

SLICE OF LIFE

# BrainFeeders delivers locally grown fruits and vegetables to students



Katherine Sotelo | The Daily Orange

The idea behind BrainFeeders came last fall when the co-founders took the class FST 403: "The Human Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition."

By [Katherine Sotelo](#) ASST. FEATURE EDITOR

The colors are bright, natural. A dark green pepper, a muted beige, ridged cantaloupe, a squash, some broccoli and lettuce — there's always a lettuce.

They're tucked in a white cardboard box, big enough to hold this season's best, but small enough to carry to your kitchen table. "Farm Fresh" is printed on the outside in green. A cluster of locally grown fruits and vegetables, straight from the farm, now available for the first time at Syracuse University.

A student organization new to campus this year, BrainFeeders has a goal: change the quality of food on the SU campus. Their introductory event, a partnership with a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm in Madison, New York, an hour southeast of Syracuse, sets out to bring farm-fresh, locally grown produce to SU students living in dorms, apartments or in the off-campus neighborhoods.

The idea behind BrainFeeders came last fall, when co-founders Lindsay De May and Imelda Rodriguez took the class FST 403: "The Human Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition." They learned how food should be considered a human right and how the quality of food isn't enforced in universities, De May said.

The women looked at each other and knew. They wanted to change the conventions of food on campus.

By December of last year, their club proposal was drafted. By January, submitted and approved during Spring Break.

"I was really hesitant that it (the proposal) wouldn't be approved because we thought Food Services would just say no," De May said. "Mainly because we're trying to bring in natural, local food to the dining halls: that's the big-picture goal; future goal. We really want to change the culture of food on campus."

Now, with a board and general body members, the group's partnership with Common Thread Community Farm is offered to students in the Farm to Fork course, offered through Falk College, but not to the entire student body. After seeing the program implemented in class and at Tulane University, BrainFeeders realized this dispensary of natural foods can happen on a grander scale.

"I participated in my class, but since it's (CSA) not offered outside, we were like, 'Other people should have this opportunity, too,'" Rodriguez said.

For the first time at SU, students and faculty were able to order a weekly box of vegetables, to either be picked up on campus or delivered to a home. The boxes come in two sizes: a small box with four to five vegetables and a large box with eight to ten.

Pick up is scheduled from 3 – 5 p.m. every Thursday in the covered portal of Huntington Beard Crouse Hall. Although students can no longer sign up for the weekly pick-up this semester, BrainFeeders is offering a weekly raffle at the pick up table to win a large box of veggies for \$1.

This is still a new endeavor; the organization's board members are hoping to release recipes for the boxes in the future.

“A lot of the time people always tell me ‘Oh, I want to cook. I want to know how to make things,’” Rodriguez said. “I think it’s a good idea for us to do the recipes when people get the box. A lot of the time people don’t know how to cook with certain vegetables and sometimes you get some crazy vegetables.”

BrainFeeders is also bringing another way for students to get fresh fruits and vegetables. The organization is offering a free bus service to the CNY Regional Market, a farmers market located across the highway from Destiny USA and next to the Regional Transportation Center every Saturday until Oct. 10. Pickups will begin at 10 a.m. at Schine Student Center and 10:10 a.m. at Goldstein Student Center and will make four rounds hourly.

“We have a lot to do, but there’s only so much we can do right now,” De May said. “A lot of students here don’t really know what farms are like or where their food comes from. They think farms are big cornfields in Iowa. We want to bring awareness to this and let people know more about good foods. We’ll see how we get there.”

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# BrainFeeders Student Group Brings CSA, Fresh Produce to Campus this Fall

BrainFeeders, a student organization in Falk College's Food Studies program, is working to establish long-lasting food access and justice programs throughout the SU/ESF campus. The group is partnering with Common Threads CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) to have SU's first-ever CSA drop off location on campus starting in August.

For nine weeks this fall, there will be a CSA pick-up location at HBC on Thursdays. One can either receive 8-10 types of vegetables for a total of \$265 (approximately \$29/week) or 4-5 vegetables for a total of \$135 (approximately \$15/week). If you would like, for an extra \$5 per week the veggies can be delivered to your door. Check out this video to learn more about the program: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-nNO3r7gT0&feature=youtu.be>. To join the group by supporting local agriculture while also having an array of organic produce, please email [BrainFeeders15@gmail.com](mailto:BrainFeeders15@gmail.com) by Tuesday, Aug. 25.

Brainfeeders is the first academically recognized Food Studies Club in the country and it is housed in Falk College's Food Studies program. The student group acts as a resource for all students who have questions regarding where food on campus comes from and how it is produced.

URL: <http://falk.syr.edu>

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