

## Local “Focus On Five” at Saint Francis

Saint Francis University in Loretto, Pa. is doing a lot to make sure that its dining is sustainable. One of the big initiatives that the school implements is the “Focus on Five” program. “It is a spin-off of our farm source program,” said Michael Miduri, general manager of Dining Services at the university with Parkhurst Dining Services, the campus foodservice provider. “Focus on Five is really picking five items, what they are, who they are from and where they are from, as opposed to an umbrella of farm source.”

Each day, dining services focuses on five items that it considers local — 100-150 miles from campus. “Sometimes it may be something that we produce here like homemade pizza dough,” he said. “We make all of our dough from scratch. Unfortunately, we are not milling the flour or anything like that, but we are making the dough from scratch. We make our cookies from scratch. One of the five might be milk — I am not milking the cow, but we are getting our milk from about half-an-hour from us.”

The program is part of a Parkhurst corporate initiative. “The initiative was developed from that farm source program to break it down for our guests and our staff. The umbrella of farm source is so big and for our guests and our staff, we weren’t getting anything from it. Now, my staff can tell you every day — they may not know exactly who the farmer is, but they know that it is local — it is either made here, it came from Blue Goose Farms, it came from Gallagher’s Dairy. It is definitely a lot easier to remember those five things.”

Each of the five items features signage to indicate that it is local. “If it is an apple, we’ll stick a little sign,” said Miduri. “This apple from whatever farm. If we are doing fresh-cut potato chips at the deli, we’ll say potatoes from Blue Goose Farms.”

He said that many times there are more than five local items on the menu, but they keep it fresh by changing the featured items daily. “Some things can get a little repetitive because I use the same purveyor for milk. I try not to keep that out all the time or it just goes away, it gets lost. They see it every day. What we’ll do is switch it up — I could do pizza dough every day, but if I mentioned everything that we did every day, I would have 40 things, which would just be too much. When we have a challenge in finding something fifth in the middle of January, then it is our pizza dough or our cookies.”

In addition to the items purchased from local farms, they make use of the school’s greenhouse garden. “Some of the things that grow like wildfire, like mint, we use those for every possible dessert that we can,” said Miduri. “For smaller specialty functions, especially those the president or the Board of Trustees is involved in, we have already done complete salads for them.”



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