

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Sustainable Benefits of the Fayetteville Farmers Market

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UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

THE PROBLEM

After visiting numerous farmers markets all across the country, we wanted to find a way to become involved with our local market. This was made a possibility when last semester we were informed of the internships available with the market through the sustainability department. We applied, interviewed with the head organizer of the market, and later went on to play key roles in the managing aspect, as well as another new project that came about this year. We were very grateful to have the chance to connect the community with fresh, high quality produce from local farmers. It was not only beneficial to us from a sustainable standpoint, but being business majors, we further saw what it took to put together such a large event/initiative. The problem is that too much of our food travels thousands of miles to reach our plates, we wanted to get locally grown, organic foods into the mouths of people in Northwest Arkansas and kids in the Fayetteville Public School District

THE PROJECT

To reach a conclusion for our project, we needed to quantify just how much produce was sold to the schools, the average amount of people attending the market at various times of the year, peak interest, the average distance we traveled to bring the produce from the local farms to the school compared to what it might normally take food to reach students from a typical school food service, as well as fellow members of the community. This data was vital to see the impact in the region, but furthermore, an impact on a global scale. The information we found indicated emissions were copiously reduced while people's happiness and overall health went up by eating a more nutrient dense product. If that isn't a winning combination, I don't know what is.

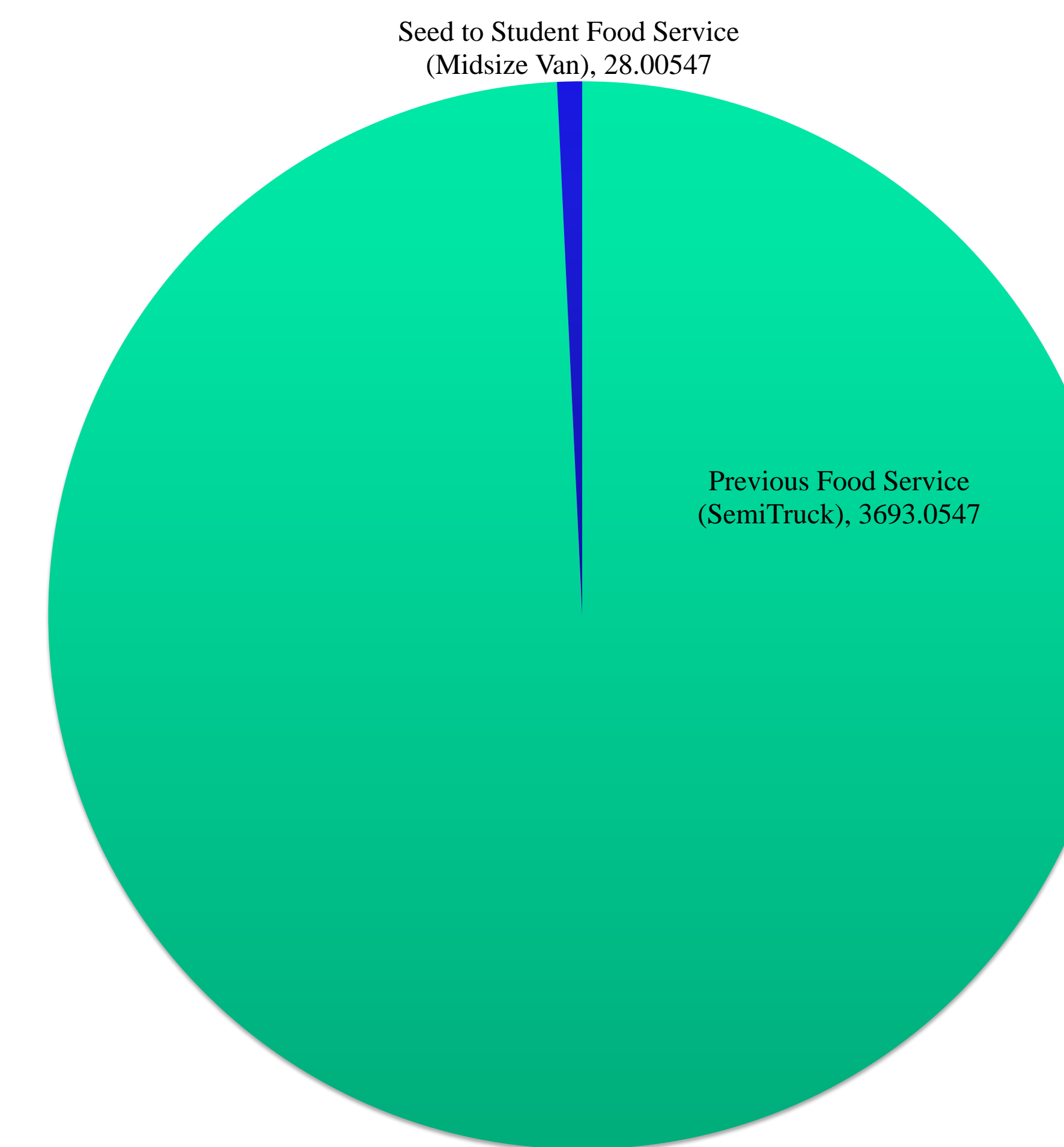
Table 7. Mean Ratings of Produce Sold at Farmers' Markets Versus Supermarkets.

Based on 5-point scale	Farmers' markets (n=336)	Supermarkets (n=336)
Highly Desirable		
Fresh looking	4.24*	3.78
Fresh tasting	4.17*	3.53
High quality product	4.06*	3.62
Good value for the money	3.83*	3.61
Reasonably priced	3.63*	3.42
Moderately Desirable		
Grown in my country	4.27*	3.29
Inexpensive	3.29	3.30
Grown by local farmers	4.20*	2.84
Good for the environment	3.46*	2.89
Can be traced to the processor & grower	3.86*	2.74
Slightly Desirable		
Irradiated to kill bacteria	2.55	3.12*
Organically grown	3.05*	2.53

* Indicates statistical significance at the 0.05 level using paired sample t-test.

Chart from http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/Wolf_Spittler_and_Ahern/Perceived_Advantages_of_Produce_Sold_at_Farmers'_Markets

Carbon Emissions Averages: Total Pounds CO2 Per Route



SUSTAINABILITY

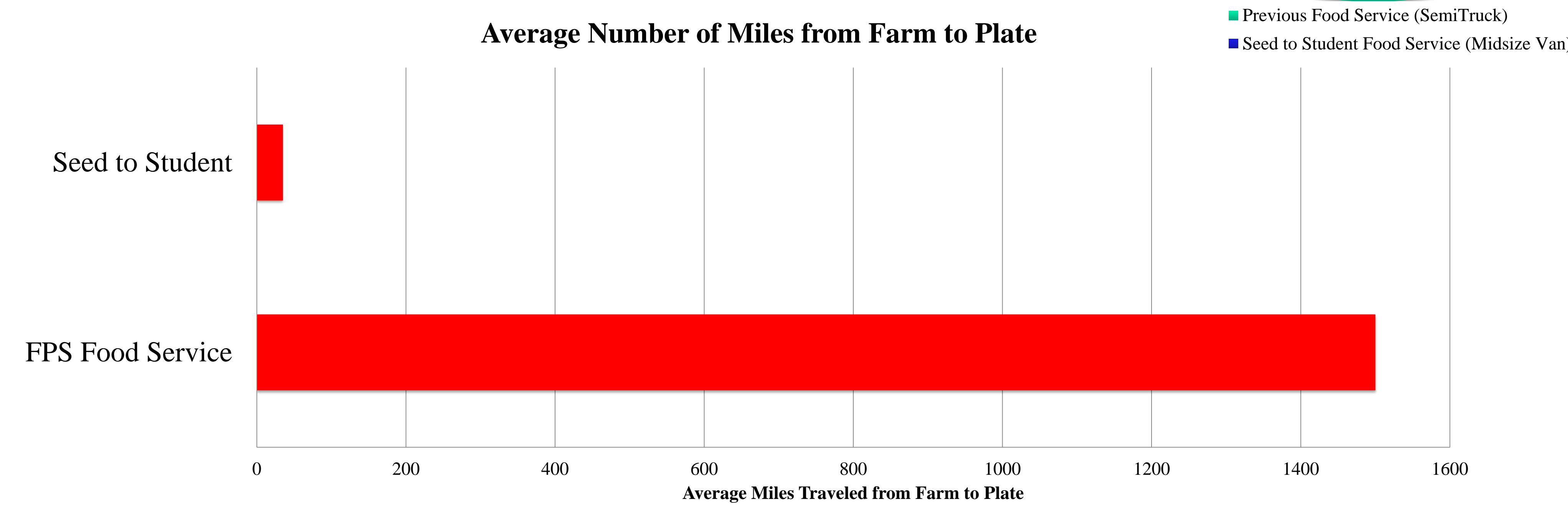
SEED TO STUDENT:

Fayetteville Public Schools have teamed up with the Fayetteville Farmers Market and it's farmers to bring locally grown produce into the local schools. The relatively new initiative called Seed to Student is the next best thing for the local community. Seed to Student initiative is bringing the freshest most nutrient dense foods to the school kids, at the same time lowering the GHGE and the distance the food has to travel, all while supporting the local economy. The Seed to Student Initiative has resulted in 1622 pounds of fresh local produce being sold to Fayetteville Public Schools since May 2014.

FAYETTEVILLE FARMERS MARKET:

With an average of 215,000+ visitors a year, the market is bringing locally grown, fresh produce and meats to our local community resulting in the most nutrient dense produce, happy outgoing vibe, all while supporting local economies and families.

Average Number of Miles from Farm to Plate



Shown Above: Meatball subs with Farmer's Market Tomato Sauce: meatballs prepared with Shumate Farm; ground beef, bell peppers from McGarrah Farms, shredded zucchini from various growers and Farmer's Market Tomato Sauce using tomatoes from various Fayetteville, Arkansas Farmers' Market growers;

Cinnamon Applesauce: Grown and produced by A&A Orchard; Springtime Salad with Ozark Strawberries from dickey farms



Shown Above: A vendor from "Mountain Greenery from Winslow, Arkansas" showing off her naturally grown, no chemical sprays or synthetic fertilizers produce at the Fayetteville Farmers Market on the downtown square.



Shown Above: A Fayetteville Public School student about to eat a nutritious salad from locally grown lettuce



Shown Above: A buffet section at a local Fayetteville Public School displaying the farms where the foods came from.

On the left: Local Butternut Squash from Dickey Farms

On the right: Local Baked Apples from A&A Orchards