Quality Assurance
By MDI Intern

Problem: Vegan students are unsatisfied with Food Zoo vegan options.

Desired Outcome: Improve the vegan student population's satisfaction with Food Zoo dining.

Process: ask vegan students for input, implement a vegan dining guide to help vegan students become more aware of their options, analyze feasibility of implementing their suggestions, look up alternative items to be ordered (for both allergen-free corner and main line) and list with order numbers, test vegan recipes to be made in house and add them to CBORD, and finally provide suggestions to food service managers.

1. The first step was to find out why vegan students aren't satisfied with U of M campus dining. To find out, vegan students were questioned during counseling sessions. After compiling comments, common items requested by vegan students were:
    - Savory protein option for breakfast
    - Vegan alternatives to regular items such as meatballs/alfredo sauce
    - Vegan ice cream/popsicle
    - Cauliflower on wing bar
    - Pasta bar more frequently
    - Plain pasta on main line more often as vegan starch
    - Better vegan salad dressing
    - Vegan cheese
    - Beyond burger

2. The second step towards increasing the satisfaction from vegan students was helping to explain why implementing some of their ideas aren't feasible financially. For example: putting out a dairy-free ice cream is something the food service staff would like to do for their vegan students, however, non-vegan students would likely start eating it too because it's trendy or because they may think it's healthier. Since the price point of dairy-free ice cream is much higher, this would be a huge added expense. Instead, something like a fruit popsicle would be feasible because the price isn't as high so it wouldn't put the food service team over their budget. This was performed in counseling sessions when vegan students were giving their input.

3. The third step was to implement a printout guide to vegan dining on campus so that vegan students become more familiar with what we already offer. This was created specifically for U of M vegan dining and also includes creative vegan meal ideas that can be made with items in the dining hall. See attachment.

4. The fourth step was to research new vegan products on the market that would fit in the U of M food service budget, satisfy the vegan students, and provide nutrient dense food options. A list of new items with UNFI item numbers was created for the vegan/allergen-free area of the dining hall, and new vegan items to incorporate into main line vegan recipes are listed below.

5. The fifth step was to test vegan recipes and find new vegan food items to order that could satisfy some of the requests from students. Recipes were standardized and added to CBORD so it would be easy for the chefs to implement.

6. The sixth step was to provide suggestions to the food service managers. Student comments were emailed over along with suggestions as to a feasible way to go about changing current practices to better suit their needs. New items and tested recipes were brought up to the food service managers in 'menu meeting'. The list of new items with order codes was also sent over to minimize barriers to making some of these changes.

New vegan recipes to serve: (tested and added to CBORD)

Tofu scrambled eggs
Vegan Alfredo
Vegan Parmesan
***see attached recipes**

Meat substitutes to offer on occasion:

1. "Meatballs" for pasta bar/pasta entrees
   -Gardein Meatless Meatballs --70664 UNFI
   -$32.69 for 8-12.7 oz packages
2. Beyond Sausage Brat for utilization in vegan entrees & etc line.
   -Sysco UPC # 7041556
   -$81.39 for 50 3.5 oz brats

Frozen Vegan Waffles:

1. Van's International Foods Wheat Free Waffles Ancient Grains 12/8 oz -- UNFI 70396 $31.36
2. Kashi Waffles Original Gluten Free 8/10.1 oz UNFI -- 35151 $27.05
3. Nature's Path Flax Plus Waffles 12/7.4 oz UNFI – 72194 $31.70

Frozen vegan dessert item: (to be offered near regular ice cream)

1. Blue Bunny/Blue Ribbon Popsicle Assorted Twin Pop (cherry, orange & grape)
   -Sysco UPC # - 1666163
   -$14.19 for 48 ($0.30 each)
   -cost effective even if non-vegan students are enjoying them
2. Jolly Rancher ice cream bomb pop: (vegan however notes that MAY contain milk or peanuts)
   -sysco UPC # 4147429
   -$15.6 for 24 ($0.65 each)

New vegan items to carry in the allergen-friendly corner:

Mayo:

1. Earth Balance Mindful Mayo – 13444 UNFI
2. Chosen Foods Vegan, Avocado Oil Mayo – 08027 UNFI

Seed Butters:

1. 88 Acres Unsweetened Pumpkin Seed Butter – 29383 UNFI
2. Beyond the Equator 5 seed Butter – 28941 UNFI

Desserts:

1. Nana's Gluten-Free Lemon Cookies (nut-free/soy-free/vegan)– 35024 UNFI
2. Nana's Gluten-Free Snickerdoodle Cookies (nut-free/soy-free/vegan)– 75926 UNFI

Granola:

1. Made Good Crispy Strawberry Granola -- 19756 UNFI

Breads: (both special order from Little Northern Bakehouse)

1. Dinner rolls
2. Bagels (plain, everything, cinnamon raisin, or blueberry)

Tortilla:

1. Siete Grain-free tortilla shells -- 29051 UNFI

Chips/Crackers:

1. Siete Grain-Free Lime Tortilla Chips – 16956 UNFI
2. Siete Grain-Free Ranch Tortilla Chips – 10956 UNFI
3. Edward and Sons Brown Rice Snaps (crackers) plain, unsalted – 36183 UNFI
4. Ka-pop Ancient Grain Chips - source TBD (brian is working on it)
    a. Cheddar(vegan)
    b. Rosemary Garlic
    c. Salt and Vinegar
    d. Olive Oil and Sea Salt

Additional suggestions based on student comments:

1. Serve roasted cauliflower at wing bar since most of the sauces are already vegan
2. Provide more walnuts and coconut flakes near the oatmeal station
3. Serve plain pasta at main line more frequently
4. Run pasta bar more frequently
5. Use soy milk or nuts in more vegan entrees to make it a complete protein
6. Provide protein breakfast option ie tofu scramble (recipe tested)

Note: implementing the new recipes tested would not require staff training on using new equipment and are all very simple and straightforward recipes. The price point of making a tofu scramble is higher than an egg scramble, and the price point of making cashew sauce is higher than regular alfredo, however, not many of the students will be eating these items when traditional versions are also available. With very small batches of these dishes served every so often, the vegan students would be much more satisfied with their dining experience and feel as if the chefs are thinking about them too. The same is true for offering alternative meat products on occasion.