Farm to Campus

VFTH

3/19/15

It’s being called a game changer for the Kentucky Proud program.

The Farm to Campus initiative unveiled this week at WKU will provide a huge boost to local farmers as Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

For years, the cafeteria in the Downing Student Union has been called “Fresh Food Company” and now that name has even more meaning.

James Comer \ KY Agriculture Commissioner

Steve Hoyng \ Resident District Mgr., Aramark

Lindsay Ratliff \ WKU Agriculture Ambassador

“We need a plan to help our small family farmers and that’s what the farm to campus initiative is all about.”

Matching up local vendors with a big market like WKU not only gets the small farmers foot in the door, it gets better food in students stomachs.

“They notice right away when it’s a fresh product because it tastes better.”

WKU is the tenth university in the state to announce a Farm to Campus initiative through the Kentucky Proud Program.

It was also a proud moment for Agriculture Commissioner James Comer.

“Being an agriculture major at Western Kentucky University and announcing this Farm to campus program with Western to be able to help farmers have new markets for their products it’s really a special day for me.”

From fruits and vegetables to milk and ice cream, it was a natural partnership to match up local farmers with WKU’s Dining Services.

“For me I come from farming country so it’s very exciting. We believe it’s the right thing to do. Farmers are the bread basket of America.”

WKU Agriculture student Lindsay Ratliff says this is important to her generation.

“Being able to be around college students who now are going to know where their food comes from and supporting the Kentucky proud initiative and Kentucky proud products which is so near and dear to my heart, it means a lot that my university is taking steps to make sure farmers are being recognized. “

State agriculture officials say Warren County produced more than $114 million worth of agricultural products in 2012, ranking ninth in the state.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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