

26 Spearfish Local, a BHSU sustainability initiative, continues to grow

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A Black Hills State University sustainability project, Spearfish Local, helps local farmers and producers promote healthy, local food through community awareness. Not only does the project encourage the economy's growth but it also invites more farmers to grow fresh vegetables in South Dakota.

Spearfish Local is a project created to inform the community about where their food comes from and provide supporter for the farmers. Businesses that participate are given free advertisement on the project's website,

<http://www.BHSU.edu/spearfishlocal>, and a sticker to put on their window to help inform consumers where to find local food.

The Spearfish Local Advisory Council met last month on the BHSU campus to discuss and brainstorm ideas. The mayor, farmers, food analysts, students and professors met and talked about community involvement, participation, new events and how Spearfish Local can grow and involve more businesses. Already 14 local restaurants, grocery stores, and brewers are involved with the project.

Spearfish Mayor Dana Boke shared her excitement about bringing pioneer values back to the area by promoting neighbors, local farmers and the value of hard work.

The Spearfish Local project focuses on approaching and affecting local farmers. Dr. Rachel Headley, STEM liaison at BHSU and Spearfish Local co-manager talked about the expansion.

"We hope the project will encourage more local farmers, because right now we have some producers in the area, but they sell all the food that they make. We need more producers or for the local producers to expand. I really hope this just encourages awareness and a growth of the local food economy," said Headley.

Headley and her family like to eat fresh and healthy food no matter where they go - at Spearfish restaurants or travelling in other cities and states.

"For me, the Spearfish Local brand enables consumers, whether you are local or traveling through, the ability to know where those places are," said Headley.

Headley mentioned that Spearfish Local's organizers are planning to get in touch with Visit Spearfish and talk about promoting local food to tourists. It would help newcomers easily locate places where they can eat fresh and local food.

Farmer Trish Jenkins from Cycle Farm said local farmers contribute to Spearfish's vitality.

"Everybody eats," said Jenkins. "Eating local is a wonderful, growing movement. It's very helpful for Spearfish."

For more information the program, contact Katie Greer, sustainability coordinator at BHSU, at 605-642-6298 or Katherine.Greer@BHSU.edu



Black Hills State University students work in the campus garden. BHSU and community members are working together to promote Spearfish Local, which helps businesses and consumers support local food growth.

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