



Loaded Ladle Annual Report 2014/2015

About the Loaded Ladle

The Loaded Ladle is a non-profit, open cooperative of students and community members dedicated to providing affordable, diverse, fresh, and nourishing food to as many people as possible. We aim to tackle the unjust global food system by providing a local alternative. The Loaded Ladle gives students the option to determine what food they eat and how it is produced through participation in our non-hierarchical and consensus-based decision making process.

Our Core Purposes

- Creating more options for students by providing an ethical food service as an alternative to the corporate market-based food system on campus.
- Making an inclusive, public forum available for all students to join and participate in through our commitment to a consensus-based and non-oppressive democratic structure.
- Educating the public about food politics on campus and in our community, as well as the broader social and environmental justice issues which surround the production and distribution of food globally.
- Using food to build a greater sense of community by bringing students together and creating relationships with local food producers

Organizational Structure

The Loaded Ladle is run by a volunteer Board of Directors, many many dedicated volunteers, and paid staff people.

The Board is made up of Dalhousie students and community members. The Board is elected at the Loaded Ladle Annual General Meeting every Spring, and is responsible for strategic planning and visioning for the Ladle, helping cook and serve meals, approving spending and the budget, proposing projects, and staff coordination, including hiring and contract revisions.

The Ladle currently employs 4 staff people in the roles of Kitchen Coordinator, Volunteer and Serving Coordinator, Solidarity Serving + Finance Coordinator, and Admin and Resource Coordinator. The staff are responsible for ensuring basic daily operations of the Ladle, such as prep parties, weekly open meetings, and thrice weekly servings, as well as broader logistics, such as food safety trainings, health and safety permits, and DSU communication.

2014/2015 was the first year we had staff carry over for 2 consecutive years. We also hired a new position in August 2014: Solidarity Serving Coordinator.

Herstory of the Loaded Ladle

The Loaded Ladle began In 2009 as a working group of NSPIRG (Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group), originally called Campus Action on Food. CAF was a political group, who fought against the unjust food structures at Dalhousie, specifically corporate exclusivity contracts in the Student Union Building. These contracts meant that all food services in the SUB were owned and managed by one corporation and any other food service was prohibited. The result was a multinational corporation profiting from the students who paid for food services within the Students Union Building.

Cooking off-campus in whatever space was available, CAF began guerilla servings in the Students' Union Building, ladling soup from large pots into containers, encircled by students. Eventually security would catch on, shaking fingers at the CAF members as they ran out the doors, pot and ladle in hand. The Dal Students' Union banned CAF servings in the SUB and CAF promptly ignored them. After some bad media on the DSU and immense student support for CAF, the DSU voted against renewing Sodexo's exclusivity contract, instead signing a contract with Chartwells, part of the Compass group, which made \$44 billion dollars in 2014. Chartwells continues to manage food service and catering in the SUB.

In 2010, CAF became the Loaded Ladle, a ratified and levied student society, as a way to foster more amicable relationships within the DSU and continue serving free food. In 2010, the Ladle also became its

own non-profit corporate entity, to pursue autonomy from the DSU. They won a levy vote in 2011 and another in 2012 to increase funding.

Currently, the Ladle serves 3 days per week in the SUB, while trying to politicize food on campus. Concerns over corporate food providers are varied: expensive and culturally inappropriate food options, unethical and exploited labour practices, furthering of global imperialist food systems, exploitative food sourcing, secret or non-transparent contracts, and many other aspects of the complex food system.

Operations

The Loaded Ladle serves locally-sourced, hot, vegan, nourishing meals 3 days per week in the Students' Union Building. We estimate that each serving we give out roughly 200 plates of food to Dal and King's students, staff, faculty, and community members. In the 2014/2015 academic year, this added up to approximately 15,600 meals!

This year, the majority of our produce came from Hutten Farms in the Annapolis Valley, as well as Four Seasons Farm and Highland Farm. Our tofu, mushrooms, and fresh cranberries came from Acadiana Soy, who uses organic, non-GMO soybeans from PEI. This year we also started incorporating fresh sprouts from Greens of Haligonias and dried cranberries from Terra Beata Cranberry Farm.

Our dried goods come from the Speerville Flour Mill in NB. This year, we used over 100lbs of organic, Nova Scotia flour, 200lbs of brown rice, 150lbs of lentils, and 20 litres of Nova Scotia maple syrup.

Events and Programming

In addition to our 3 weekly servings and once weekly prep parties, we host events, workshops, panels, and contribute to similar events on campus and in the community.

September 2014

Food Imperialism Workshop - part of Rad Frosh
Sexton Campus Corn Boil
Dal Urban Garden Society Green BBQ
Screenprinting Party

October 2014

Screenprinting Party
Squash Carving Contest

November 2014

Winter Gardening Workshop at Common Roots Urban Farm
Zine Reading and Discussion Group: Abolish Restaurants

December 2014

Biannual Kitchen Cleaning Party
Volunteer Appreciation Party and Crafternoon

January 2015

DSU Town Hall: Rape Culture

February 2015

Lunch and Learn Series: ENRICH Film Screening
Lunch and Learn Series: Unlearn Healthy Discussion Group
Winter Film Series: Bananas! A Documentary

March 2015

Global Health Office Food Security Panel
Iron Ladle Competition
Winter Film Series: King Corn
Fermentation Workshop with Dal Urban Garden Society

April 2015

Ladle Prom(?!?!)

Loaded Ladle Board Report 2014/2015

We are pleased to present the Loaded Ladle Board's Annual Report for 2014/2015. We have experienced great success in so many ways over the last year and we want to share our story with our fellow cooperative members.

The board of directors is a group of elected volunteers who oversee the functioning of the Ladle. The 6 members of the 2014/2015 board all joined within the past year, in either spring or fall 2014. Working with the Ladle's knowledgeable and dedicated staff, the board was able to quickly transition into their role of overseeing the ongoing ladle operations and supporting new ideas and visioning. Each Board member participated in the ongoing running of The Loaded Ladle in a manner of their choosing in order to develop their own feel for the cooperative. We looked for ways to fully engage our community, support our allies, expand the cooperative's impact, and provide opportunities for creativity and expression. The following is a list of board highlights for the 2014/2015 year:

- Spring 2014: Visioning meeting and transition from previous board
 - Reflections from 2013/2014 board and ideas for improvement
 - Brainstorming ways the ladle can reach more of our community
 - Planning for major changes in Dal's food system
 - Delicious potluck
- Spring/Summer 2014: Hiring summer student and new finance/solidarity serving coordinator
 - Members of the 13/14 and 14/15 board formed part of the hiring committees
 - Held interviews and selected an awesome summer student to take on the task of... self-directed projects! Well done, Desiree.
 - Held interviews and selected an awesome new staff member to be our finance guru and coordinate sol servings with our greater community. Hey, Su!
- Fall 2014: New board elections
 - Prepared call-out material and reached out to the community to spread the word
 - New board members elected in early fall!
- Fall 2014: Anti-Oppression training
 - The board participated in anti-O training at two workshops
 - Big thanks to South House for facilitating!
- Winter 2015: Visioning weekend
 - Board members and staff participated in visioning sessions to check in on the ladle's overall operations and make sure we're best representing the goals and ideas of our cooperative
 - Discussed new ideas and plans for the next year or so
 - Plummeted down steep snowy slopes on pizza trays (this is called "team building", right?)
- Ongoing board activities

- Board participates in weekly Ladle meetings whenever possible
- Ongoing communication via email, to approve proposals and respond to questions/concerns/community issues/etc raised by staff members
- Monthly board meetings to discuss specific items
 - Helping with servings, market pick-ups, coordinating with DSU, etc

While there have been challenges, and like most organizations we too suffer from logistical woes, communication issues, and bureaucratic nonsense, overall we see positivity, dedication, momentum, and progress as we pursue the Ladle's collective vision and goals. When we see the Ladle lineup winding through the hallway, when we walk into a busy, onion-chopping kitchen, when we dine in style on delicious stews and slaws, when we scheme and plan and dream of a Chartwells-free SUB, when we hear about the amazing positive events going on in our community, when we stand in solidarity with the all too frequent cases of oppression, when we see our dedicated volunteers casually mixing up a cake or salad, in all of this, we're reminded again just how much this cooperative truly is whatever the collective wants it to be. And as the board, we're happy to provide the support and background contributions to help keep the stew cooking.

The 2014-2015 serving season was, once again, outstanding. It seemed that our operations ran even smoother than in previous years, due in very large part to the inspired contributions of all of our staff, board, and volunteer members. On the whole, the season delivered everything it should have, and more. We look forward to another fruit - and veg - ful year of tackling the unjust food system through ethically sourced and collectively prepared food, access to open and inclusive spaces, and support and solidarity within our community.

The Loaded Ladle Board of Directors

Solidarity Serving Report 2014/2015:

This was the first year the Loaded Ladle had a position created specifically to do Solidarity Servings and outreach with other social justice groups both on-campus and in our larger community. All-in-all, it was a very fruitful (!), successful year for solidarity servings and building bridges of support with other community groups in Halifax, both on and off-campus.

Attached is a list of all the servings we put on since the position started. A rough estimate of all the people who attended solidarity servings since August puts the number of people we have served at these events at over a few thousand! More importantly however are the ongoing relationships we are forming with different groups in our community, such as the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, as well as supporting allied societies and working groups here on campus such as DalOUT and South House.

Rather than a problem of having enough outreach, our dilemma seems to be one of building enough capacity to fulfill all of the requests we receive: which is a good dilemma to have! We have a solidarity serving policy which gives guidance on how to respond to requests when we have more than one coming in at a time. We give precedent to those groups who otherwise would not be able to have food at their event (accessibility concerns) , as well as to those groups who are working to further social and environmental justice through their work.

Next year we hope to continue the scope and amount of solidarity servings we are offering, as well as building more of a culture of mutual aid and support among different groups on campus, and doing more public education about why we believe this is an integral part of the social justice work we do. Working to increase the amount of Loaded Ladle volunteers who want to be involved with solidarity servings is also something that will further this goal.

Solidarity Servings 2014/2015

August 2014

Aug 19th/20th: elders/community lunches at Friendship Centre: 2 servings

Aug 30th: Posterfest: Community art show & art-making event at new RadStorm space

September 2014

Sept 5th: Sexton campus corn-boil: 200 ears of corn

Sept 10th: Divest Dal 101 serving: pesto,veg, cake for 15

Sept 11th: Native Ed open house serving (cake)

Sept 23rd: First Elders supper at Friendship Centre (monthly event): veggie stew for 12

Sept 24th: Mad-Positive spaces serving (snacks)

Sept 27th: Cats Against Cat Calls crit mass (Avalon: 100 burritos)

AND

Indigenous Speakers event with Isabelle Knockwood at her home in Indian Brook

October 2014

Oct 4th: Sisters in Spirit event at Friendship Centre: Spaghetti supper for feast for 100+people

Oct 7th: ENRICH/organizing against environmental racism: full meal for 200 people

Oct 9th: Anti-O put on by South House: snacks for 50

Oct 22nd: Shadeism screening by Dal South Asian Student Ass'n: snacks for 20

Oct 27th: Peer Support/Mental Health at Dal: cake

Oct 28th: October Elders Supper at Friendship Centre:veggie stew for 25

Oct 29th: DivestSMU Divest 101 presentation: raw veg & hummus for 15

November 2014

Nov 3rd: Hummus making with SAIA

Nov 4th: Hummus serving with Students against Israeli Apartheid

Nov 17th: Dal Students against Fee Hikes: snacks

Nov 20th: Trans Day of Remembrance event: gluten-free snacks

Nov 22nd: Project 14 sol serving: raw veg & hummus

Nov 25th: Divest Dal serving

February 2015

Feb 3rd: Indigenous Speakers Event: snacks for reception

Feb 4th: Student Day of Action: Hot cider, apples, cake

Feb 4th (evening): Env studies film screening

Feb 6th: Stop Energy East Pipeline anti-o/retreat: meal for 20

Feb 10th: DivestSMU sol serving

Feb 13th: Bike centre sol serving: granola bars/baked goods for bike-to-work day

Feb 25th: CKDU Homelessness Marathon: millet loaf, veg gravy: hot supper for 60 with FNB

Feb 27th: Know your rights in the mental health system: carrot cake

March 2015

Mar 4th: DalOut/Kings Pride event: pink triangle hummus! & kale chips

Mar 9th: Environmental Justice conference: hummus & raw veg for 25

Mar 12th: Consent Day w/ Kings/SoHo: veggie pita sandwiches for 50

Mar 14th: Student Action day camp: snacks, lunch for 20

March 24th: Students against fee hikes: vegan poutine

Vegan lunches to be frozen for Out of the Cold Shelter

Upcoming:

April: Time to Clear the Air: Mi'kmaq & Black Nova Scotian youth art show

More servings for Out of the Cold Shelter

Financial Report 2014/2015:

The Loaded Ladle has been able to do a lot with the \$3 levy we get each semester from every Dalhousie student. It is important to us that not only do we operate efficiently and wisely, we use our money in a way that feels ethical and good to us and is in keeping with our politics of support and solidarity.

We have been able to do both of these things, running a modest surplus of money this past year as well as being able to support local producers and farmers and offer our co-op members predominantly organic, free meals.

Although we prioritize supporting local farmers (Hutten Family Farms, Acadiana Soy) and merchants (Mid-East Food), and buying local, organic dry beans and grains (Speerville Flour Mill in New Brunswick), we still are able to serve interesting, varied and nourishing meals to students, three times a week, a full array of solidarity servings, and still have money left to offer honorariums to people who do trainings for us (such as anti-oppression training, financial training) and to reimburse committed co-op members who offer their time to support us (picking up market veggies, gas mileage). We also were able to offer donations to local groups and initiatives that we felt are worthwhile, such as the Justice for Deepan campaign, and fundraising to support Elsipogtog land defenders.

Attached is our budget for this year, and are projected budget for the next fiscal year (Starting in Sept 2016). We are transparent with how we spend our money, and a large portion of our money goes to buying bulk dry good,vegetables, and equipment for the kitchen. This averages about \$1600 a month during the school year. Wages average about \$5,000 a month and deductions and remittances to the CRA average about \$1300 a month. Our projected expenses for 2014/2015 fiscal year are \$91,054.59 and our projected income is \$121,600.

Moving forward, we have talked in the past about setting up a savings account for the Loaded Ladle. Based on our surplus of this year, I feel this may be a worthwhile topic to open up again, to set aside money for any special long-term projects that co-op members feel are worthwhile.

Su Donovaro
Finance Coordinator