding factors influencing water quality and availability*

ENVS 0112: Natural Science and the Environment - *exploring environmental issues and challenges to sustainability*

ENVS 0215: Contested Grounds - *investigating a varied and contested stories pertaining to the environment*

ENVS 0332: The Perennial Turn - *exploring notions of perennial thinking and actions*

FOOD 0281: Food Power and Justice - *analyzing power and justice in relation to the food system*

GEOG 0208: Land and Livelihoods - From Local to Global - *examining livelihood dynamics in the Global South*

GHLT 0257: Global Health - *introduction to basic issues and initiatives in contemporary global public health*

HIST 0209: History of US Food Politics - *exploring food policies from the top down and bottom up*

HIST 0466: Animals in Middle Eastern History - *examining attitudes towards animals in Middle Eastern history*

INTD 0283: Grassroot Perspectives on Sustainable Development - *exploring "systems thinking"*

ITAL 0299: Literary Feasts: Representations of Food in Modern Narrative - *analyzing food and eating practices*

PGSE 0321: Food and Brazilian Culture - *focusing on food production, consumption, and culture in Brazil*

PSCI 0304: International Political Economy - *examining the politics of global economic relations*

To learn more about the Food Studies program, visit <https://www.middlebury.edu/college/academics/food-studies>