

Everybody
Benefits

Portland's Campaign for
Earned Sick Days 

January 2013

Dear Fellow Portland Chefs & Restaurateurs,

Portland's restaurant scene enjoys an incredible reputation across the country – even the globe. We've earned it through our uniquely Portland approach to food. We are blessed with bountiful soil and a dynamic local farming community that produces an abundance of sustainable ingredients.

We care about our impact. We compost. We recycle. We grow our own herbs and even vegetables – sometimes right on our rooftops. In short, we're leaders, which is exactly what Portland eaters demand, and we happily, skillfully, creatively, and sustainably deliver.

Clearly, we care about the food we serve and how we serve it, but there's something missing: most of the people we depend on to chop, wash, sauté, and serve our amazing harvest don't have one of the basic elements of job security -- paid sick days. When they're ill, they can't stay home to recover without losing income that we all know they need. They can't stay home with a sick child -- who shouldn't be in school or childcare where they infect others and recover more slowly.

A lack of paid sick days is not good for the people we depend on to bring our culinary visions to the customer's tables (free of germs). It's not good for the families who depend on our employees for care and financial support. It's not good for our customers, who deserve to be served by healthy people who are treated well in return for their labor.

Providing paid sick days does not conform to our industry's "standard," which is why it's a perfect opportunity for Portland's restaurant industry. If we all take this step forward, together, we will *all* be better off. Once again, we'll be leading in the food movement.

Sustainability is about more than serving organic, locally sourced food. The human and economic aspects of sustainability are equally important, and that's why we support a paid sick days policy in Portland. We want to enable our employees – and the food service employees across the city on which we depend – to be able to stay home when they're sick or need to care for a sick family member without losing needed pay.

Please join us to create an even more remarkable food scene here in Portland.

Sincerely,

Ben Mayer | Grain & Gristle + Old Salt Marketplace
Brian Snyder | Pine State Biscuits
Bryan Steelman | ¿Por Que No?
Saron Khut | Mekong Bistro