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FIRST HARVEST AT RESIDENTIAL DINING CHEFS GARDEN AT USC

LOS ANGELES, California, USA (March 8, 2016) – There’s no denying that eating locally grown food is the trend of the century. As such, the USC Hospitality Group’s Food Philosophy mandates a focus on local food sourcing for all chefs and kitchen managers. USC Residential Dining has done its part in this movement by sourcing nearly all of its food from producers within a 250-mile radius of campus. Parkside Residential Dining Center, has taken its sustainability efforts one step further by going über-local.

Über-local food sourcing means that the food inventory is traveling less than a few blocks to the end consumer. On February 9th, this idea became a reality at the Parkside Community Garden. Red leaf lettuce, butter crunch lettuce and Chandler strawberries were carefully pulled from one of three garden boxes and served at Parkside and the monthly Faculty Masters’ dinner. Leading this initiative and partnering with USC Residential Dining is Jason Sanders. Aside from serving in part of USC’s faculty-in-residence program with his wife, Dr. Kelly Sanders, Sanders is the National Manager for EcoSafe Zero Waste where he develops composting programs across North America. Here at USC, Sanders has developed a system in which the Parkside Community Garden is maintained and harvested.

According to Sanders, left over juice pulp and fruit skins from the on-campus Nektar Juice Bar are collected weekly and fed to worms in a worm bin. Worm castings are collected from the bin and used to enrich the soil used in the garden boxes. This “garbage-to-garden” relationship between these two USC Hospitality dining venues promotes a safe and sustainable way to reuse waste and take ownership of the environment.

During the month, Sanders and his team also harvested cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and tomatoes. On a much larger scale, seedlings were planted in the USC Learning Garden, an urban farm that uses aeroponic towers. The sixty towers were installed behind the Radisson Hotel and will support the restaurants of USC as well as the residential dining centers.

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For more information on USC Hospitality, please visit hospitality.usc.edu or contact the Marketing Department at 213.821.5707.

About USC Hospitality

USC Hospitality is a division of USC Auxiliary Services at the University of Southern California, one of the nation's premier research universities. USC Hospitality operates over 30 food and beverage venues on the University Park Campus, Health Sciences Campus as well as two off campus venues and offers full-service catering and the Radisson Hotel at USC. A unique mix of nationally recognized, locally acclaimed as well as innovative self-branded concepts consist of full-service restaurants, residential dining restaurants, cafes, retail dining concepts, vending and full-service catering supports the food and beverage needs of the university community. For more information, please visit hospitality.usc.edu.

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