



The Loaded Ladle
Annual Report
2015 - 2016

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

History 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.

Organizational Structure

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

The Board is made up of Dalhousie and King's 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 5 staff people in the roles of Kitchen Coordinator, Volunteer and Serving Coordinator, Solidarity Serving Coordinator, 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 financial records.

2015/2016 saw the Loaded Ladle hiring 2 new staff people in the positions of Finance Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator.

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 2015/2016 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 Ironwood Farm. Our tofu, mushrooms, and fresh cranberries came from Acadiana Soy, who uses organic, non-GMO soybeans from PEI. We collaborated with the DSU Farmers' Market Collective and purchased unsold produce at the end of their market days. This year we also received donations from the DSU Food Bank.

Events and Programming

We had some exciting new additions to programming and initiatives in 2015-2016:

Summer Research Coordinator

Summer 2015, we hired a summer research coordinator, who spent the warmer months working on a research project on food insecurity on Canadian universities. The final paper, “Planting the Seeds of Change: Beyond Economic Barriers to Food Security Among Canadian Students”, was presented at our workshop series, To The Root, in October 2015, and is available on our website.

Radish Reads Bookclub

Radish Reads met once per month from September to March and discussed articles, books, and zines centered around food justice and politics. Materials included: Wages Against Housework, by Silvia Federici, Weighing In, by Julie Guthman, and a selection of articles about food and racism. Materials and snacks were provided by the Ladle, to make a more fun and accessible event.

To The Root Workshop Series

In October 2015, we held our first ever workshop series. The weekend started with an opening night mixer, featured keynote speakers Patrick Nadjiwon and Aurora Felix from 3 Sister’s House in Toronto, and included other amazing workshops and discussion groups about tincture-making, Racism and Erasure in Food Movements, and Barriers to Food Access. The weekend was held on King’s College campus.

Bursary Program

Held once per semester, applicants could apply for a bursary for up to \$100. A bursary committee was struck and a policy is currently being finalized. We were able to provide over \$2000 to students who self-identified as needing financial support.

Sexton Free Coffee Mondays

In an effort to reach out and politicize food on Sexton campus, we teamed up with the DSU to provide free coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and snacks on Monday mornings. It’s been great and we hope to work with Sexton folks to make student-run food on Sexton possible!

The Coast's Best of Campus Food: Silver!

We did it! Thanks to everyone who voted online, we placed 2nd in the Coast's annual survey of the Best of around Halifax. Let's try for gold this year ;)

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 2015

Welcome Week Volunteer Orientation

O-Week Field Party Apple Wagon

Rad Frosh: Film Screening, Just Eat It: A Food Waste Film

Rad Frosh: Vegan Potluck and Intro to the Loaded Ladle

Radish Reads: Wages Against Housework - Silvia Federici

October 2015

Squash Carving, Autumn Decoration Craft Night + Prep Party

Radish Reads: The Revolution Will Not Be Microwaved - Sandor Katz

To The Root Workshop Series:

- Opening Night Mixer

- Herbal Oil + Tincture Making

- Container Gardening

- Seed Saving + Compost

- Indigenous Food Justice

- Racism and Erasure in Food Movements

- Beyond Economic Barriers: Food Insecurity

November 2015

Volunteer Orientation

Radish Reads: Weighing In - Julie Guthman

Sexton Campus Volunteer Info Session

Volunteer Appreciation and Holiday Party

Weekly Sexton Coffee Mondays

December 2015

Weekly Sexton Coffee Mondays

Kitchen Cleaning Party

Surprise Finals Week #burritotornado

January 2016

Volunteer Orientation

Radish Reads: "Let's Eat Chinese" + other selections on food, racism, and colonialism

February 2016

Volunteer Orientation and Craft Night

Food Pun Zine Submissions

Radish Reads: The Trouble with Brunch - Shawn Micallef

March 2016

Volunteer Orientation

Iron Ladle Cooking Competition

Radish Reads: selection from Food and Femininity - Josée Johnston

Serving Collaborations with DSU Sustainability Office and The Dal Native Students Association

Financial Report

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. We prioritize supporting local farmers (Hutten Family Farms, Acadiana Soy) and merchants (MidEast Food Centre), and buying local, organic dry beans and grains (Speerville Flour Mill in New Brunswick). With this food we are able to serve interesting, varied and nourishing meals to students, three times a week, and a full array of solidarity servings. A new initiative this year is Sexton Mondays where we have been providing coffee on Sexton campus. We set up a wholesale account with Just Us Coffee to provide fair trade coffee. We budgeted \$13,000 for the year for food (Sept 2015 – Aug 2016) and so far have spent around \$10,000, averaging around \$1,600 per month during the school year.

We also offer honorariums to people who do trainings for our staff and board (such as anti-oppression training, meeting/facilitation skills) and to reimburse committed co-op members who offer their time to support us (picking up market veggies, gas mileage).

We were also able to offer donations to local groups and initiatives that we felt are worthwhile, such as the Sexual Assault and Harassment Phone Line and the Our Resilient Bodies workshop series. New this year we offered \$2205 in bursaries for people in emergency situations, from communities who historically have had limited access to financial support.

Education is an important aspect of the work of the Loaded Ladle. We organized the To The Root workshop series, bringing in a range of speakers and presentations. We organized the whole series and provided airfare and housing for out of town presenters for \$2647, which was nearly \$1000 less than was originally budgeted. We host regular book club events called Radish Reads where participants are given their own books. We were able to host multiple discussions and provide reading material and snacks for \$770 this year.

Included in this report is a summary of spending from the 2014-2015 year, a interim report on spending for the 2015-2016 year (in progress), and a budget for the 2016-2017 year. The fiscal year (the financial year used for keeping track of accounting) for the Loaded Ladle currently runs from September until the end of August each year. A proposed change is to adjust the fiscal year to start May 1st and run until April 30th each year, to line up more smoothly with the timing of the AGM and Board Elections,

while still encompassing an entire “school year.” At the moment we are only just over halfway through the 2015-2016 fiscal year which makes it difficult to plan for the 2016-2017 year so far in advance. A change in the fiscal year will make planning and accounting more accurate.

Due to this our 2015-2016 fiscal year will run from Sept 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016 (a total of 8 months), and our 2016-2017 fiscal year will run for 12 months starting on May 1st. Our budgets and reports will reflect these new dates.

We are transparent with how we spend our money. Our two largest expenses are food and staffing. A large portion of our money goes to buying bulk dry goods and vegetables for servings, for a total of around \$13,000 per year. The Loaded Ladle employs 5 staff (2-part time of 10-15hrs/week and 3 full-time of 27.5 - 32 hrs/week). The Loaded Ladle is committed to paying a living wage of \$17/hr. Wages averaged around \$8,500 a month during the school year including deductions and remittances to the government. At the end of the 2015-16 year it is estimated that we will have around \$45,000 in savings.

Our projected expenses for 2016/2017 fiscal year are \$131,450 and our projected income is \$111,167. With the savings from previous years, it is estimated that we will end the next year with \$28,333 in savings. These savings are important as the Loaded Ladle grows. A new kitchen is planned for next year which we will be contributing to financially. With new a expanded kitchen facility comes an ability to increase our serving and programming capacity, something that our accumulated savings will allow us to do.

Solidarity Serving Report

This was the Loaded Ladle's second year of having a position that focuses specifically on providing Solidarity Servings and doing outreach with other social justice groups both on-campus and in our larger community. Once again, we received a lot of interest in the servings from groups within the Dal community as well as the larger social justice community in and around Halifax. We continued building on relationships with organizations we have worked with in the past, as well as forging new bonds with other groups such as Our Resilient Bodies and SNARC (Students Advocating for Representative Curriculum).

Attached is a list of all the sol servings we hosted this academic year. Next year we are hoping to be in our new kitchen. Although some unknowns remain about when we will be accessing the space, and what day-to-day operations will look like, the hope is that we will be able to increase the amount of folks we serve throughout the year. This could also spill over to the amount of sol servings we will be able to provide.

With that in mind, what we have learned from the last couple years is that sol servings seem to work better when they are for a smaller number of people: 25 or less. This makes insurance for us easier, and is in keeping with the mandate of what solidarity servings are for. One decision the board will need to make for next year is whether we want to purchase additional insurance to be able to cook and serve off-campus.

In conclusion, it has been a busy and fun year on the solidarity serving side of things, with lots of new people learning about and wanting to get involved with the Loaded Ladle. Next year only promises to bring more of the same .

Calendar of Servings 2015-2016

Sept 26th: Cats Glare Back Event. Avalon Centre & Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre.

Oct 23rd: Zine fair/Anti-fest: snacks

Nov 20th: Trans Day of Remembrance community service and meal

Nov 25th: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence: movie screening, discussion, meal by Oxfam Dal

Dec 3rd: Anchor Archive Zine Library: Community visioning meeting at the North end Library branch. Meal for 15

Dec 5th: Ecology Action Centre work party for their new space: brought lunch for 8

Dec 11th: Our Resilient Bodies: culmination of week of body-positive workshops with Art showing and brunch serving.

Jan 16th: SNARC: Students Advocating for Representative Curriculum: conference and lunch

Jan 17th: Not 15 Million: Fundraiser in response to drought in Ethiopia. Cultural performances and supper

Feb 5th: SALSA: Social Activist Law Student Ass'n. IdeaLAW Social Justice conference: snacks

Mar 2nd: Indigenous Health Interest Group: Panel on Indigenous Health/snacks

Mar 5th: SkilledUP: Free Skillshare event put on by YESS: Your Environmental Sustainability Society. Soup for 20

Mar 12th: DASS Dal Arts & Social Sciences Society Conference: burritos

Mar 17th: Sexton: Environmental Design students Think Tank/Discussion around Gentrification. Snacks

Mar 18th: Kings Sustainability Society: Roots event: Seasonal, local soup for about 20

Mar 21st: Black Gold: OxFam Dal movie screening and talk about food justice and fair trade. Meal for 20

Mar 30th: Veith House community supper: donation of beans and grains.

Loaded Ladle Board Report 2015/2016

We are pleased to present the Loaded Ladle Board's Annual Report for 2015/2016. 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 9 members of the 2015/2016 board all joined within the past year, in either spring or fall 2015. 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 2015/2016 year:

Spring 2015: Transition from previous board

- Reflections from 2014/2015 board and ideas for improvement
- First Iron Ladle competition: reflections and the award ceremony at the AGM
- Discussing/brainstorming new ways the Ladle can be involved in outreach at Sexton, for O-Week, and to the greater community
- Planning for major changes in Dal's food system and determining our place during the upcoming SUB renovations

Summer 2015: Hiring a new summer student, finance director and volunteer coordinator

Members of the 2014/2015 board and staff, formed the hiring committees for the different positions

- Held interviews and selected the amazing Tess, as a summer student to take on the task of researching student food security issues
- Conducted multiple interviews and selected our new talented finance director, Capp, and the incredible Tess as the volunteer coordinator.
- Added our final board member, Allison to the board of directors in August

Fall 2015: Board training/ Visioning/ Bursary program

- A week of board training started the first week of September (before classes), consisting of communications training, anti-oppression training, anti-racism training, Human Interactions training (how to be an employer). Thank you to all of our kind facilitators that dedicated their time for us! We also had a lovely potluck that our board member Rachael Delano hosted!
- Staff and board also attended some O-Week Events, and did some intro to the Ladle for first year students
- Tess and Joan (who was working from Montreal) also developed and executed the workshop series called To The Root, which consisted of talks, get-togethers, and

community meals that was looking to connect folks interested or involved in food activism, while broadening folks understanding of the various intersectionalities within this movement. The keynote speakers, Patrick Nadjiwon and Aurora Felix, from Three Sisters House, gave a community talk and workshop Indigenous Food Justice.

- Board and staff expressed that weekend long visioning sessions could be demanding for some individuals (especially folks that work weekends) so we decided to have a mini-visioning session that was at the Halifax Central Library, with lots of good snacks and great discussion
- The Ladle ran our first round of the Bursary program. The Bursary program was aimed to provide funds for those in the community who needed emergency funds. We operated our program on an equity policy of ensuring that we prioritized the voices of those who are subject to the white-supremacist cishetero patriarchy. This program was also run in Winter semester and plans to continue into our 2016/2017 year.

Winter 2016: Sexton Coffee/ Iron Ladle/ Sub Renos/DSU Food Board

- In November 2015 and early December, the Ladle started a collaboration with the DSU in a new Sexton outreach initiative called Coffee Mondays. With the DSU, the Ladle has been present on Sexton campuses every Monday (with some exceptions) since the beginning of November to hand out free, ethically sourced, Just Us coffee, tea and hot chocolate. Since we do not have the volunteer commitment or kitchen space at Sexton we cannot do full servings and this has been a good alternative!
It was a little tricky at first, and has had some setbacks, but all in all, it has been a good way to meet more Sexton pals and get people engaged in food politics!
- The Ladle also hosted the second Iron Ladle competition! It was another big hit this year, and board want to thank staff and all dedicated teams that came out and made some delicious meals for our Ladlers <3
- The amazing Nicole also has been meeting with DSU execs and facilities management over the last couple years to ensure that we have space during this SUB renovation turmoil. Although the kitchen design and all of the equipment has not been yet confirmed, final decisions are being confirmed as the renovations to the servery start on April 11th 2016. However, the board wants to send big thanks and hugs to Nicole for always being on the ball and ensuring that Ladle interests are heard! More details will be confirmed on April 4th 2016, about the new kitchen and the management plan
- Very new: we will be assigning a board member a new role as the Loaded Ladle representative on the newly formed DSU Food Advisory Board. This new board seeks to mobilize individuals and societies on the Dal campuses that are interested in student food issues, and food services at Dal. We are hoping that having a Ladle rep will ensure that our voice as a cooperative is heard when discussion for a student-run food services is discussed

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
- Bi-weekly board meetings to discuss specific items that are brought up by both board and staff

- Human Interactions meetings/and continual contact, supported by our HI members Anne and Chris
- Helping with prep parties, servings, coffee Mondays, market pick-ups, coordinating with DSU, etc.
- Ensuring the political nature of the Loaded Ladle and challenging the unjust corporate food systems present on campus, along with supporting allying ourselves with groups that aim to challenge systemic oppression.

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 2015-2016 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.