



11-21-2014

Fearless Friday: Sean Pethybridge

Christina L. Bassler
Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge>

 Part of the [Agriculture Commons](#), [Environmental Sciences Commons](#), [Food Science Commons](#), and the [Plant Sciences Commons](#)

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

Bassler, Christina L., "Fearless Friday: Sean Pethybridge" (2014). *SURGE*. 253.
<https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/253>

This is the author's version of the work. This publication appears in Gettysburg College's institutional repository by permission of the copyright owner for personal use, not for redistribution. Cupola permanent link: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/253>

This open access blog post is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.

Fearless Friday: Sean Pethybridge

Abstract

Talking with Sean Pethybridge '15, one could easily assume his interest in agriculture and food justice developed at a very young age. Sean confesses that he had very limited knowledge prior to attending Gettysburg. “My grandpa had a garden and the most experience I had with that was picking green beans during the summer time when I was younger,” he jokes. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, sustainable agriculture, food justice, environmental issues, Painted Turtle Farm

Disciplines

Agriculture | Environmental Sciences | Food Science | Plant Sciences

Comments

Surge is a student blog at [Gettysburg College](#) where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at surgegettysburg.wordpress.com Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that –isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

SURGE

[VERB] : to move suddenly or powerfully forward or upward

FEARLESS FRIDAY: SEAN PETHYBRIDGE

November 21, 2014



Talking with Sean Pethybridge '15, one could easily assume his interest in agriculture and food justice developed at a very young age. Sean confesses that he had very limited knowledge prior to attending Gettysburg. "My grandpa had a garden and the most experience I had with that was picking green beans during the summer time when I was younger," he jokes.

Sean does not remember when he developed his present interests. He had shown some interest in vegetarianism and environmental issues during his time in high school, and knew he would love to learn more about issues relating to food and sustainable agriculture. During his senior year of high school, he learned about Painted Turtle Farm and campus agriculture initiatives at Gettysburg. He thought this was an interesting program and something he definitely wanted to get involved with while at Gettysburg.

During Sean's visit to Gettysburg for Get Acquainted Day, Sean discussed his interests with Sarah Tower a Senior working at the farm and founding member of Farmhouse.

He joined Painted Turtle Farm (PTF) his first year and has been involved ever since. At the end of his first year, he was selected to stay the summer to work at the farm.

Sean describes PTF as a "laboratory and community hub for sustainable agriculture and food justice." He explains that the farm seeks to address issues of food justice by teaching people how to grow food and providing local food sources for families, many of who often lack access to healthy food options. Sean

has learned a lot from his work with the farm, both from his farming mentors and from involved community members.

As a member of Farmhouse since his sophomore year, Sean has been able to get more involved in sustainable agriculture initiatives, working with the community and other students, and increasing his knowledge about issues related to food justice. He explains that living in Farmhouse has provided him more opportunities to pursue his interest and expand on his knowledge. Through Farmhouse's Community Supported Agriculture share program, Sean was able to volunteer with a local farm. From this partnership, Sean learned about small-scale organic farming. In addition, the farm provides weekly share of vegetables to farmhouse.

Sean has spent most of his summer working in Gettysburg throughout his time here. The summer after his sophomore year, Sean worked at the center for career development and attended PTF workshops, and volunteered whenever he could. He explains that working there that summer really helped him gain a clearer understanding of food issues.

"I had known that food wasn't equally accessible to everyone, but I hadn't witnessed direct interventions beyond the food bank and soup kitchen models."

He credits his work with PTF with providing him this first hand experience and enabling him to interact with communities affected by unequal access to food.

In addition to his work with food and agriculture, Sean also expresses great interest in raising awareness about environmental issues. He does his best to compost what he can, and be mindful of his impacts on the environment and other people. "Its not just about food or the environment, but creating a healthy community for all members." At Farmhouse, he works with his house members to sponsor events that raise awareness about these issues. They recently co-sponsored an event with a farmer from Honduras who discussed the agricultural methods and the financial models they use in their farming. At farmhouse, they use food to access and involve the community to address the larger issues of food inequality.

Sean also carried his commitment to sustainable agriculture overseas in Florence, Italy. He worked with two faculty members at the university to start a community garden. He got a different perspective on community gardening through this experience, learning how the approaches differ in other areas and how the goals and processes vary.

Over the years, Sean has also worked as a Heston Intern where he learned "a ton about the farmers who work in Gettysburg, and developed a relationship with the people who work in the fields and in the food processing plants."

In addition to his work with PTF and local farms, Sean works at the Center for Career Development as a Career Outreach Assistant and Student Assistant, and is also a Peer Learning Associate for the Italian department. He is also involved with the Eisenhower Institute's environmental leadership program, which looks at sustainability at the economic level. He also works once a week as an intern with Thom and Judy Marty of Broad Valley Orchard, the CSA farm that partners with Farm House.

While his interests in sustainable agriculture and food justice has grown, Sean still struggles answering what he is passionate about, and struggles even more when asked about his future plans. He jokes that his History and Italian majors have very little to do with his interests outside the classroom. “But this keeps me grounded, and it allows me to think about my immediate surroundings and how I can contribute to my community.”

Sean encourages others to get involved with PTF as it is a wonderful and often life-changing way for students/faculty/ administrators to work with the community, families and local farmers.