Trayless dining is not proven waste solution

"Many with the tray"... If you have made an effort to limit your waste production, you have probably had this experience at least once. The campaign to make the dining halls trayless at Truman State University was spearheaded by the Environmental Campus Organization (ECO) last year and has not been able to decide on its next move. The campus community, the Editorial Board and members of the Truman family — including students, employees — have all been affected in some way.

Although ECO’s campaign has not found a concrete solution to its goal of removing the plastic used in going trayless, it has generated a fair amount of conversation and speculation about whether the plastic used in the previous system was actually a waste production. Although Trayless Dining Office (TDO), the entity in charge of implementing trayless dining in the past, has reduced waste at Sodexo because of a lack of trays, there “has been no documented evidence that cafeterias without trays is the way to go,” according to a story in the April 2 issue of the Index. Sodexo calculates that 25 to 30 percent of students already are going trayless, however, so ECO has put a huge amount of time and effort into getting students to switch to a trayless dining system.

And there are other signs that going trayless is a win for the environment.

The campus community has been affected by trayless dining for several reasons. First, going trayless has reduced the amount of waste generated. Second, trayless dining allows students to be more efficient with their meals — cafeterias will no longer use excess disposable containers to bring home leftovers. Finally, going trayless has reduced the amount of time students spend in dining lines as card-swiping becomes an option. Food production is forced to adjust between both a la carte and trayless dining options.

TDO has put a lot of effort into the trayless dining campaign, and it will continue to do so. What’s more, the campus community is beginning to appreciate the benefits of trayless dining. There is no real statistical evidence that going trayless is a win for the environment.

letters to the editor

Index offers needed coverage of crisis

In the April 2 issue of the Index, a story on page 1 stated that Brett Knight was charged with a crime that was not present in the original version of the story. The Index regrets the error. The Index is working on improving its coverage of crisis, such as that of North Korea. It is disturbing that in the history of the Index, there has been no coverage of the crisis of North Korea, or any other countries, until now.

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