

Two Week Challenge

The two week challenge was giving to alter the everyday routine to provide new insight and outlook on our environment. I decided to take the challenge of buying locally. Before starting, I had little to no knowledge on how to grocery shop locally. After many hours on the internet and wondering in markets I gained some tricks. Mentally I gained pride with every purchase I made.

The challenge made me realize the unnecessary produce that was once part of my grocery list. On my grocery list there used to be a large amount of unseasonal fruits and vegetables, chips, candy, drinks, condiments and ect. Buying seasonal vegetables and fruits is key when buying local. When they are not seasonal they are transported from another country. When the produce is in season it is important to get the one that is grown local. The onion was on my list and when I was faced in front of them in the grocery store I became cross-eyed. There were five or four different types and from different areas. Since it was in season I read each label and found one that was grown in Laval. I was stunned to see that a grocery store in Quebec would have imported apples. Perhaps it is because I am from a small town where apples are grown and a main part of our economy. I see no use of importing apples when they are in season and part of a local towns economy. With my forever need for candy and chips I headed to their aisle. Reading behind each bag I realized that the ingredients are unreadable and put it back on the shelf. This made me realize how much I depend on the packaging to give me comfort. While buying soymilk I depended on the packaging of to carton. I was looking for a warm color scheme and a soft font. The packaging of a product can be deceiving. This made me think of the movie Food Inc that we had watched in my Eco Living class. Buying drink has become hard for me. I always have orange jus on my list and only buy the one on sale. Knowing that it was apple season in my hometown I asked my mother to get me some juice and other products. When I received the products I was surprised how far she went with this small task. My kitchen table was filled with a box of apples, two bottles of apple juice (the

brown kind), apple pie, apple studies, apple sauce, apples crumble, apple spread, apple chips and apple donuts. I began to cry a little inside knowing that for not only the next two weeks but for the next month my diet will be based primarily on apples. After the two weeks I have mastered the art of cooking and baking apples. My favorite dish was so simple and 100% local. I cubed an onion, apples and some brie that was made in Vaudrauille. I sautéed the onion with the apples in butter. I then wrapped a bread pan with philo paper and placed the onion, apples and cheese mixture inside. Placed the pan in the oven for 20 minutes. Once out this rich in flavor dish became my favorite part of the challenge. My mother had also brought me eggs from a farm down her street. These eggs surprised me when I cracked them. I always buy the large eggs and they are always white. Looking at the egg from the farmer I didn't understand why it was not only brown but that it was small.

I learned that it is very hard to eat out and it be from a local area. I decide to eat a home and make a meal when it was needed. I was fortunate to come from an independent surrounding where I had to make my own meals from a very young age. A lot of my friends do not know how to cook so they eat out a lot and not only to they spend a large amount of money but they spend it on fast food. Fast food is not local, it is not organic, and it is high in fat and in sugars.

Another thing that I have noticed is how we take advantage of our luxury. For example the banana, it is not a local product but is part of our grocery list every week. I was one of those people who always had at least one banana in the house at all times. I do not need to have bananas part of my daily diet. From now on I will pay more attention to what is in season and cut back on these luxuries.

Will you take the challenge?