At a snail's pace: Slow Food's measured move from Tuscany to Chicago

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Slow dancing and slow motion are familiar terms to most people, but have you ever heard of Slow Food? Slow Food is a fast growing movement in cities worldwide. It is the movement that is credited with saving the most famous restaurant in the United States and around the world. The movement promotes healthy, fair trade and quality food; a reflection of today’s awareness of the principles behind green, organic, local and hand-made products. Slow Food is more than a movement; it’s a multifaceted, global-scale social movement. For over 10 years, the movement’s growth has been painful-

slow. Slow Food’s attempt to entrench itself in the land of endless drive-thru restaurants has met its fiercest competitor yet: 50 years of fast-food culture. However, despite this uphill battle, Slow Food USA is showing prom- ise in the United States formed since its arrival.

Among the problems facing Slow Food USA is the question: what would an historically American food culture look like? Though tasty, few Americans would label culturally significant food as foo. In this respect, Slow Food stands for fairtrade and quality food. /T_hough not a vegetarian movement, the idea of clean food culture looks like recuperating the relations with our own land, our bodies, fellow citizens, the environment and public policies. For a week, students observe the Slow Food movement and food policy in action as part of their M.A. studies. Many of the students returned anxious to create and participate in similar practices here in Chicago.

One such method for participation exists through Chicago's own local Slow Food chapter (slowfoodchicago.org), which has adapted its approach to suit the windy city. The entire volunteer organization provides listings for various Slow Food events, schedules for neighborhood farmer's markets and recommendations for local restaurants that adhere to the Slow Food principles. Local staples include Logan Square's Funky Lula's Cafe or the Loop's sky-scraping Everest. Regardless of price, there is a definite taste difference that the food tradesmen and women at Slow Food USA is about recuperating the relations with our own land, our bodies, fellow citizens, the environment and public policies. Slow Food's attempt to entrench itself in the land of endless drive-thru restaurants has met its fiercest competitor yet: 50 years of fast-food culture. However, despite this uphill battle, Slow Food USA is showing promise in the United States formed since its arrival.

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