



March 25, 2009

Mr. Wayne Pacelle
President & CEO
The Humane Society of the United States
2100 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Mr. Pacelle:

This letter is to clarify Virginia Tech's recent decision to find local food sources for Dining Services. Your March 3 press release states that the university has a cage-free egg policy. We do not have such a policy. The decision was made to purchase our whole eggs locally in an ongoing effort to be more sustainable in our practices. Andy Sarjahani, Dining Services' Sustainability Coordinator, called Josh Balk on March 4, 2009, to request corrections to the release to state our purchase decision was based on an interest in purchasing food locally.

Virginia Tech does not have a policy regarding cage-free eggs. The purchase of whole eggs from a local source in Nelson County only represents 10 percent of our egg purchase. Additionally, Virginia Tech has not entered into any agreements with the Humane Society of the United States, and the March 3 release insinuates a relationship that is misleading.

The recent switch to a local egg producer versus an out-of-state producer is just one example of our efforts to purchase food locally and part of a larger sustainability program, which includes reducing and composting food waste, working to remove polystyrene foam from the dining centers by switching to either reusable containers or compostable products, creating a campus garden to grow produce for use in the university's dining centers, finding sources to convert used fryer oil into biodiesel, and diverting leftovers to America's Second Harvest Food Bank.

As a land grant institution, Virginia Tech was founded as a result of the Morrill Land Grant College Act to help finance agricultural and mechanical education in the United States and we maintain this work within

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our College of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Division as well as the outreach programs we conduct in Virginia and throughout the United States and world. Agriculture remains important to the economy of Virginia as our number one industry with over \$79 billion annually and 10.3 percent of the jobs in the Commonwealth. The university's agriculture graduates provide significant resources to the agriculture community through employment, research, education, and partnerships to help grow the industry. Within Dining Services, we are doing our part to sustain and strengthen our state's largest industry while also providing high quality food for our customers.

We appreciate your interest in Virginia Tech's sustainability efforts and ask that you correct the release on your website to reflect our interest in purchasing more local food items.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Coffey", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Coffey

Senior Associate Director

Virginia Tech Dining Services