

Food services on trial

by ralph nader

When visiting a college campus these days, I frequently find that students complain about the quality of campus food. The issue may not be as global as university investments in South Africa, but students have a legitimate complaint: because of their limited time and money, most students have to rely heavily on the food service for their meals. And on many campuses the college food service provides you with overcooked vegetables, "Mystery meats," recycled noodle dishes, chemical desserts and caustic coffee. Frequently the quality is poor, the selections are few, and meal times are inconvenient. And most students figure there is nothing they can do but eat now and pay later.

Unless you can afford the time and money to eat out or cook for yourself, or you buy your dinner—heaven forbid—at campus vending machines, you have no alternative, it seems, but to accept what your food service dishes out. Right?

Wrong. It's clear that students should have more to say about what they are served at school. But even if you were to gain this power, would you know enough about food (beyond what tastes good) to choose wisely in terms of nutrition and a balanced diet? Look at what students have done around the country to improve their food service systems.

At Franconia College in New Hampshire, a small student body was able to form a food cooperative where students, staff and faculty share in the buying and preparation of meals and the organization of the food service. Dissatisfaction with the commercial food service was high, so a committee was formed and tasks were divided among volunteers. Professional cooks were retained to help with planning the meals and cooking. Professional staff now meet with students, faculty and staff to plan meals and discuss situations which are disruptive to the cooperative. The kitchen is managed efficiently enough so that it is an economic success as well, and profits are distributed to students at the end of each school year. The experience of the collective at Franconia became, in the view of one member, "a model of how we would like the whole college to function."

At Guilford College in North Carolina, vegetarian students were unable to obtain an adequate diet from the campus food service. In 1971, they asked the food service manager if they could do vegetarian food preparation themselves. Students began by serving a vegetarian main dish at the evening meal for 25 students. By 1974, the vegetarian service grew, and the number of students served jumped to 100. Two cooks were hired, a baker was contracted to make whole wheat rolls and bread, and a

yogurt bar was added.

The organizer of the alternative food service has a few suggestions for students interested in setting up such a program: whenever possible, hire non-students as cooks because of students' time constraints; have students work with cooks and supervisors to learn about nutrition and food politics so they will have more power when negotiating with managers of the food service and administrators; and students recommending the program should be knowledgeable about their goals and have the support of other students. Also, begin with food co-ops already established in your area to supply food items and equipment for your alternative food service.

At University of Maryland, students created their own food cooperative in 1975. In 1974, the student government and its food co-op committee began negotiations for permission to establish a co-op on campus. After numerous plans for the co-op were rejected by the Board of Regents because "it might compete with local business," a small lunch co-op was established offering sandwiches, yogurt, fruits and nuts. The administration threatened to close the co-op, and about 100 students gathered in response to rally in support of the lunch co-op. Finally, the administration agreed to negotiate if the lunch co-op was closed during the period in which a decision would be made.

A well-defined proposal was agreed to by the administration in June 1975 and the food co-op was established. A grant from the student government helped the 100 student volunteers in getting the project started, and the co-op is still growing. A core group of students, with patience and determination, made the Maryland Food Co-op a viable alternative food service for the campus community.

In 1975, students at Lewis and Clark College in Oregon decided that it was worth a small increase (about 10 percent) in food costs to have a menu low in refined sugar, saturated fats, and high in fiber (by substituting whole grain flour for bleached white flour, honey for sugar, and adding more fruits and vegetables to the menu.) The President of the school, John Howard, proposed the program and through it students are educated about nutrition at the same time the nutritional value of the food is upgraded.

At Stanford University in California, students initiated monthly testing panels where they have a chance to compare old and new recipes and products, discuss preferences with the food service staff, and work out compromises in trying to satisfy the greatest number of students and upgrade the nutritional content of the food.

You have a right to complain about the quality of your campus food and you have the resources to do something about it. Students often spend

much time learning about math, history, biology or art, yet so little time studying their own bodies. Since the food you eat can directly affect your health and mental performance, it is clear that any time spent learning about nutrition and working to reform your campus food service is time well spent.

In order to improve your campus food service you must organize the grievances and energies of your fellow students. Survey student opinion, examine how the food service is run, and determine what kinds of changes would be economically feasible. Lobby for your demands, and be persistent. Don't be put off when the administration responds "it can't be done." Find out how students at other schools have organized food co-ops or alternative food services, obtained vending machines providing nutritious foods, or have won the right to have student input into food service decisions.

You can also read a manual entitled *A Student's Guide to Improving the Campus Food Service*. It is available for \$3.50 from the Center for Responsive Law, P.O. Box 19367, Washington, D.C., 20036. This guide contains nutrition background, detailed plans of action and case studies of schools where students have achieved change. There is also a bibliography of resource materials and even recipes that can be used in institutional kitchens for large numbers of people.

Trout fishing tips

by tony gladfelter

Tired of hunting for night crawlers? Salmon eggs cost too much? Give corn a try. Use the large yellow niblet variety. Throw a few kernels in where you're fishing. Then put one or two kernels on a salmon egg hook with just enough weight on your line to keep it bouncing along the bottom. The hit is generally light, so be alert. Clear water have you down?

Do the fish see you before you see them? Try lighter line. Although ultra-light rods and reels are best for this game, most medium weight spinning outfits can accommodate four pound test line. When using line this light, however, be sure to buy quality line—that usually means more expensive. It resists abrasion better than cheap line. In the summer time it is

Fed up with chubs constantly taking your bait? Want to cover ground fast on a new stream? Give spinners a try. even a good idea to go down to two pound test line. It will take more punishment and pull in bigger trout than you might believe. Always remember to fish upstream when the water is low and clear. Trout are generally facing upstream.

Sizes 0 and 1 in any of the popular brands are a good bet. On some days the bucktailed varieties work better. Fish them on casts quartering upstream. Reel them in at medium speed. Spinners are especially effective from the middle of May to the middle of June. Always use swivel snap to prevent line twist when fishing for them.



One of the finest fishing spots in the area--Red Hill Dam--is just below TMI.

photo by bob foster

Jack and Jean's



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Due to the schedule changes at the start of this term the application deadline for our Capitol Campus Kunkle Scholarships has been extended. The new deadline is Monday, May 14, 1979.

Over 16,000 in scholarships will be awarded to Capitol Campus students from the Kunkle Scholarship Fund for the 1979-80 Academic Year. Awards will be based upon need, academic achievement, professional promise and campus and community involvement.

All interested students are encouraged to apply. Applications are available in the admissions Office.