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## **Bard College at Simon's Rock Launches Center for Food Studies, Co-Sponsors ThinkFOOD Conference**

**Great Barrington, MA**, Bard College at Simon's Rock (BCSR) has announced the formation of The Center for Food Studies, a new program aimed at advancing the community's knowledge of food as a cultural force and our culture's responsibilities as stewards of a sustainable food system.

The Center will provide a forum for collaboration, communication, and learning across a variety of food realms by offering for-credit courses within existing Simon's Rock programs; presenting non-credit workshops for personal and professional education; collaborating with community partners to sponsor lectures, conferences, and other educational events on campus and across the region; creating opportunities for students and local organizations to benefit from internships and other work/study arrangements; and partnering creatively on and off campus to develop awareness of critical issues related to food, leading to productive connections and action.

"The subject of food studies is present at Simon's Rock in our courses, through our research and events as well as in the Berkshires in the form of agriculture, activism, and the foodie culture," said Dr. Anne O'Dwyer, Dean of Academic Affairs. "We felt it was time to formalize this interest in food locally and globally and to create a place for these various interested parties to meet and connect at Simon's Rock. Our students are also more and more informed and interested in food: where it comes from, what food production means for the planet, and what choices we need to make to feed ourselves well."

Professor Maryann Tebben will head the Center for Food Studies. Dr. Tebben's work in food studies stems from her research in French literature. She has

published a number of articles on French food and French identity, and has a book forthcoming from Reaktion Books entitled *Sauces: A Global History*.

Dr. Tebben said, “We are an institution whose first priority is to educate and inform our students, our campus community, and the community around us. As an institution of higher education in the region, we see our role as a connecting point between students and local organizations (in the form of internships, for example), as a resource to encourage and promote new courses by faculty, public talks that will be open to the community, and a space for events and workshops that are collaborations between community groups.”

The highlight of the Center for Food Studies offerings this spring will be the **ThinkFOOD Conference** on Saturday, April 19 at Simon’s Rock. Co-sponsored by The Nutrition Center, this conference will feature three panel presentations with regional food thinkers, writers, and leaders:

*Perceptions and Perspectives: Our Regional Food Culture*, a presentation of Berkshire food in the media, moderated by Dan Shaw, Founder, Rural Intelligence, featuring panelists Matthew Rubiner, Owner Rubiner’s Cheesemongers & Grocers; Serge Madikians, Chef-Owner, Serevan Restaurant; and Angela Cardinali, Founder, Berkshire Farm & Table.

*Fuel the Body, Fuel the Mind: Current Research and Teaching by Food Studies Faculty at Simon’s Rock and Connections to the Community*, moderated by Maryann Tebben, Faculty in French Literature, featuring panelists Chris Coggins, Faculty in Geography & Asian Studies; Erin McMullin, Faculty in Biology; and respondents Dominic Palumbo, Farmer, Moon In The Pond Farm; and Peter Stanton, Director, The Nutrition Center.

*Practical Matters: The Challenges of Feeding Our Students*, sourcing and serving local food at schools and colleges in the region, moderated by Marianne Young, Principal, Monument Mountain Regional High School, featuring panelists Lisa Damon, Farm to Cafeteria Coordinator, Massachusetts Farm to School; Meriweather Clark-Connors, Director of Dining Services, Bard College at Simon’s Rock; Chas Cerulli, Senior Director of Dining Services, Bard College; Andy Cox, General Manager of Dining Services, The Hotchkiss School; and John-Paul Sliva, Bard Farm Coordinator, Bard College. Those who have been successful in sourcing local food will share best practices with those who would like to start or improve their own use of local produce in school cafeterias and dining halls.

Due to limited seating, registration is required for the ThinkFOOD conference. For more information about the Center for Food Studies and to register for the conference, visit: <http://simonsrock.campusguides.com/foodstudies>.

In addition, The Center of Food Studies at Bard College at Simon’s Rock will

partner with local organizations on a number of other events this Spring including:

Wednesday, April 16: "A Place at the Table", a documentary screening and discussion facilitated by Peter Stanton of The Nutrition Center. The event is part of a course taught by professor Chris Coggins entitled "The Agricultural World", and will allow students direct access to experts who can speak practically about the theoretical concerns discussed in the classroom.

Wednesday, April 23: "The Future of Seeds", a panel discussion with Abby Kinchy (BCSR '93), current faculty in Science and Technology Studies at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, who published a book on genetically modified (GMO) seeds called *Seeds, Science, and Struggle*; and Dominic Palumbo, owner of Moon in the Pond Farm, who has worked to preserve and promote heirloom seeds. The event will also link to Chris Coggins' "Agricultural World" course.

Future projects for the Center for Food Studies include: cultivation of new food-related courses by faculty, regular film screenings/lectures and discussions, and establishment of regular food-related internships.

"We believe that, as an academic institution, Simon's Rock has an important role to play in the local food movement," said Dr. O'Dwyer. "We look forward to increasing the offerings of The Center for Food Studies and contributing in a positive way to the community around us."

[Bard College at Simon's Rock](http://www.simons-rock.edu) is the nation's only four-year residential college of the liberal arts and sciences specifically designed for bright, motivated students ready to begin college after the tenth or eleventh grade. Students are taught exclusively in small seminars by a supportive, highly trained faculty. Degrees are granted in over 40 areas of study. Most graduates proceed to earn graduate and professional degrees at highly selective universities. Simon's Rock was founded in 1966 and joined the Bard College network in 1979. For more information visit [www.simons-rock.edu](http://www.simons-rock.edu).

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