McGill feeding

Where food production and consumption meet

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Sustainability: can a University feed itself?

McGill
- Founded in 1821
- downtown Montreal
- 34,000 students
- 6,000 staff
Residence dining services feed over 2700 students daily
McGill Food and Dining Services’ commitment to sustainability

Purchase local (500 km radius)

– At least 75% in Summer
– At least 50% in Fall
– At least 25% in Spring
Montreal: an island surrounded by farm land
Last remaining farm land on the Island of Montreal
Macdonald Campus: McGill University’s Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
Horticultural Research Centre

- Part of McGill University since 1905
- 15 ha of orchards and vegetable fields
- Teaching & research
Student involvement: education about food production

Most Canadians are at least 3 generations removed from the farm!
## Links with courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th># of students</th>
<th>Links with “McGill feeding McGill” projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Botany PLNT 203</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>Use of high tunnels for introducing students to economically-important plants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plant Pathology PLNT 305</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>Use of high tunnels for teaching plant pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cropping Systems PLNT 300</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>Use of high tunnels as an example of a cropping system</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fruit &amp; Vegetable Crops FMTP 032</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>High tunnels for fall vegetable production: several “hands-on” labs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freshman Seminar AGRI 196</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>High tunnels: introduction to commercial horticulture for Freshmen students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design 1 BREE 490 / Design 2 BREE 491</td>
<td>Fall / Winter</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Students will design and build hydroponic growing systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agri-Food Industry Project AGRI 490</td>
<td>Fall / Winter</td>
<td>variable</td>
<td>Undergraduate student research projects on high tunnels and hydroponics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse Management PLNT 322</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>Hydroponics in greenhouse: several “hands-on” labs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenhouse Crops FMTP 033</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>Hydroponics in greenhouse: several “hands-on” labs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, Fibre and Fuel Elements BREE 520</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Study of hydroponic plant growing systems</td>
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</table>
Composting leaves from Campus: replaces most fertilizers
Funding?

• McGill Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF)
  – All McGill students contribute $0.50/credit to SPF
  – $800,000 fund

• Sales to McGill Food and Dining Services
Challenges: Moving food from Point A to Point B

“only” 32 km!
Other challenges?

• Farming practices must meet a new seasonal demand:
  – Must match the university semesters:
    • September-December
    • January-April
  – Therefore: no point in harvesting fruits and vegetables in July!

• Projects must meet educational requirements
Initiatives for 2011-2012: season extension

High tunnels to extend production season in Fall

Renovate old greenhouse: hydroponics for winter greens
Initiatives for 2011-2012: new crops

Sweet potatoes: good storage vegetable + favourite with students!

Puréed garlic flower scapes: a high value seasoning
New initiatives for 2011-2012

- Certification by LocalFoodPlus
- Eggs
Michael Bleho receives Mac Campus Award of Excellence

2011 Catalyst Awards

A meeting of 2 minds
To learn more...

- Horticultural Research Centre  
  http://www.mcgill.ca/plant/regional/horticulture/
- LocalFoodPlus  http://localfoodplus.ca/
- McGill Food and Dining Services, Social Responsibility  
  http://www.mcgill.ca/foodservices/socialresponsibility/
- McGill Food Systems Project  http://mfsp.wordpress.com/

Thank you!