

Short Takes

Dining Insights Fall 2008

Where's the Best Campus Food?

Wheaton College in Illinois has the best college dining service in the U.S., at least according to students responding to *Princeton Review's* 2008 nationwide survey. Runner-up is Bowdoin College, Brunswick, ME. Maine has four of the 20 spots on the list, including Colby College (6); College of the Atlantic (18), and Bates College (19)

“Students want to eat healthy. ‘Healthy’ replaces the words ‘organic’ and ‘sustainable.’ ‘Fresh’ is definitely No. 1 and No. 2 is more vegetables.” - Gary Arthur, chef at Texas A&M University, quoted in *FoodService Director*

“Many college students have grown up with organic foods. As the look for solutions to the economic and environmental problems facing the world, students are among the key drivers changing campus food toward organic products and more sustainable choices.” - David Gagnon, Director, Organic Trade Assn., in a press release

Sandwich restaurant sales are increasing, driven by fresh ingredients, premium meats and ethnic options, especially Mexican, “the new Italian food.” - *Specialty Food News*

When a new product was offered for free by a chain restaurant, sales for the day rose 5% compared to the same day a year earlier. - *Nation's Restaurant News*

Organic foods cost 30% to 50% more than conventional foods, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences reports. - *fastcasual.com*

More and more, chefs at college and corporate dining services “are boosting their spice inventory to recreate authentic dishes from India, southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America [to satisfy an] increasingly diverse and culturally curious population.” - *Restaurants & Institutions*

Seven of the 25 worst-paying jobs in the U.S. are in food service, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Lowest-paying of all: food preparation/server (including fast food), \$7.66 an hour. Best of the worst-paying: short-order cook, \$8.99. - *careerbuilders.com*

Sixty-eight pct. of baby boomers (now 44 to 64 years old) say they try to eat healthier food and 37% dismiss fast food as junk as part of a heightened interest in proactively staying healthy. - *Food Institute Report*

One-quarter of fish tested in New York City restaurants was a cheaper species than the menu claimed, according to DNA tests. The most mislabeled fish was red snapper. - *walletpop.com/blog*

Last year, 328 food products were introduced with environment-friendly and sustainability claims. In the prior five years, only five were introduced. - *Minton's Global New Products Database*