

Delicata Farrotto with Balsamic Gastrique and Goat Cheese

University of Connecticut

Essay:

The University of Connecticut is a land-grant University located in a rural town in eastern Connecticut called Storrs. With an enrollment of over twenty-eight thousand students, and the Department of Dining Services serving 185,000 meals a week, we pride ourselves on doing everything possible to support sustainability and especially local agriculture. We are now the largest user of Connecticut-grown produce in the state and have begun focusing on purchasing as much from local farmers and businesses as possible. The recipe we are submitting is the Delicata Farrotto with Balsamic Gastrique and Goat Cheese, served at our McMahon Dining Hall on campus.

The Delicata squash we use in the recipe comes from The Farm in Woodbury, Connecticut, which is about sixty miles from campus. The Farm has been in business since 1988 and produces grass-fed beef, maple syrup, and an array of vegetables. Delicata squash has a sweet, nutty flavor reminiscent of sweet potatoes. thefarmwoodbury.com

The Kale is from Baggott Family Farm, East Windsor, CT, located about 22 miles from campus. They specialize in producing a large variety of vegetables. facebook.com/www.baggottfamilyfarms

Honey from UConn Apiaries, Storrs, CT – produced on campus. dining.uconn.edu/apiaries

Onions, garlic, and basil come from our student-run farm on campus called Spring Valley Student Farm. UConn students who are members of the Eco House living and learning community can opt to live on the farm, where they learn about organic farming during their time enrolled at UConn. dining.uconn.edu/spring-valley-farm.

Goat Cheese, Vermont Creamery, Websterville, VT - located just north of Connecticut in the mountains of Vermont, about 200 miles from campus. vermontcreamery.com

When it comes to procuring local ingredients, we have established a strong partnership with our produce distributor (Sardilli-Hartford, CT) and the local farmers. Sardilli Produce Company started as a fruit stand in 1955 and has evolved into a family-run business that supports the local food movement. This relationship has enabled us to give our produce needs to the farmers before the growing season and lock in pricing. Our produce distributor knows our priority is Connecticut-grown produce first and then produce from neighboring states second. sardilliproduce.com

We are proud members of The Working Lands Alliance, which is a coalition that, through cooperation, champions policy and education initiatives to protect farmland and advance agriculture. We are also involved with CT Farmland Trust, which is a relationship between farmers, conservationists, and policymakers, working to protect CT farmland and provide healthy local food to all citizens.

Our marketing department does an amazing job sharing this information with the students and community, by using our Dining website and social media, to promote local farms, and ingredients procured. Student feedback comes from focus groups, comment cards, and a feedback link located on our web page. We are proud of what we have accomplished thus far, but will continue to grow as a community, supporting local agriculture and educating our students. dining.uconn.edu

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