

EQ leads movement against food waste

By David Sterrett
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Food that students put on their trays but do not eat is a big problem on campus. In November, when members of the Environmental Quality Club weighed this type of waste in Proctor it averaged out to .44 pounds per person! The current trend seems to be that many students are putting way too much food on their trays. Unfortunately, a lot of it never gets touched.

To combat this problem, EQ is

making the reduction of food waste on campus one of its major projects for the spring. We are trying to raise awareness about this issue by weighing food waste in front of the diners at Proctor during selected dinners. We weigh meat in a separate bin from the rest of

the food, so we can establish a total estimate of the amount of meat wasted as well.

Wasting food has a direct effect on the day-to-day life of every college student here.

The food that is wasted is money wasted out of Dining Services' budget, money that could otherwise be spent on improving the meals here. As Russell Hulst, the board plan manager at Proctor

said, "We can improve the quality of food on campus if we cut down on food waste."

This type of waste also affects our lives in ways that are less visible to us. For example, the food we eat goes through many stages of production before it ends up on the

serving line at Proctor. Much of this production process negatively impacts the environment.

Growing crops can also be extremely destructive to our world. First of all, crops need a lot of water to grow. In many cases that water is drawn from rivers — a process which ends up killing the ecosystems of these rivers. Then, to transport the water to a farm re-

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quires a great deal of energy consumption. The energy that is used for this procedure is usually a non-renewable resource such as coal or oil.

Further adding to the harmful elements of growing crops is the fact that at many farms around the country crops are sprayed with numerous pesticides which seep into groundwater and poison it for humans and all other animals.

The next stage of production is delivering these crops to various stores. When they are shipped to their appropriate locations, crops are usually put in an abundance of unnecessary packaging, which eventually finds its way into a landfill. By the end of the growth and transportation process of

these crops, it becomes evident that we have depleted a large amount of non-renewable resources, as well as added to pollution.

After all of the environmental destruction it has caused to grow and ship food to our school — not to mention the energy it takes for the Proctor staff to prepare it — we end up wasting it. In essence, we have reduced precious resources and polluted our world for nothing.

There are still other reasons for reducing our food waste. Meat composes a large part of the food wasted on campus.

We are so removed from the process by which our meat comes to us, that we often forget we are eating what was once an animal.

These animals sacrifice their lives so we can eat meat. If we waste it, then those animals died for nothing.

Perhaps the most important reason for not wasting food is that many people do not have any food to eat; the food we waste would keep them alive.

I know the food at the dining halls is not as good as a home-cooked meal, but, if we go to eat with the idea of trying to waste as little food as possible, we all can make a big difference.

If you would like to find out more about the Weigh Your Waste project, write or call me or come to EQ meetings on Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. on the 3rd floor of Adirondack House. All are welcome!