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## UM Food Day Events Celebrate Healthy, Local Food

Observance includes on-campus farmers market and compost 'sift-a-thon'

OCTOBER 1, 2017 BY MAGGIE SMITH

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The annual UM Food Day Festival and Farmers Market, set for 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday (Oct. 5) on Galtney-Lott Plaza, will feature farmers and local food producers. Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Communications

OXFORD, Miss. – **The University of Mississippi** will observe Food Day throughout October with a series of events designed to inspire thought about the importance of sustainable food systems.

The university's events take place as part of the national Food Day celebration. Food Day festivities begin on campus Tuesday (Oct. 3), when Lenoir Dining – the university's student-run restaurant – will feature a menu highlighting local food items including catfish from Mississippi and local produce.

"Every time we purchase or eat a food item, we are playing a role in a system that encompasses wellness, environmental and social issues," said Lindsey Abernathy, associate director of the **UM Office of Sustainability**. "Food Day is an opportunity to open a dialogue about the impact of our food choices and also raise awareness of the great food-related resources we have here in Oxford, like farmers markets, community gardens and other programs."

The UM Office of Sustainability will host its annual Food Day Festival and Farmers Market from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday (Oct. 5) on Galtney-Lott Plaza. The event will feature farmers and local food producers, along with informational tables for food-focused campus and community organizations such as the UM Garden Club, Oxford Community Garden, **UM Food Bank** and Oxford Community Market.

"By discussing sustainability through the lens of food, we have a great opportunity to engage everyone in our campus community because we all have some relationship with food," says Kendall McDonald, sustainability fellow of the UM Office of Sustainability. "Food Day is a fun way to examine and learn about those relationships, and find opportunities to strengthen our ties with the community and our environment."

Additional Food Day events on campus include an Oct. 13 compost "sift-a-thon," which offers volunteers a chance to earn service hours while getting a hands-on lesson on the importance and process of composting, at the Maynard W. Quimby Medicinal Plant Garden, and "Mostly Meatless Monday," which takes place Oct. 23 at Rebel Market during lunchtime. Rebel Market will offer a variety of vegetarian and vegan lunch options, as well as an information table highlighting the environmental benefits of incorporating more plant-based meals into one's diet.

Food Day activities are also taking place in the Oxford community. Oxford's newest local food market, Chicory Market, will celebrate its grand opening from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday (Oct. 8) with music, barbecue and kids' activities.

Food Day programming comes to a close Oct. 24 at Oxford Elementary School. Volunteers are needed to help Oxford Elementary students celebrate Food Day at various times by assisting with activities in classes such as art, music and physical education.

For more information or to volunteer for the compost sift-a-thon or Food Day at Oxford Elementary, visit <http://sustain.olemiss.edu>.

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