The Real Food Calculator, developed by the non-profit Real Food Challenge (RFC), represents a third-party standard used by over 130 institutions of higher education. RFC defines “real food” as being ecologically sound, humanely raised, community based, or fair. The rigorous standards for each category were developed in tandem with the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The Carleton RFC Calculator project is a joint effort between the Center for Civic and Community Engagement, Sustainability Office, and Bon Appétit. Student workers analyzed all October and February Bon Appétit invoices in order to keep track of how much “real food” Carleton purchases annually and to make informed decisions about how Bon Appétit can shift its purchases toward more “real food.” Below are highlights from the 2015/2016 results:

Light green: Real Food B, signifies that the food item fulfills one RFC standard.
Dark green: Real Food A, signifies that the food item fulfills at least two RFC standards.

Where to go from here?
-- Focus on non-seasonally dependent changes in order to increase both the fall and winter percent.
-- Potential changes that would affect fall and winter are increasing real food in meat or poultry.
  - Switching all non-real chicken to real chicken increases real food percentage 5.6%.
  - Buying humane or organic bacon would increase the real food percent by 1.9%

For more complete findings or any questions or comments, contact steinp@carleton.edu.