NEWS The Evergreen State College Olympia, Washington 98501

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Higher food prices are affecting everyone's budget these days. And, a number of people in Olympia -- including students from The Evergreen State College and concerned area residents --- will convene May 8 and 9 for a free, public Food Conference to share perspectives on what can be done to ease the crunch.

The two-day event, organized by a student-Olympia-area group called Community Resources Conference, will be held from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday and from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at the Olympia Community Center (1314 East 4th).

Purpose of the meetings, according to Conference Spokesperson Thom Thacker, is "to give Olympia-area residents a chance to discuss rising food prices and related topics, including community gardens, food buying groups, recycling, and the West Coast Food Cooperative System.

"We've all seen major changes in the food industry in the past few years," Thacker says. "Most of us don't understand why food shortages exist --- only that we're paying more and more money for less and less food. It's hard to see who's involved in the food price hikes, but hopefully we can share some answers and some solutions at this conference."

An original play, "That's Agri-Biz," will be staged at 7:30 p.m. Saturday by the Theatre of the Unemployed, and lunch and dinner will also be served. Brunch will be available Sunday from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and childcare will be provided. Interested persons are invited to call 943-6772 for additional conference information or 866-0303 for details on childcare arrangements.

> Dick Nichols, Director Information Services