RU Eating Healthy?

Changing the unavailability of healthy food choices at the Rutgers University

Tag Words: Rutgers food policy, Healthy food options, grease truck, Rutgers dining hall, Rutgers food options,

Authors: Jalpa Dhanani, Natalie Cicero with Julie M. Fagan, PhD.

Summary

A healthy diet is one of the important parts in our life. Having healthy diet helps maintaining or improving general health. Healthy diet means consuming minimal amount of all crucial nutrients. Nutrients can be gained from various different foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and nuts, so on. Busy schedules filled with work, school, and study time can leave Rutgers’s students with little time for sit down meals. Fast food is a speedy way to squeeze a meal into a fast-paced lifestyle. However, healthy and nutritious options are hard to find, especially for students living in campus. Since lack of attention is gain on healthy food, Rutgers students have set up a place where they will be educate what can be done for better food choices in campus. There, also will be healthy refreshments served outside SCC hall where students have held a conference on April 19, 2012 between 4:30-7:00 at the Archibald S. Alexander Library. What I mean by healthy food is food that contains low fat calories, low sodium, fruits, etc. There are many ways students can get healthy and cheap food on the campus. Educating students for importance of such a food option is the first part of the goal and Rutgers students are willing to take this challenge. (JD)

Video Link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HngF_keZbVI&list=UUts4_1WyqXMmVDfu9ZffstA&index=20&feature=plcp

RU Eating Healthy?

Since lack of attention is gain on healthy food, we have set up a place where we will be educate what can be done for better food choices in campus. Educating students means let students know what are the side effects of eating unhealthy food at the grease trucks. There will be healthy refreshments served outside SCC hall where students have held a conference on April 19, 2012 between 4:30-7:00 at the Archibald S. Alexander Library. What I mean by healthy food is food that contains low fat calories, low sodium, fruits, etc. There are many ways students can get healthy and cheap food on the campus. One of the best ways is to replace grease trucks with healthy food trucks. Educating students for importance of such a food option is the first part of the goal and Rutgers students are willing to take this challenge.
What does healthy diet means?

A healthy diet is one of the important parts in our life. Having healthy diet helps maintaining or improving general health. Healthy diet means consuming minimal amount of all crucial nutrients. Nutrients can be gained from various different foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and nuts, so on. Healthy food can also be called as natural foods, organic foods, and whole foods. Healthy food contains vitamins, calcium, fiber, and protein. In addition, it contains low in fat and saturated fat as well as limited amounts of sodium and cholesterol. Most fiber receives from healthy diet in whole grain, fruits and vegetables. Simply fiber is a type of carbohydrate that cannot be digested. Fiber can also reduce the various diseases from developing. These diseases are diabetes, heart disease, and constipation.

What is the difference between healthy food and unhealthy food is a hot topic for many college students. It is an important to define, since many college students are consuming over half their diet as highly processed foods. There are two important facts about healthy food that separates from a junk food. First of all, junk foods contain almost no nutrients because the food has been processed, and processed food usually wipes out important nutrients such as, mineral, vitamin, and fiber content. Losses of nutrients occur from excessive amount of heat and exposure to air. Secondly, there is over 4000 different artificial additions are put in junk foods. Artificial additives are artificial sweeteners, colors and preservatives. Usually, additives have poorly tested and can be seen as effects on body in future. For example, NutraSweet was complained for its side effects for number of times. Moreover, many toxins in foods come from either heavy pesticide used by farmer as well as growth hormones and antibiotics fed to animals or simply air pollution. Most of these toxins are hard to get rid of from body system. Organic food gained attention these days because its farmer avoids using such toxins. Finally, healthy foods are those that carry more nutrients and fewer amounts of toxins. Processed and fast foods carries long ingredient list. The healthy foods have no ingredient list.

Fast food world is impacting on youngsters

Let’s get real, every woman would like to have “Barbie doll image”. Magazines, television, and Internet are full of advertisements on how can to lose those pounds. The marketing of fast food has became big now days. For example, McDonald’s pay $1.2 billion on advertisements per year. An average person watches around 10,000 food advertisements per year on television and only 2% of 10,000 are for healthy food such as fruits, vegetables, etc. Most of advertise are on fast foods; McDonald’s, Burger King, Wendy’s, etc. Having delicious fast food around cannot be control for not to be eaten. The beautiful picture of big and delicious sandwiches on McDonald’s poster gets hard to resist. In this case, one would mostly likely to have the sandwich with large fries and coke, which of course, it’s cheaper because it’s a meal.

Chronic health risks due to unhealthy diet
Most of the disease comes from what we eat regularly. It is certainly important for lowering numerous chronic health risks, such as obesity, diabetes and cancer. Fast food is a major issue for people these days. People want convince when it comes to food and they’re been lazy part of their lives being affected on their physique and personal health. The majority fast food restaurants such as McDonald’s, Burger King, Wendy’s, Taco Bell, etc. contains ridiculous amount of calories and tons of trans fat. All these increases fat storage and place at risk of various different diseases mentioned above. For example, type II diabetes from irregular blood sugar levels, heart attacks from raised cholesterol levels and colon cancer from not being able to process the waste products properly. It also leads to weight gain and obesity. Obesity rates have doubled in past twenty years. When a country changes from a healthy meal to junk and fast food, the obesity rates increases and will continue to increase. Consuming processed food meaning consuming tons of calories because processed foods have low fiber content and high fat content. The only possible solution for this problem is to look back on one’s diet plan and to select a healthier alternative. Improve eating habits by true nutrition rather than counting calories, these will result in positive outcome both a healthier and perfect look.

**Comparison between healthy versus unhealthy restaurants**

Deciding between fast food burgers, Burger King Buck Double and the Steak ‘n Shake Chipotle are the first to click on one’s mind. Based on public surveys, nutrition, taste and portion size plays an important role in terms of choosing between fast food burgers. After comparison between both fast food burgers, the Steak ‘n Shake Chipotle was the winner based on nutrition. They are actually not different from each other in terms of quantity; however, they are very different in terms of nutritious. A major difference between the fast food burgers is total fat. Total fat for Burger King Buck Double is 410 grams, on the other hand, Steak ‘n Shake Chipotle is only 160 grams. Taste is also important factor in choosing fast food burgers. Taste is usually made up of overall flavor, spiciness and meat quality. One factor that goes into evaluating taste is meat quality. Meat quality in Steak n’ Shake Chipotle is better because of the origin of it’s meat. Chipotle gets their meat products as well as the vegetable produces from organic farms. They use meat from an animals raised without the use of any antibiotics or synthetic hormones. Finally, portion size is important as well, where one can eat same size as unhealthy burger with better in quality of the food. Bigger size usually carries bigger calories especially in Burger King Burgers; however, Chipotle carries bigger size, less calories and healthier meals.

**Organic produce in developed countries**

Most of the people don’t really know what goes into their food. Research has shown that an average apple has over 30 pesticides even after it washed. The quality of food has certainly dropped. The research has shown that the level of vitamin C has dropped after World War II. Since we have an option of healthy food choices why not take that advantage. Organic foods are produced without any modern synthetic inputs such as pesticides or chemical fertilizers. It does not contain genetically modified organisms, not processed using irradiation or chemical food additives. Organic produce is strictly regulated industry. Countries such as United States, European Union, Canada and many others require producers to acquire special certification in order to market food as organic.
Organic food can be found many different places such as shop markets, organic farmers, and even in some restaurant like Chipotle. Identifying organic food is easier than someone can imagine. Supermarkets usually have sign above the organic produces especially above the vegetables or fruits. The word “organic” also appear on packages of milk, eggs, or any single item. If foods labeled 100% organic that means it contains only organic ingredients. However, products containing some organic ingredients usually appear in percentage. Similarly, if foods labeled only “organic” must contain at least 95% organic ingredients by law, excluding water and salt.

Rutgers students left with less healthy food options in campus

Busy schedules filled with work, school, and study time can leave Rutgers’s students with little time for sit down meals. Fast food is a speedy way to squeeze a meal into a fast-paced lifestyle. However, healthy and nutritious options are hard to find, especially for students living in campus. As I mentioned above, most fast foods are low in nutrients and high in fat, saturated fat and calories. Based on the experiment done in San Francisco, California, they have found out that cafeteria will lose profit if they stop selling junk foods such as chips, pizza, burger, etc. Rutgers students living in campus do not have any other option then eat in dinning halls because the places where they can find healthy food are far away, so either someone has to take them or take the bus. There are more chances that students will end up eating in dinning hall or restaurants near by Rutgers University, such as Wendy’s, McDonald, or Burger King. The students also have one more option is the Rutgers University’s beloved grease trucks. They are nearly two decades of living large in a campus parking lot. These trucks are known for the “Fat Darrell,” “Fat Cat” and other gut-busting sandwiches. The grease trucks have been feeding Rutgers students since the 1960s, when vendors began parking along College Avenue. They are no way near the University has where students can find healthy and nutrients foods.

Fewer healthy diet options for vegetarian students in Rutgers University

Most of the students especially in New Brunswick campus are vegetarian. Does Rutgers University have a vegetarian and healthy food options their students? From my personal experience, the only option is available for vegetarians are pizza, fries, and salad from dinning halls. Of course, the vending machine, which Rutgers is probably making big money. Since there many students can be found vegetarian why not have healthy veggie options for them. Most of the vegetarian students will go for vending machine because of the less option in dinning halls. These foods are neither healthy nor organic. It is harmful for body from either of these choices. Rutgers University should have at least one day in a week that some colleges called as “Meatless Mondays”, such as Franklin and Marshall College. Where pure vegetarian food to be serve. There is two benefit comes out of this options, such as, vegetarian option for non-meat eater students and people who don’t eat vegetables more often will have chance take different diet. Also, decided a day in a week just for Organic produce that all the dinning will only carry organic food. Another option for Rutgers University for vegetarians is the grease truck. Why not sell same size, same taste, but more healthier with more veggie foods where most vegetarian can enjoy. More vegetarian option means more profit since many New Brunswick students are vegetarian.
Improvements towards Rutgers University on healthy diet plans

Rutgers University has many options to make healthier diet for the students. Improvements in the quality of school meals is one option were the meal meets all nutritional standards. Nutrition standard consist of increase in the amounts of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. If possible an option of Organic produce would be one of the best option Rutgers could have, since Rutgers own Organic Farm. Reduced the amount of sodium and saturated fat and also, set a scale of minimum and maximum number of calories of meals. Almost all the building in Rutgers carries at least one vending machine where students can find junk foods. Getting rid of the vending machine is another option for better health for students. These venues include cookies, crackers, and other high fat baked goods, as well as salty snacks and sport drinks. These types of foods usually lead to obesity and other health problems. As I mentioned before, some colleges depends on food sales to cover the cost of expenses. In this situation, colleges usually offer most demanding and revenue potential foods, rather than most nutrition. However, research has shown that offering healthier foods did not decrease revenue, but in some cases increased. We live in a society were body image is the main concern, especially in youngsters where they are looking for better food where still can have big meal with less calories. If Rutgers’s dinning halls offer healthy or maybe organic food at a same time large meals, it will be more profitable. Finally, getting rid of grease truck on from Rutgers University property. These is one of the most important distribution can Rutgers University can give to students. Students are craving for the “Fat Cat” big sandwiches. Rather than having those meals containing tons of calories, why not offer organic and healthy options for students on the same trucks.

More options for improvement on healthy diet

As it said above, as far as food trucks go Rutgers is famous for them. The Grease Trucks on campus are visited everyday by many students. Thousands of people eat here every year and indulge in their well know “fat sandwiches.” And after the show Man Vs. Food gave the Grease Trucks even more publicity, more and more people flock to these trucks. Although their cheap prices and delicious food keep students and other visiting daily, they are also making them fat. Each Fat sandwich earns its name by providing the customer with almost two thousand calories per sandwich. Unhealthiness wrapped in a bun. And even their vegetarian choices don’t cut down the calories. The few choices that they even have for the many vegetarians that live on campus do not provide a healthy meal. With the limited choices on vegetarian meals and healthy meals in campus centers, dining halls, and food trucks on Rutgers campus, it makes maintaining a healthy diet very difficult. Healthy choices seem to be mostly salads as provided by the campus. Salad is also not a diet and does not incorporate all the food groups. Rutgers is a community. We live here, learn here, and eat here. We as a community should be given more choices to eat healthy, and keep ourselves from gaining 15 pounds our freshman year.

More solutions for better healthy foods in Rutgers campus

In order to do this the school needs to provide us with more choices, healthier choices. There are a few ways to do this. The cafeterias can start providing healthier food choices and the food they buy can be better quality. Another way is to provide more options in the school’s student centers. The school can sell healthier foods instead of Wendy’s and burger king. Fatty foods and lack of
options are causing the students to gain weight and obtain unhealthy diets leading to unhealthy body images and poor health. Another way we can help the students at Rutgers obtain the diet they long for is by providing some organic food. With the organic farm on campus we can at least offer some choices to those worried about the effect of pesticides on their body. Instead of forcing the students to seek else where for the foods they wish Rutgers can sell it in their own venues. This gives the university a chance to also create money while providing the students with healthier choices.

Although these options are beneficial and will obviously work they tend to be a long shot. To change menus and have the school shell out more money for different foods, no matter how healthy, can eventually be denied. The school may just look at that as an inconvenience and simply ignore the idea. Thus to keep their interest we have to apply to both the school’s students as well as the schools wallet. The solution we have found allows the students to receive the nutrition they need, the school to make money, and the food choices at Rutgers to be expanded. The way we see this is a win for every party involved. Better health and a better atmosphere here at this great university that many have called our home.

**Bringing healthy food trucks in the Rutgers campus**

This solution I speak of is to get a new, healthy food truck on campus. While we are not trying to take over the food truck industry and kick the grease trucks out, we are just simply offering the students another option. This truck could set up on other campuses, like cook for example, and it could provide healthy lunch and dinner options. Instead of a 2000 calorie sandwich, they can have wraps with ten times less that amount. Healthier, more vegetarian options and cost effective. In this scenario is seems as if we found a way to make everyone happy. In order to this this we had to see if there were any of these options close to our area. Through research not only have we found countless examples of just this in New York City. These trucks are showing up all around the city. They have created a new trend and this is because the city needs quick food that still provides them with low calorie choices and makes the, feel better at the end of the day. Healthy food trucks are providing city goers and residents with quick, easy, food choices that do not leave its customers hating themselves for eating unhealthy fatty foods. There are healthier foods, vegetarian trucks, organic trucks, ethnic healthy food trucks, and the list goes on and on. The fact of the matter is that the trucks are not just a fad, they work to provide a community with better choices thought the day starting with a simple meal. By providing this in the Rutgers university community we are providing the same service as those in New York. A vegetarian and healthy food truck is just what this campus needs. Those who work out to protect their figure, or those trying to stay on a healthy diet now have better options and a new way to do just that. These trucks will help those who have different life choices when it comes to what they eat, keep true to their values.

**Healthy trucks impact on life choices and religion aspects**

Not only will these trucks provide healthy food but they will also provide food to those whose life choices and religions aspects inhibit them from eating meat. Vegetarians and vegans usually make up a small part of the community. But in this case there are many Muslims who keep true to their religion and do not indulge in meat or any animal product. This is even harder to do when their options are so limited. By providing these trucks we can offer healthy vegetarian
meals that differ from the few choices that they are given on a daily basis. Pasta ad salad does not make a very great diet. By making the students happier you are making the university a happier environment. Vegetarian students are now given delicious foods that help them to keep true to their life choices. Vegetarians are not the only ones who will find these options appealing. Rutgers has many gyms throughout the campuses. Those students who are trying to watch their weight or build themselves up need healthy foods to stay on track. It is easy to get off course and eat the fatty foods that are offered all around campus. But in an effort to keep your body looking good, fit, and possibly better than normal, you need a good diet to go with the hours of losing weight. By placing the trucks by the gyms it provides the students to keep on track more easily. Instead of reaching out for near by fatty food, there will be another choice just as close.

Service project for our community

(JD) Since lack of attention is gain on healthy food, Rutgers students have set up a place where they will be educate what can be done for better food choices in campus. There, also will be healthy refreshments served outside SCC hall where students have held a conference on April 19, 2012 between 4:30-7:00 at the Archibald S. Alexander Library. What I mean by healthy food is food that contains low fat calories, low sodium, fruits, etc. There are many ways students can get healthy and cheap food on the campus. Educating students for importance of such a food option is the first part of the goal and Rutgers students are willing to take this challenge.
Be innovative with affordable and healthy food choices

By: Jalpa Dhanani

It is one of the greatest challenges for Rutgers students to find affordable and healthy food on campus. It can be tough to find vendor who provide both affordable and most important healthy food. Off-campus students still have choice of going outside of campus for variety of food; however, on-campus students are often forced to balance budget and food choices. The key factor is being innovative with ones choices.

First, students should calculate their choices. Dining halls provides wide different varieties of meal options, from healthy to the not so healthy. However, selection of choice isn’t cost free and can bring pretty heavy cost. Rutgers University meal plan run from $735 to $2270 per semester, depending on the selection of the plan and not all the students uses meal plan. It cost $11.50 for a meal at the dining halls. This is not cheap meal.

On-campus students have very limited access to an alternative. There are many pizza places scattered on the College Avenue campus. There are Big Fat sandwiches at the grease trucks that can load up to 2000 calories, enough calories per day for $7. This is sacrificing health to save few dollars. How many healthy restaurants can one find for healthy food? Not many.

Since lack of attention is gain on healthy food, Rutgers students have set up a place where they will be educate what can be done for better food choices in campus. There, also will be healthy refreshments served outside SCC hall where students have held a conference on April 19, 2012 between 4:30-7:00 at the Archibald S. Alexander Library. What I mean by healthy food is food that contains low fat calories, low sodium, fruits, etc. There are many ways students can get healthy and cheap food on the campus. Educating students for importance of such a food option is the first part of the goal and Rutgers students are willing to take this challenge.

In the end, students must be innovative with their choices of food. Since you are most willing to buy food from outside, why not buy it from healthy place. A Big Fat sandwich costs you $7 and gives you tons of calories; why not get healthy low calorie food for same amount of money. As of right now when unhealthy food choices increases, obesity and healthy problem increases. Students much think logically where and to what their money are being spent.
Bring healthy food trucks to campus

By: Natalie Cicero

There has long been a struggle of college life and keeping a healthy diet. In college, students do not have much time between classes to have a sit-down lunch. Many students look for something quick and easy, which leads them to make many unhealthy choices. The University even provides their students with unhealthy choices. In the campus centers, they have Wendy’s and Burger King. How can students resist these places where they can get a lot of food for a small price?

As a student is trying to pay the high cost of a quality education, they have to save in other ways. University meal plans are expensive and students look for cheaper choices. In a school that offers a nutrition degree, they do not offer many healthy choices the students need. With some campus food containing more than 1,000 calories per serving, the University is simply contributing to the obesity problem in this country.

A person’s life choices are also important to consider. At the University, there are many students who are vegetarians and vegans, and yet vegetarian options are limited. When it comes to quick and cheap food, the choices are slimmed down even more. Meals get repetitive and boring, but we have discovered a solution to it all.

As a solution, we have come up with an idea in which everyone can benefit — permanent on-campus food trucks. The New Brunswick campus has four campuses that each have perfect locations for food trucks. The difference between these trucks and the grease trucks is that they will provide healthy vegetarian and vegan options. These types of trucks have been growing more and more popular in the New York area, and we believe they would be a great addition to the school. Not only would they be providing the students with healthier options, they would also be offering them for prices that are reasonable for the college student.

This would help students by offering healthy food they can afford, and also provide the University with a new business option. The trucks would have to pay to use the space provided, just as every venue needs to. The school is getting money, the individual owners of the trucks will make money from the business they will receive, and the students keep their health. This is a win from all angles, and we strongly urge the University to take our advice.

There will be a student-held conference in the Alexander Library on the College Avenue campus on April 19 to promote healthy options as well as other service projects for the community and the University. This conference will be held at 4-5:30 p.m in the Scholarly Communications Center Lecture Hall. Refreshments will be served outside the lecture hall. In addition to the traditional snacks, there will also be healthy choices and vegetarian choices to support the idea of healthier food options on campus.

Natalie Cicero is a School of Biological and Environmental Sciences senior and is majoring in meteorology.