

Our 2014-2015 Campus Success Story

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Of course, when you take time to reflect on the year as a whole, most of us tend to look back at our challenges more than our success stories. This year, we are extremely proud of our outdoor Farmers' Market and Food Festival initiative, which was a huge success for Hospitality Services at Western. What started out as a relatively small market a few years ago, has blossomed into an event that has created quite a buzz in our community.

Hospitality Services has received positive feedback and accolades about the Farmers' Market & Food Festival from staff, students and faculty. As a result of our team's commitment to this initiative, we've recently been recognized with the "Western's Green Award." The purpose of the award is to help raise awareness of sustainability at Western University through the acknowledgement of community members (student, faculty and staff) who have made positive contributions. We are very proud and excited to be recognized with such a positive award.

Hospitality Services at Western is committed to taking responsibility and taking action when it comes to being more sustainable. Within the Western community, we know that making small changes to what we do, has a larger impact on our community for generations to come. Our Sustainability Mission Statement is **"Hospitality Services is committed to creating, producing and enhancing a sustainable culture for the life legacy of the Western community."** Providing a farmers' market on campus makes perfect sense to us. The focus is to bring local farmers to campus to provide an opportunity for students, faculty and staff to

engage with them in a supportive environment. By creating relationships with the farmers, students and the rest of our community learn firsthand what it takes to provide such great produce locally.

There are specific criteria and guidelines in place for vendors to be able to participate in the Western Farmers' Market. Our goal is for our community to gain firsthand knowledge of the produce they are buying. All vendors must be directly involved in the growing and production of the product offered, and must be local! Hospitality Services has committed to ensuring that all of our vendors are from the surrounding community and are within 100 miles of our campus.

Western's Farmers' Market has hosted a wide variety of vendors and farmers offering fresh produce, herbs and berries; jams and jellies; kettle corn; fresh flowers; artisan breads and even honey from our very own apiary at Windermere Manor. During the first week of September, we expanded the traditional Tuesday market day and turned it into a "Food Festival" by adding local food trucks, artists, musicians and other small business operators, and it ran for four days during Orientation Week. What a huge success! The Farmers' Market has become a destination on campus where staff and students meet to buy their weekly produce, have lunch and take a short break from the pressures of campus life.

We're excited to see what the next market season brings.