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Chloe LeMarchand '09 lends a hand in the Sixth Annual Corn Shuck Off on Wriston.

Locally grown food has its day, yesterday

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Corn shucking? A "Fall Dinner Special" of locally grown food? The Community Harvest program is the driving force behind these events yesterday, which aimed to promote sustainable food initiatives.

The celebratory day kicked off with the annual corn shucking competition held on Wriston Quadrangle. "Many students were involved in helping us get 2,000 ears of corn shucked in only an hour and a half," Gina Guiducci, administrative dietitian, wrote in an e-mail to The Herald. "We are also composting the husks," she added.

For supper, students flooded Sharpe Refectory to enjoy a locally grown dinner. The meal was complete with several entree options, soup and bread tables, a nacho and salsa bar and milkshake and dessert tables. The Verney-Woolley Dining Hall had a similar menu, Guiducci added.

"Vegan Vegetable Stew, Stuffed Acorn Squash, Stuffed Chicken, Fresh Baked Scrod and lots and lots of vegetables" were just some of the options available. "They were selected because the major ingredient in each of these menu items was locally produced," Guiducci wrote.

Students appeared to enjoy the meal, and the Ratty was crowded until 7:30 p.m. Adam Pliskin '12 said, "The meal was delicious! There was stuffed chicken and pumpkin ravioli. It really hit the spot, and the pie - oh, the pie!"

"I respect the gesture they were trying to make in supporting local farms," Kate Carbone '12 said.

Louisa Paine '12 agreed. "I liked the great effort they made to bring in new and fresh food," she said.

One of the dinner's main goals was to bring more attention to the Community Harvest program. "Since the growing and harvesting season is nearly over for the state of Rhode Island," Guiducci wrote, this event was "sort of our last hoorah before we head into 'After the Harvest' type programs."

Brown Dining Services' Community Harvest program began in Fall 2002 and, in 2005, partnered with the student-run Sustainable Food Initiative to provide more nutritious, locally grown food and increase

environmental and local agricultural awareness.

The Community Harvest program is responsible for the Wriston farmers market; fair-trade coffee, tea and chocolate; and biodegradable to-go containers. It also hosts tours of local farms and sponsors food drives as part of its "After the Harvest" program, according to its Web site.

Yesterday also marked the initiation of the V-Dub's trayless dining policy. The transition seems to have gone smoothly.

"I think it worked really well, and I think it's great Brown is trying to be environmentally friendly," Sophie Kainen '12 said about the new no-tray system.

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