

MSU – Sustainable Food and Bioenergy Systems Program (SFBS)

Mary Stein is Program Coordinator for SFBS, a new interdisciplinary MSU Bachelor of Science degree program. The program focuses on sustainable production, distribution and consumption of food and bioenergy. Graduates of the program will serve in important food system niches including production, retail and education.

Activities Relevant to State Plan to Prevent Obesity: SFBS education and outreach relate to availability of healthy, nutritious Montana food – increasing supply, distribution, access, awareness and processing.

Services/Recipients: SFBS serves MSU students, and food system leaders/advocates through the statewide internship program. From the student run farm, Towne’s Harvest Garden, the program directly provides donated produce to the Gallatin Valley Food Bank and to local consumers through purchase of “CSA” (Community Supported Agriculture) shares. The associated student club (Friends of Local Food) also works on MSU institutional purchases of local foods.

State Plan Settings: Food access/outlets; Schools (MSU).

CDC Behaviors:

- Increasing fruit & vegetable consumption through Towne’s Harvest and Farm-to-MSU;
- Decreasing consumption of energy dense food (> 4 calories/gram) by encouraging the eating of non-processed foods;
- Increasing physical activity through on-farm and other active internships as well as hosting school children at Towne’s Harvest Garden.

Gaps and Concerns: Food deserts and the accessibility of Montana-grown whole foods to rural communities. A key barrier to achieving “Montana food for Montanans” is the lack of an adequate supply of diverse crops and inadequate processing infrastructure in the state (e.g. frozen vegetables).