Sac State will celebrate Food Day

A cornucopia of events will be held at Sacramento State on Monday, Oct. 24, as part of Food Day, a nationwide mobilization that encourages the development of healthy, affordable food produced in a sustainable, humane way as a means to improve health, the environment and America’s food system.

Food Day is sponsored by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a nonprofit watchdog group, with the aim of making it an annual observance similar to Earth Day.

Groups around the nation will observe the day with activities centered around the production, distribution and consumption of food. Goals include supporting sustainable farming, reducing diet-related maladies such as diabetes and stroke, and curbing junk-food marketing to children.

Professors Lynn Hanna and Kristin Kiesel are organizing Sacramento State’s observance, which will include cooking demonstrations, special screenings of films about food and its production, a panel discussion and educational outreach.

One of the major issues is the disparity between the diets of those on opposite ends of the spectrum. “We have one in three children who are overweight, but we also have one in five children living in households that face food insecurity,” says Kiesel.

Another of the goals, sustainable farming, also has multiple facets. If it takes the equivalent of 35 calories of fossil fuel to produce a single calorie of meat in raising livestock, that’s not a sustainable practice, Hanna says. But the issue also involves the livelihood of those who grow the food. “Are they living a lifestyle that is sustainable, that is humane to them, that provides them with social justice, or is it abusive in some way?”
Sac State’s Food Day begins at 9 a.m. Oct. 24 with a slate of movies running until 5 p.m. in Library Room 1522. Films include Food Inc., an overview of the problems in America’s food distribution system; and Supersize Me, a satire on the fast food industry.

At 9:30 a.m., Shauna Schultz, The WELL’s registered dietitian, will offer interactive and fun food experiences for preschoolers from the Sacramento State Children’s Center. Those will take place in The Cove, The WELL’s demonstration kitchen. “We welcome all adults and the young at heart to learn about the Food Day children’s curriculum,” Schultz says. The Cove will also offer delicious treats for students, faculty and staff in the afternoon.

The University Center Restaurant will feature a special lunch featuring local and organic items beginning at 11 a.m. Togo’s special that day will be a hummus wrap with organic fruit, and other food vendors are considering specials as well.

Keynote addresses by a panel of guest speakers run 1-3 p.m. in the University Union’s Forest Suite. Speakers include Craig McNamara, president of the California State Board for Food and Agriculture; and Judith Redmond, owner of Full Belly Farm.

More information and a complete schedule are available at www.foodday.org/participate/events/search/38.579065/-121.491014. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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