



Colby College

Selected Campus Greening Projects

www.colby.edu/green/

www.colby.edu/eag/

Green Graduation

The College will finish the 2007-08 academic year with our first-ever Green Graduation. Alaina Clark '08 working with Professor Russ Cole, developed the idea as part of Alaina's honor thesis. Events scheduled and supported by the Office of Special Programs, Physical Plant, and Dining Services will incorporate current and new green practices including minimizing the use of plastics, reducing electricity use, increasing composting, serving sustainable foods, using 100 percent recycled products, and reducing paper use, among other initiatives. Organizers also hope that receptions and events organized by departments will hew to these principles with assistance from departments mentioned above. A key feature of Green Graduation is the Green Team, a group of Colby students and employees who will be staffing information tables and assisting visitors with composting and other greening efforts at events.

Award Winning Energy Practices

A program run by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency named Colby conference champion for use of green electricity. Beyond topping other NESCAC schools, Colby has the highest percentage use of green electricity of any college or university in the national competition. All of Colby's purchased electricity comes from renewable sources, the College has a co-generation turbine on campus, and it buys Renewable Energy Credits as well.

LEED Certification

Three building projects on campus were given LEED certification. The Schair Swenson Watson Alumni Center awarded LEED Silver, the Diamond Building was LEED certified, and the Pulver Pavilion Renovation was also LEED certified.

Geothermal Heat

Geothermal is used in the LEED Silver Building, the Schair Swenson Watson Alumni Center. Geothermal works for both heating and cooling due to the water temperature at 1,500 feet remains consistently in the mid to upper 50s. When that water is pumped up into the building in the summer it is relatively cool compared to ambient air temperatures and it helps cool the building; in winter it's relatively warm and heats the building as its warmth is transferred to liquid in the building's heating and cooling systems.

American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment

President Adams, along with over 500 college presidents has signed the commitment pledge to exercise leadership by modeling ways to integrate sustainability into campus operations, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and provide students with the knowledge they need to work toward climate neutrality. Colby has already met the Governor's Carbon Challenge, which stipulated that we should, by 2010, reduce our emissions from 1990 levels by 9 percent. Two years before the deadline, Colby has reduced those emissions by 13 percent. For more information on the commitment: <http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/>.

Water Conservation

Excess water from the geothermal wells is used in and around the Alumni Center for toilets and irrigation. Rain gauges have been installed to control sprinkler use only

when necessary. Reduced-flow showerheads and toilets have been installed in dorms. Composting continues to save thousands of gallons every year after removing the garbage disposals.

Dialogue Housing

The Green House, established in 2005, serves as a living space where students interested in or curious about environmental issues can explore and discuss classroom theories in another light. The house serves as a model to initiate and strengthen campus wide greening efforts both through setting an example, and through interactive activities for the rest of campus. ES Professor David Firmage has been the faculty advisor for the Green House since its inception.

Environmental Activism Course

In the fall semester 2007, ES Professor Gail Carlson taught a new course, *Environmental Activism* to first year students. This course is an introduction to the history, theory, and practice of environmental activism, incorporating both global and local perspectives. The students in this course have gone on to take leadership roles in campus greening initiatives as well as national movements such as Powershift 2007 and Focus the Nation.

Sustainable Catering Menu

In response to an increased demand for sustainable options for catered events, Dining Services has a new menu featuring many local and organic items. The staff has increased composting at catered meals, and serving water in pitchers rather than plastic bottles. When using paper plates, biodegradable Chinet has replaced the black plastic plates previously used.

Trayless Dining

Removing the trays in the Dana dining hall has shown to dramatically reduce the amount of food wasted. In a pilot project, trays were removed each Thursday from Dana. Compost was measured and compared to days when trays were available. The food waste decreased by 66% on Trayless Thursdays. Environmental Coalition students launched an education program to inform students about the connection between trays and food waste. The College is now considering permanently removing trays.

Sustainable Seafood: “The Fish List” is a nationally recognized guideline for making eco-friendly and sustainable seafood purchasing choices. In response to concerns about overfishing and destructive fishing practices, Colby has established a policy that adheres to this List in the dining services board meal plan.

Local Food: Buying locally can make a dramatic impact on the environment and our local economy. Less transportation distance reduces carbon dioxide emissions as well as packaging being used. It keeps dollars in our local economy and the food tastes fresher. Colby works with over 100 local growers, processors, and manufacturers to bring students fresh produce and goods from the State of Maine. Colby and North Center, our major food supplier, practice a “Maine First” policy and use out of state goods only when native is not available. This emphasis on buying locally has led to 20% of Colby’s total Dining Services budget going to local food and supplies.

Organic Food: Organic food is food raised or grown without the use of pesticides, chemicals, hormones, or antibiotics. All three dining halls consistently serve a selection of organic foods. The Foss dining hall is particularly notable because it specializes in vegan and vegetarian fare with over 29 organic items available on the menu.

A Green Cup of Coffee: All paper cups in the dining halls have been replaced by reusable mugs. These mugs are used by students and returned at key locations on campus, or

back in the dining halls. This decision has removed 154,000 cups/year from the waste stream.

Composting: Since 2002, Colby has been separating food waste from the general waste stream as a first step in the process of composting. Physical Plant Department and Dining Services have developed a composting system that is efficient and effective. Each year over 50 tons of food waste is collected and delivered to the Hawk Ridge Compost Facility in Unity Maine. They use a unique tunnel composting system that produces compost for garden centers, nurseries, and landscapers throughout New England. As a practice of “closing the loop”, Colby has used the compost on the campus grounds.

Biodiesel

Colby employee Cindy Wells and her husband, Butch approached dining services to pick up their used fryolator oil from the kitchen to use to power their farm equipment. This win-win situation has led to 21,000 lbs of grease to be recycled and used as biodiesel annually.

RecycleMania

RecycleMania is a competition among college and university recycling programs in the United States that provides the campus community with a fun, proactive activity in waste reduction. Over a 10-week period, campuses compete in different contests to see which institution can collect the largest amount of recyclables per capita, the largest amount of total recyclables, the least amount of trash per capita, or have the highest recycling rate. In 2008, Colby came in 34th out of the 180 schools competing in the per capita category. The ES Program worked with the hall staff to place recycling bins in dorm rooms in an effort to increase dorm recycling.