



### **UAlbany Makes the Farm-to-Table Connection**

In an effort to meet the University's local food goals, the University Auxiliary Services at Albany (UAS) has strategically involved many stakeholders in the process. "We continuously work to nurture the collaboration between faculty, staff, and especially the students in our sustainability efforts," said Stephen Pearse, UAS' executive director. "One way we do this is by hosting farm trips that make agricultural, environmental and nutritional concepts come to life.

And "come to life" they did for six students and five faculty and staff members in March, as the classroom transformed from a lecture hall to two beef farms (Ashley Acres and Keith Farms) and a processing facility (Purdy & Sons) in upstate New York – approximately two and a half hours southwest of the University.

The main intention of the day was to explore how 100% of the grass fed beef served in the



UAlbany resident dining rooms is raised and processed.

"A couple of students on the tour are from the city (New York) and had never even seen a live cow before," stated the University's Director of Environmental Sustainability Mary Ellen Mallia, PhD. "So this trip was an ideal way for the students to not only embrace our local food efforts on campus, but to also understand and connect with where



their food comes from."

A trip to the processing facility, Purdy & Sons, and then lunch at a restaurant (the Copper Turret, which is owned and operated by SUNY Morrisville) that exclusively serves local meats and many other local products, ended the day, making the vital connection between the social, ecological, and economic importance of farm to table initiatives.

Currently, UAlbany sources 22% of its animal products locally, and received the GOLD rating from the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS) in February 2016.

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