

# Dorm food: the best but . . . a 'scapegoat'

By Ann Naumann  
Of the Emerald

*'We can't please everyone all of the time'*

"I ate dorm food and survived," reads a University of Houston T-shirt. Although the campus is different, the message hits home with University students.

The University Residence Hall Food Service feeds about 2,600 students 19 meals a week for \$5.65 a day. And complaints abound.

"We can't please everyone all of the time," says Fred Babcock, director of food services for residence halls. "When you feed a large number of people that just happens."

**Last year students successfully campaigned for Cap'n Crunch — the newest movement is for Crunchberries.**

Babcock says many of the complaints are merely rumors about the food service system. In fact, a strict specification system determines buying procedures and quality standards. Beef must be choice (one grade below the best) or better, Babcock says. Only grade number one pork, choice lamb and fresh poultry are used, all purchased from commercial producers, he says.

Specifications also rule out the use of preservatives in the green salad, says Lonnie McCormick, supervisor at Hamilton dining center. Milk is not watered down. Powdered eggs are not used in omelettes, scrambled eggs or anything else, he says.

However, some complaints are valid and receive notice.

Last year students in both Carson and Hamilton dining halls campaigned for Cap'n Crunch



Photo Michael Clapp

A student food committee and University food service work together to tailor menus to students' tastes.

cereal and got it. Babcock says the newest movement is for Crunchberries.

Complaints about salty food resulted in a cutback in the amount of salt used in cafeteria

recipes, says Sue Esau, supervisor at Carson dining hall. Salt lovers simply use the shakers at the tables.

Babcock says the biggest change has been the initiation

of weekend brunch and Sunday dinner in response to complaints about early Saturday morning breakfasts and the expense of dining out on Sunday nights.

Problems do exist, however. McCormick says cold food is a common source of complaints. Casseroles and some other side-dishes are made in the central kitchen in Carson and then sent to the three dining centers — University Inn, Carson, and Hamilton.

"It's a matter of timing and organization," McCormick says.

Students also believe some selections are served too often despite the fact that frequency charts stagger offerings throughout the year to avoid repetition.

"They see some (dishes) more than they want to," McCormick says.

Students also question the ingredients used in dorm food casseroles and entrees, Esau says.

"They can just come back and read it," Esau says. "We believe in truth in menus."

Other students claim the quality of food varies from term to term or week to week, Babcock says. He says this is a misperception.

"We don't tailor menus to particular times," Babcock says. "There are unpopular menus at times."

At Carson, a student food committee and Esau work together to deal with student complaints.

"We use students' ideas, wants and needs," Esau says.

The student committee members say this system works.

"They've (Carson cafeteria workers) been excellent," says Marianne Picha, student food committee member.

The food committee tries to answer the question, "What would most people like," Picha says. They use a suggestion box to communicate with Carson diners. However, complaints are taken with a grain of salt.

"We don't take everything literally from the suggestion box," Picha said. "Food is an easy scapegoat."

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## Candidates air views for students today

Candidates for several local and state races, as well as representatives from more than 25 national, state and local campaigns, will take part in a Candidates Fair today and Friday in EMU Room 167.

"The importance of the candidates fair is it will give students a chance to look beyond the candidates' image and look at the issues," says Betsy Boyd, ASUO co-coordinator for state affairs.

The fair also will make candidates aware that students are concerned about certain issues, Boyd says.

Bill Rutherford, a former student body president running on the Republican ticket for state treasurer, will speak at 10 a.m. today. Dave Cargo, another Republican running for treasurer, will speak at 10:15 a.m. Rutherford will also be available for questions in Fenton Hall, Room 117, at 11 a.m.

John Schiess, running for the U.S. Senate, and candidates for Eugene mayor, city council, county commissioner, and county sheriff will also speak at the fair.

Other campaigns will have tables at the fair where students

can pick up literature and ask questions about the candidates.

The results of a candidates' questionnaire will also be available. Candidates were asked how they would deal with issues important to students.

For example, candidates for state treasurer were asked their views on state investments in South Africa, and candidates for the U.S. Senate were asked their views on the Solomon Amendment.

The fair, which will run from 10 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., is sponsored by ASUO and SUAB. For more information call 686-3724.

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