

Monadnock Table

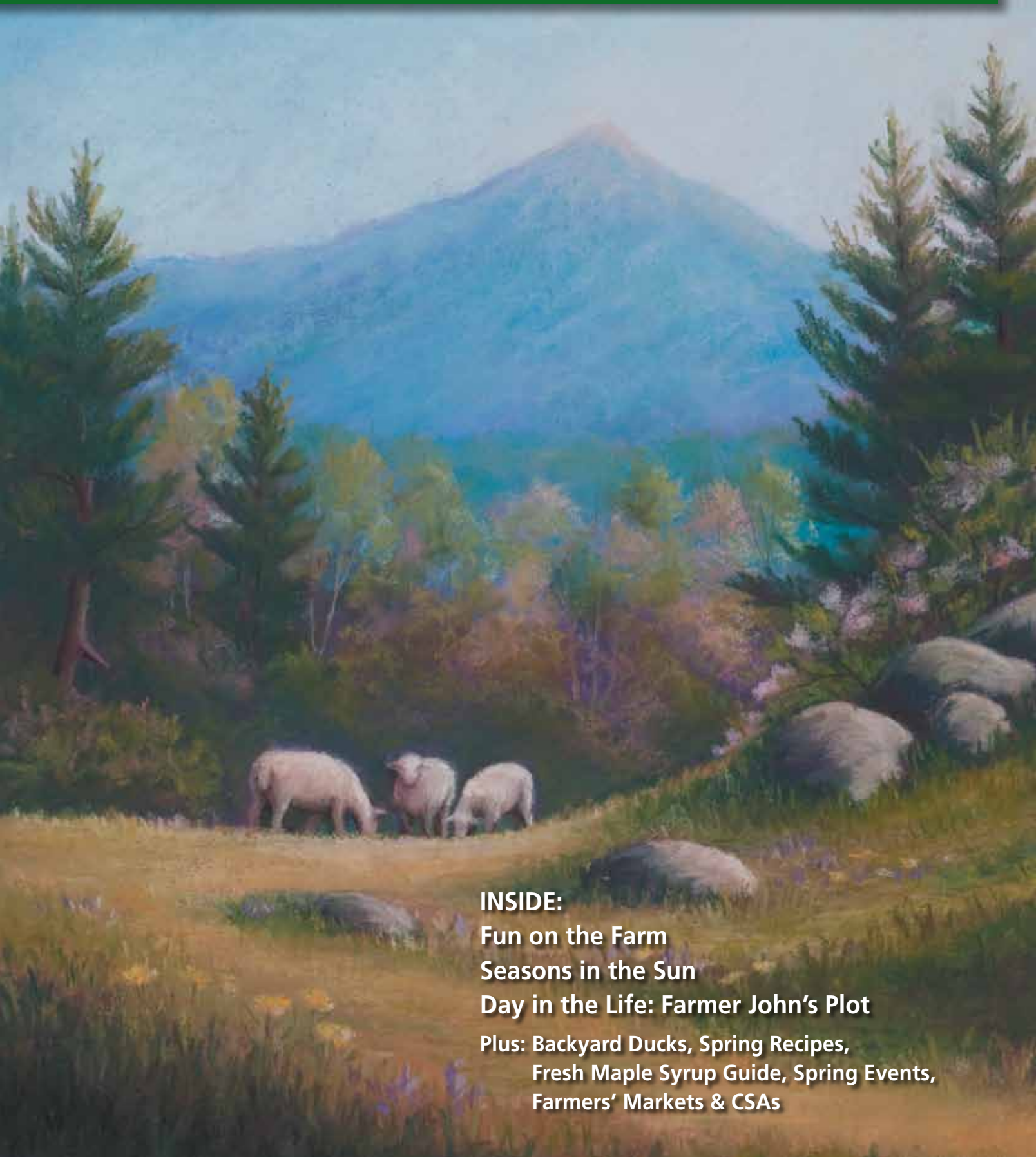
Issue 8 • Spring 2012

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INSIDE:

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Seasons in the Sun

Day in the Life: Farmer John's Plot

Plus: Backyard Ducks, Spring Recipes,
Fresh Maple Syrup Guide, Spring Events,
Farmers' Markets & CSAs

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ON THE COVER *Sheep with a View*, by Donna Bascom Lund Pastel, 9.5" x 12"



Donna Bascom Lund's work has been exhibited in local venues, galleries and art shows and is sold throughout New England and the world. Lund is a member of the Walpole Artisan Cooperative, Monadnock Area Art Association and the Saxtons River Art Guild; she is available for commission of home or barn portraits in watercolor, acrylic or pastel. Lund lives in East Alstead with her husband, Perley.



To be considered for this publication's cover art and other artwork, please send Jodi Genest, creative director, a link to your online portfolio for review: jodi@monadnocktable.com.

Photos (clockwise from top): Flying Cloud Dairy by Jess Gerrior; Crescendo Acres by Marcia Passos Duffy; Flying Cloud Dairy by Jess Gerrior; Spring Greens Soup by Katrina Hall; The Inn at East Hill Farm by Al Karevy; Donna Bascom Lund courtesy the artist; Acorn squash seeds by Jodi Genest. Photo of cover painting by Al Karevy.

A Taste of Spring

**"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant:
if we did not sometimes taste of adversity,
prosperity would not be so welcome."**

— Anne Bradstreet (New England 17th-century poet)

As I sit down to write this column, it is mid-January; the winter season's first snow has blanketed our vegetable garden before I could pick the last of my kale. My husband has just brought in freshly split wood. The cats and dog hover appreciatively by the wood-burning stove. The days and nights are filled with hot beverages, blankets, lingering holiday decorations, wool socks, scarves, hats and a reluctance to leave home.

I don't find it entirely unpleasant, this hunkering down until spring. Our winters, while harsh, don't cause us undue suffering as they must have to New England colonists of the 1600s, when Bradstreet wrote her sentiments about spring (I imagine she wouldn't have forgotten to pick *her* kale before the winter's first snowfall).

Spring, to us in this century, means throwing open the windows. Ordering our garden seeds. Getting our first taste of fresh maple syrup. But to our early settlers, spring meant more than a reason to romp outside in shorts. It meant that they had survived "a taste of adversity."

Farmers, like our early settlers, depend intensely on the seasons for their livelihood. Meanwhile, for the majority of us, income depends little on whether the sun shines, or if the winter is long or short, or the summer wet or dry. Farmers see the seasons — and the arrival of spring — through a very different lens.

This is a slice of life that not many of us experience firsthand. Except if you are lucky enough to visit a farm on an extended visit, as do the students that visit East Hill Farm's "Farm School," as writer Katherine P. Cox explains in this issue's feature story, "Fun on the Farm."

I was impressed by the wisdom of these 12 and 13 year olds after just four days of living and working on the farm. One girl concludes after her stay that farm life "... takes a lot of energy, expense and ability."

It also takes, I will add, courage to taste the kind of adversity that Bradstreet talks about — which, in turn, makes the arrival of spring so welcome.

— Marcia



Marcia Passos Duffy



Jodi Genest

Photos: Marcia Passos Duffy, Mei Genest



PUBLISHERS

Marcia Passos Duffy
Jodi Genest

EDITORIAL

EDITOR: Marcia Passos Duffy
COPY EDITOR: Donna Moxley
PROOFREADER: Carol Urofsky

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Katherine P. Cox, Jess Gerrior, Katrina Hall,
Amanda Maurmann, Kimberly Peck, Jen Risley,
Jeanne Prevett Sable, Andrea Chickering Sawyer,
Tracie Smith, Wendy Thomas, Willard Williams

DESIGN

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Jodi Genest
CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS:
Sue Bunton, Donna Bascom Lund
CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS:
Katrina Hall, Al Karevy, Michael Moore,
Kimberly Peck
ADVERTISING PRODUCTION:
Margo Hrubec, Ron Wasko

ADVERTISING SALES

Carol Lake, Angy Lombara, Jeanne Morin

ADVISORY BOARD

Jacqueline Caserta, *The Inn at Valley Farms*
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Jen Risley, *Hannah Grimes Center*

CONTACT US

Monadnock Table, LLC
PO Box 1504
Keene, NH 03431
info@monadnocktable.com
www.monadnocktable.com
(603) 357-8761 • (603) 358-6954
Follow us on Facebook & Twitter

Monadnock Table is published quarterly by Monadnock Table, LLC and distributed throughout the Monadnock Region of southwestern New Hampshire. Monadnock Table, LLC supports our local farmers and food producers and aims to connect them with Monadnock Region consumers. Our goal is to inform the Monadnock community about the art and science of growing, preparing, cooking and storing local foods, to highlight local farms and food events, and to promote local foods and products.

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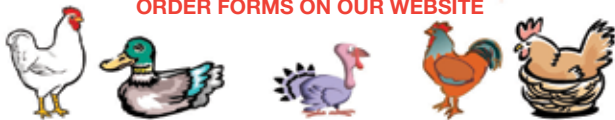


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Table Talk

FOOD AND FARM NEWS FROM THE REGION AND BEYOND

Peterborough Goes Green in May



PETERBOROUGH — Greenerborough, New England's Green Living Expo and Festival, will be going on all day in downtown Peterborough on Saturday, May 5.

Part tech fair, home show and farmers' market — and topped off with live music all day — Greenerborough, which started as an annual festival in 2008, has exhibitors and other events that explore "green" concepts, including alternative energy technologies, lower impact lifestyle choices and more localized agriculture and industry.

The event is produced by the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Peterborough Grange.

Exhibits and activities officially begin at 10 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. But event coordinators urge festival-goers to stay in town for shopping and dinner, and then head to the Town House for the Peterborough First Saturday Contra Dance at 7:30 p.m.

For more information, including exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities: greenerboroughnh.com.

Photos: courtesy Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce



Farm Store Opens at Walpole Valley Farms

WALPOLE — Walpole Valley Farms has opened a farm store in the old milk room of its dairy barn. The farm store is open Saturday

10 a.m.-3 p.m. and by appointment. Starting March 14, the farm store will also open its doors on Wednesdays from 6-10 p.m.

The farm store offers 35 different cuts of its pasture-raised beef, plus chicken, pork, lamb, eggs and maple syrup.

"It's a simple store, but people like it," says farm owner Chris Caserta. "It's heated and in good weather we put Adirondack chairs outside for people to sit and enjoy the farm."

For more information call Walpole Valley Farms at 603-756-2805, or visit: walpolevalleyfarms.com.



Locally Made Chicken Coops Available

FITZWILLIAM — Blueberry Hill Sheds & Barns now offers locally made chicken coops. Ron Cormier, owner, says he can provide several shapes and sizes of chicken coops for customers to choose from; he also will take custom orders.

Cormier, who sells locally made tool sheds and run-in sheds for livestock, says he has added chicken coops to his line-up of products because of customer demand. As with his other locally made sheds, Cormier says he can offer a reduced price compared to sheds built out of state. "We can pass on the savings, and we can produce them with a shorter delivery time," he says.

For more information contact Blueberry Hill Sheds and Barns at 603-242-3152, or visit blueberryhillsheds.net.



Photos: courtesy Walpole Valley Farms; Dreamstime

Send your Table Talk news to: Marcia Passos Duffy, editor@monadnocktable.com. Please put "Table Talk" in the subject line.

Two Monadnock Region Inns Named in Yankee Magazine's Top 10 Historic Inns

DUBLIN — Two Monadnock Region inns were recently named among the top 10 historic inns in New England by Dublin-based Yankee Magazine. Hancock Inn in Hancock, which ranked #5, and The Inn at Valley Farms of Walpole, ranked #8, were the only New Hampshire-based inns that topped the list.

The magazine rated historic inns in New England built before 1799 on the following criteria: comfort, historic ambience, food, setting, things to do nearby, value, hearths, a storied past and a nice library.

The Hancock Inn is the only New Hampshire inn that has been in continuous operation since 1789.

The Inn at Valley Farms, previously a private 1774 Colonial home, is located on 105 acres at Walpole Valley Farms; it is also known for its green efforts and was the first property in the Monadnock Region to be named "Environmental Champion" by the NH Sustainable Restaurant and Lodging Association in 2009.

For more information on the Hancock Inn visit hancockinn.com. For more information about The Inn at Valley Farms visit innatvalleyfarms.com.



The Hancock Inn (left) and The Inn at Valley Farms (top) designated by Yankee Magazine as two of New England's top 10 historic inns.

Photos (above and at left): courtesy the Inn at Valley Farms and The Hancock Inn

Four More Keene Gardens to Sprout

KEENE — Keene Community Garden Connections (CGC), a project of Antioch University New England's Department of Environmental Studies, has chosen four new sites for community gardens in 2012.

The following groups will have community garden projects in 2012: Keene Family YMCA and the Kids InSHAPE program (through

Monadnock Family Services), Building Bridges Clubhouse (a program of Keene Housing Authority), The Woodward Home and the Keene Senior Center.

The new sites bring the number of community gardens in Keene to six. During the last growing season, CGC partnered with Harper Acres on Castle Street and the Keene

Recreation Center on Washington Street to develop the first two garden sites.

The purpose of the project is to build Keene's local capacity to grow food and address issues of food insecurity related to climate change, personal and communal health and resiliency. For more information visit: antiochne.edu/cgc.

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The Emotional Power of Local Food

By Skye Stephenson

Pumpkin pie, peanut butter, pig’s feet, *picoroco* (Chilean barnacles): each a special food loved by some people in this beautiful and diverse world — and disliked by others. Perhaps one of the most common human characteristics is our deep connection to the foods we eat — a connection that goes way beyond our physical need for sustenance.

I have worked in international education for many years, and observed countless people trying to adjust to different cultural settings far from their home. Often, food proves to be the major source of so-called “homesickness.”

For a long time, I considered this strong emotional connection with “local food” to be rather superficial. But recently, I have gained a better understanding of the significance of our relationship with the food of our family and community.

This aliveness of local foods and the emotional power of familiar foods from our home are part and parcel of the same broad truth: We have a profound relationship with what we eat.

Luis Fernando Sarango Macas is a Saraguro man from Ecuador who is president of an indigenous university. I recently had the great pleasure of hosting him in Keene. During his visit, I asked him if it was true what I had once read about the

indigenous Saraguro people: that they regard leftover food to be unhealthy. He explained that this traditional belief came from a time when everything his people ate was freshly picked from their gardens, and still “alive,” as he put it.

“But these days,” he said with a touch of sadness in his voice, “most of our food comes from the supermarket and no supermarket food is ‘alive.’ It is good that people in the Monadnock area are

trying to bring back locally grown food. We are trying to do the same thing, but it is not easy.”

I like this concept of only certain foods being “alive.” I’ve always sensed that the “energy” of the CSA vegetables I get every week is definitely stronger than the same type of produce I purchase at the supermarket, which has typically been picked a while ago and shipped in from far away.

This aliveness of local foods and the emotional power of familiar foods from our home are part and parcel of the same broad truth: We have a profound relationship with what we eat. This relationship involves so much more than just purchasing, chewing and digesting something to stave off our hunger for a few hours.

For many indigenous peoples, a community includes not only humans, but also the plants and stones and mountains and rivers and lakes and more. They are part of us and we are part of them. It is a two-way relationship. The indigenous shamans of Siberia, (from whom the term “shaman” is derived), call the animals and plants around us “other-than-people” people.

Looked at in this way, using locally grown produce is a way of strengthening our connections with “other-than-people” people: with our maple trees, which allow us to siphon off some of their sap for syrup; our wild blueberry bushes that freely share their fruits with us; our kale and cabbage lovingly grown on organic plots of land nearby, and more. These “other-than-people” people are also part of our community. By partaking of our local food — gifts, really — with joy and gratitude we are consciously choosing the kind of relationship we want to have with them. Their aliveness becomes part of our aliveness, and together we strengthen our community and connection to the earth upon which we reside. 🌱

Skye Stephenson, PhD, is an intercultural educator and licensed crystal healer who uses writing to promote healing and transformation. She is author of the new book, The Spirits of Jade (Carnelian Press, 2011), a mystical/political novel based in the Monadnock Region and Latin America. Stephenson is available for book readings and workshops. Visit her websites: skystephenson.com and jadejourneys.org.




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Flying on a Dream

by Jess Gerrior



hen William “Bill” Jahos was in kindergarten, he

drew a crayon picture of himself as a farmer and the dairy he would someday run. It took many years to fulfill this dream, but 15 years ago Jahos started Flying Cloud Dairy, a small country farm perched among Alstead’s steep, picturesque hills.

On the day I visited, his 22 milking cows were enjoying fresh grass and hay in the pasture under a blue-gray sky. The cows produce close to 100 gallons of milk each week; Jahos sells the raw milk direct from the farm and locally through a handful of stores.

Cows that eat fresh grass and hay are healthier and produce the best milk, Jahos says. It takes about three years for one Flying Cloud Dairy cow to get ready for milk production. That’s a year longer than for conventionally raised dairy cows, because cows raised on grain grow faster, he notes. But, Jahos says, it is worth it: His customers love the taste of his cows’ milk.

While Jahos enjoys being a farmer — the farm is also home to a small flock of sheep and 50 egg-laying hens — he says the business side of dairying “is tough.” Some weeks the cows produce

“Farming may not be the way to make a good living, but it’s a good way to live.”

more milk than Jahos can sell, and without an outlet for surplus milk (for example, a cheese-making

operation), profits dip. Plus, market prices and demand often fluctuate rapidly. Bottling, trucking and marketing the milk take considerable time and money — time that is taken away from farm work. This year Jahos’ farm insurance company stopped offering coverage for raw milk, and he says many companies’ premiums are “out of the ozone layer” — a problem for many small farmers. A farmer’s only option is often to raise prices, but there are limits to that, too, he says.



Farm: Flying Cloud Dairy Town: Alstead Farmer: Bill Jahos
Raise: Dairy Cows, Sheep, Egg-laying Chickens

He notes that his small dairy business is helped by the people in the surrounding community who are supportive of small farming and local business, and the growth of the local food movement helps. That community support was evident last year when a double disaster hit Jahos’ farm: He lost an equipment barn to snow load, and then his home to fire. The Alstead community rallied around the farm and held two fundraisers to help him out.

Jahos has yet to rebuild his house — he is now living with family in East Alstead and sometimes stays overnight at his farm in a teepee — but hopes that business will pick up enough in 2012 to start building. While that prophetic piece of art that Jahos drew as a child is one of a number of treasures that disappeared in the fire, he remains optimistic about farming and says he can’t imagine doing anything else.

He shares the sentiment that he says is common among his friends and fellow farmers: “Farming may not be the way to make a good living, but it’s a good way to live.”

You can purchase Flying Cloud Dairy milk right at the farm at 426 Hill Road, Alstead, 603-835-2519, bjahos@comcast.net, or at Hannah Grimes Marketplace in Keene and Nature’s Green Grocer in Peterborough.

Jess Gerrior is an educator, writer and consultant with an interest in sustainable communities and food. She is a mother of three children, at least one of whom is thinking of becoming a farmer.

Photo: Jess Gerrior

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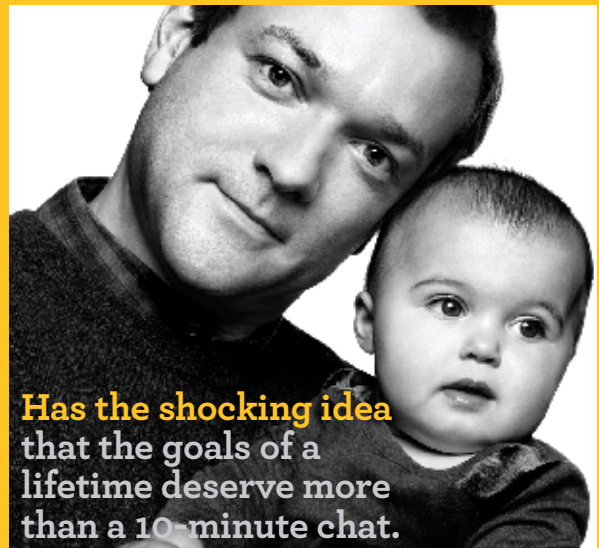


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A Restaurant with Roots

By Wendy Thomas

There's a sign beside the front door of the Hilltop Café & Bakery in Wilton that reads: "Joseph Abbot House 1765." It's a building with roots, precisely what the three restaurant partners had in mind when they opened their doors in January 2010: to develop deep roots within the Wilton local community. Christie Reed, her husband Ben and Lincoln Geiger joined to form a team that aims to not only feed its customers healthy and nutritious food, but also to become a centerpiece in the community that shows the relationship between the land and the food it delivers.

An important aspect of the Hilltop Café & Bakery is the farm just outside the restaurant's door: the Temple Wilton Community Farm, a CSA owned by Geiger that supplies food to 100 families (and has a waiting list of 120 more). The CSA grows the organic and bio-dynamic vegetables and herbs, and supplies the milk, eggs and some of the meat used in the restaurant.

The farm is essential to the eating experience at the Café. Customers who have finished their meals will frequently go out to visit with the nearby cows, pigs and calves. One of the farm's goals is to create an area where children and adults can interact directly with the farm animals. The café's owners will even ask visitors what they think a new calf should be named and choose a name from the suggestions.

The Hilltop Café has a monthly menu that highlights seasonal produce for breakfast and lunch. Typical menu items include sandwiches (including those made with gluten-free bread), omelets and sweet




Hilltop Café & Bakery owners hope to develop deep roots in the Wilton community. Pictured (l to r) Lincoln Geiger; Christie and Ben Reed and daughter Aria.

and do some work while enjoying a fresh muffin and coffee. The restaurant also offers the chance to hear local musicians with open mic opportunities and space where local artists can display their works. Plans for the upcoming season include planting a large herb garden, expanding the kitchen, installing an outdoor brick oven for breads and pizzas, and additional seating on the patio.

or savory crepes that all include either fresh produce or produce preserved from the summer. The soups are made daily from farm-fresh vegetables and homemade stock. Although the goal is to use only its own foods in the coming season, last year the restaurant also used foods bio-dynamically grown from Nomadic Farms of Wilton and Misty Knoll Farms of New Haven, Vt. The café also provides lunches for the Pine Hill Waldorf School just down the street; mid-day meals for students range from sandwiches and yogurt to samosas with curry and fruit.

The Hilltop Café has Wi-Fi available and welcomes those who would like to sit

According to Reed, the Wilton community had been lacking a center where people could come and meet, and the Hilltop Café has helped to address that need with art, food and education. Geiger sits quietly nodding in agreement with Reed, then adds: "We also wanted to teach the roots of our community ... how we can actually survive with local food and make it into something beautiful and tasty. Food doesn't have to come from far away to be exotic." 

Wendy Thomas is an award-winning journalist, columnist and blogger who lives in the Monadnock Region.



Hilltop Café's Asparagus and Goat Cheese Omelet

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 2 asparagus spears | 3 fresh eggs |
| 1 scallion | Fresh goat cheese (crumbled) |
| 2 tablespoons butter or olive oil, divided | Chives |

Break off tough ends of asparagus spears and slice them at a 45 degree angle in 1/4-inch thick pieces. Mince scallion and chives thinly.

Melt 1 tablespoon butter on medium heat in a 10-inch omelet pan. Toss in the asparagus and scallion. Sauté until asparagus is tender. Remove to a bowl while asparagus is still bright green.

Wipe out omelet pan, return to heat and brush with 1 tablespoon butter or olive oil. Whisk 3 eggs and pour into pan when butter looks frothy. Lift edges of omelet to allow the egg to run underneath.

When eggs are cooked, cover half with asparagus mixture, top with goat cheese and chives and fold it in half. Slide onto a plate and garnish with additional chives. Serve with whole grain toast and local bacon or sausage.

Photos: Michael Moore

Carving in Wood and Ice

BY Jen Risley

Wayne Miller carves both ice and wood from his home and business, The Inn of the Tartan Fox, in Swanzey. Miller says he is mostly self-taught and started carving as a Boy Scout. Since he and his wife, Meg Kupiec, opened their bed & breakfast in 1998, he has devoted even more time to carving.

All of his wooden figures are made from local trees. "Most of my basswood came from a tree off Old Concord Road," Miller says. "The carvings in butternut (wood) are from a tree in Swanzey."

His carvings come in all sizes and are not limited to wood; Miller also carves in ice, a technique he learned when he worked in restaurants. He is now a regular committee member for the annual Keene

Ice & Snow Festival (held in February). In 2011, Miller's carving of "Man and Lamppost" won the "People's Choice" award.

"Ice carves so quickly," Miller notes. "If not for the many layers of clothes, it would be my favorite medium."

Wayne Miller's wooden carvings are sold at The Inn of the Tartan Fox's gift shop and at area craft shows. For more information visit tartanfox.com or call 603-357-9308. ☎

Jen Risley is the education program coordinator at the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene.



Photos: courtesy Wayne Miller



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YOUR GARDENING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

by Amanda Maurmann

Dear Amanda,

Where can I get local, organic seeds?

I don't know of anyone in the area saving organic seeds to sell. So the only way to get truly local seeds is to save them yourself. A great resource to learn about seed saving is through the Monadnock Seed Savers group; they can be reached through The Sustainability Project in Gilsam, NH.

Organic seeds, however, can be acquired through many national seed companies and need only a Google search to find them. Just go to each website and request a free catalog or download a copy. Grab a cup of coffee or tea, a cozy blanket and get ready for hours of entertainment as you leaf through the beautiful and informative pages.

Dear Amanda,

When is the best time to apply manure to the garden?

It depends if you are talking about fresh or composted manure. Fresh manure should be applied only in the fall as it needs time (about three months) to compost before you can harvest from it; otherwise you risk illness from the pathogens found in fresh manure that can get transferred onto vegetables.

On the other hand, composted manure can be applied to your garden anytime; but consider spreading in the fall if you have clay soils that take a long time to dry in the spring. If you have sandier, lighter soils that are able to be cultivated in the spring then you can apply composted manure in the springtime. Make sure you work the manure — fresh or composted — thoroughly into the soil.

Dear Amanda,

I want to attract beneficial insects to my vegetable garden this year. What should I do?

There are two basic and important steps to attracting beneficial insects to your garden.

The first is to plant a diverse variety of vegetables, fruits and flowers with a wide range of bloom times. This allows for insect food in various forms all season long.

Buy and release beneficial insects into your garden.

The second basic and important step is to put away the poison. Chemical insecticides do not discriminate species and new research has shown that non-target insects can be more affected than target insects.

If you do find yourself with a pest problem there are ways to target that pest individually; one method is to buy and release beneficial insects into your garden that feed on the pest.

So instead of automatically reaching for the chemicals, do some



Get local, organic seeds by saving them yourself.

research first. I'm sure you will find creative solutions that rid your garden of the pest problem, and save your bees, butterflies and ladybugs at the same time.

Dear Amanda,

Rabbits ravaged my vegetables last year — what can I do to prevent them from getting into my garden?

Woodchucks were a problem for the first time last season at the farm, so I understand how frustrating it can be to wake up one morning and find your entire garden leveled!

One suggestion: Get a dog! Not necessarily for killing rabbits, but to have a presence around your garden. Many times this can be enough to keep rabbits away. If dog ownership is not in the cards for you, my other suggestion would be to purchase electric fencing. For my woodchuck problem I used fiberglass poles and single-strand electric fencing and created an electrified line about 1 foot off the ground around my garden (actually first it was just around my kale, then it was around my fall cabbage.)

While it won't keep away the deer it did keep my woodchuck from fattening up on kale and cabbage. Just be sure to keep the grass or weeds controlled around the perimeter otherwise you will short out your fence. If deer are a problem, construct your fence (with 2-3 layers of strands) to about 6 feet tall and bait it with peanut butter early in the season ... they'll get the hint. 🐾



Amanda Maurmann is Monadnock Table's "Dig In" columnist and the garden manager at Stonewall Farm in Keene. Do you have a gardening or farming question for Amanda? Send her an email at askafarmer@monadnocktable.com.

Photo: Dreamstime

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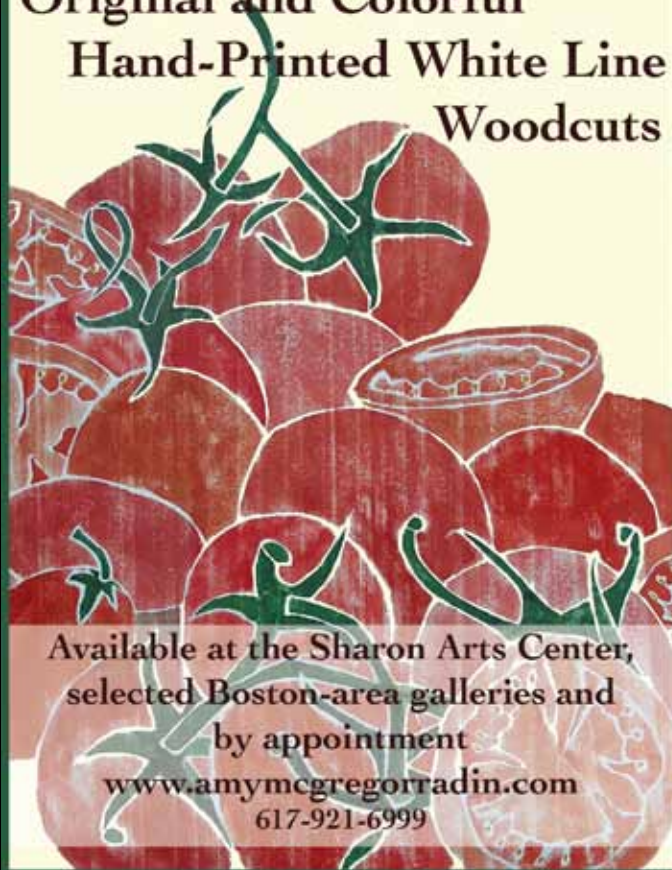
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Fun on the Farm

Work is Play for These Suburban Kids

By Katherine P. Cox
Photos by Al Karevy

Early one morning, a group of 22 middle school students from a suburban New Jersey school are busy with farm chores — from milking cows to cleaning barns — at East Hill Farm in Troy. Afterward, they eat a hearty farm breakfast and are eager to go back out to the barn to learn about sheep shearing — and even try it themselves. “I didn’t expect it to be this much fun,” says one student as he headed out.

These young teens, from The Village School in Waldwick, N.J., known as “all the farm helpers,” are part of East Hill Farm’s “Farm School.” It’s a new program created by the Troy-based farm (see sidebar) for students in grades 5 through 8 to experience several days of life on a farm and participate in all the activities and chores that it entails.

The Farm School is full immersion on the 150-acre farm that has cows, pigs, sheep, goats, chickens and horses. With help and

guidance from the farm staff, the students clean barns, milk cows, groom and care for the animals, fix fences and learn how to manage fields and woodlands. For most of the participants — who live in suburban and urban areas — it’s the first time they’ve done these things, and it is their first exposure to farm life.

THE FARM SCHOOL: A FOCUS ON “DOING”

“It’s a lot of fun, but a lot of work,” says one student. “A lot more interactive than being at a zoo,” adds another. “We’re not just sitting and learning,” chimes in another.

“This is the coolest thing I’ve ever done.”

The hands-on activities of feeding the animals and milking the cows appeals to their curiosity and reinforces the lessons they have been learning about farming and animal husbandry, says Dadmara Desantis, co-director for The Village School, a Montessori school for pre-schoolers to age 14. “Our field trips are designed to engage our students in hands-on activities and direct learning experiences rather than passively



Students learn that farm life is fun but takes energy, expense and ability.

absorb information,” she says. “The practical, direct nature of involvement of the program at East Hill seemed a wonderful match for our school.”

“We had been searching for a farm trip for our students for a number of years,” adds Marilyn Larkin, co-director. “Most farms are one-day workshops and we wanted the students to have a more realistic experience.”

The program provides a wealth of real-world farm tasks; depending on the season, workshops include maple sugaring, forest management, pond ecology and sheep shearing.

LEARNING TO SHEAR

After a hearty breakfast the students reassemble in the barn where Bruce Clement, a shearer from Westmoreland, gives them in-depth background about sheep and their wool, and explains how — and why — to shear sheep.

The students intently watch Clement as he holds a sheep on its hind end between his feet and knees — forelegs firmly in one hand and electric shears in the other — and skillfully separates the thick fleece from the sheep. The students clap and cheer when he finishes.

After demonstrating the proper technique, Clement invites the students to try their hands at shearing another sheep. No one hesitates or holds back, and eagerly line up to take their turns. A few touch the fleece scattered on the barn floor. “It’s really oily,” says one girl. “I didn’t expect that.”

Afterwards, one 13-year-old girl uses a variety of adjectives to describe her sheep shearing experience: scary, intense, interesting, exciting. “It’s something I never thought I would do,” she says. “I will think about shearing sheep the next time I wear wool.”

Minutes later, she and her fellow students learn how to


transform the wool into felt in a crafting project that takes them through many wet, messy steps of layering wool, soaking it in soapy water and pounding the layers into a solid form. Students end up with their own felt square. One boy says proudly: “This is the coolest thing I’ve ever done.”

FARM CHORES NOT LIKE HOME CHORES

One girl, reflecting on her time at the farm, says it was fun, very new and tiring; but she would “definitely” recommend it to others. Farm life, she concludes, “takes a lot of energy, expense and ability.”

But these middle schoolers — at an age where just picking up their rooms is considered a chore — are not complaining. One 12-year-old boy points out that his favorite chore was feeding the animals. He explains that he has been on a farm before, but never got to shear sheep or milk cows. Not many people can say they’ve milked a cow, he says. “I milked a cow! I fed donkeys! I sheared sheep!” he says, somewhat amazed.

When asked, most of the students agree they have discovered a lot about farm life, and have learned to appreciate what it takes to keep a farm going. “It’s important to see how much work it takes,” says one boy. Another says that what’s important to him about the experience has been “... getting in touch with nature. You can see the stars. There’s not a lot of pollution; the air smells fresh.”

One 13-year-old sums up his 4-day farm experience: “This is the best school trip I’ve ever been on. I love animals. It’s so cool to be around them and take care of them. I’d love to live here.” 

Katherine P. Cox is a freelance writer who has lived and gardened in the Monadnock Region for 30 years.



The Farm School: One of Many Agricultural Experiences at the East Hill Farm

Jennifer Adams grew up on East Hill Farm in Troy, a family-run enterprise that includes The Inn at East Hill Farm, a vacation destination that has long offered guests a chance to retreat from their daily lives with an authentic farm experience.

Over the years, the family resort has expanded its offerings in an effort to sustain the working farm: special events, theme weekends, conferences, senior weekends and more. Last year Adams launched the Farm School, building on some of the activities already offered.

Working with the Shelburne, Vt.-based Farm Based Education Association (FBEA), and with the help of Antioch New England University interns, Adams developed a curriculum based on Vermont state educational standards. "We expose kids to where their food comes from," Adams says. "There's always stuff to do" on a farm, Adams says. "Everything they're doing is necessary. It's not staged."

Adams believes there's a need for such programs as farms increasingly vanish and kids lose touch with farm life. "It's a good thing for them to see how hard it is to keep a farm going. If they didn't have them (farms), where would they get their food?"

The cost for the Farm School is \$125 per night, per student, and generally runs three days and two nights. Adams works with the schools to customize the activities based on various programs that are seasonally appropriate. The Village School from New Jersey chose to spend four days and three nights; the students conducted fundraisers to help offset some of the costs.

In class discussion after their return to New Jersey, Marilyn Larkin, co-director at The Village School, says there was "much interest in returning. We discussed the importance of small farms, sustainable agricultural methods and the effect some 'advances' have had on food, occupations, etc., as well as what alternatives are available. Right now we are engaged in (discussions about) ... food security, food price volatility and G.M.O.'s. Our farm experience (at East Hill Farm) has given us some first-hand knowledge of issues related to these topics."

The student response "was overwhelmingly positive," Larkin adds. "I got a lot of feedback from parents who told me their children couldn't stop talking about it."

For more information about East Hill Farm's Farm School visit east-hill-farm.com.



"Everything (these kids) are doing is necessary. It's not staged." — Jennifer Adams



SEASONS IN THE SUN

When you live on a vegetable farm — dependent on the weather and hours of daylight — you become highly tuned in with the seasons. Each season means a different kind of work that needs to get done.

As you're reading this it will be spring, my favorite season on the farm. Spring on a vegetable farm is the season for inspiration ... and action. It's when the cycle of life begins. I look forward to all the stored up energy and possibilities of plans made throughout the winter for the season ahead.

At the end of February we start seeding in the heated greenhouse — herbs, flowers and perennials — to get a head start on our short New England growing season. In mid-March, spinach planted the previous fall is ready for harvesting in the unheated greenhouses — just in time for the start of our spring CSA. We also distribute other overwintered vegetables from the greenhouse that may have made it from the previous season: carrots, beets, winter squash, garlic, parsnips and greens. By late-March, the more cold-tolerant plant starts, such as onions and pansies, get moved to the unheated greenhouses. As we approach mid- to late-April, asparagus begins to poke up out of the soil, along with rhubarb,



by Tracie Smith

mint, oregano, thyme and savory. Tulips and daffodils are also unfurling from the ground and become our spring cut flowers for our CSA.

When the ground thaws and dries out, we spread compost and other amendments based on soil tests and crop needs; we also make vegetable beds and begin sowing seeds that grow in cooler weather. By the end of May, we wrap up our main plantings and continue succession plantings through the rest of the growing season.

Summer and fall: reaping the rewards of spring

As the days lengthen, the season of hoeing, weeding, taking care of plants to prevent disease and pests, and replanting takes over. Summer and fall are the seasons to harvest, reaping the rewards of our planning and hard work. Fall adds the additional clean up chore for plants that have completed their growth cycle. We then seed winter rye that will keep the soil covered to prevent erosion, compaction, nutrients from leaching out of the soil and weeds from growing. When you turn all that nutrient-rich winter rye back into the soil in the spring, it feeds the plants and the life in the soil and creates a diverse, beneficial environment.



Late fall is garlic planting time. It overwinters and is one of the first plants to peek up from the soil in the spring. At a vegetable farm, late fall is somewhat anti-climactic as we watch the dying leaves of the trees and plants fall to the ground. But as a farmer you have to keep going with the little bit of energy you have left to get the harvest in so you can have plenty of food throughout the winter.

We continue to harvest and distribute hardy vegetables for our fall CSA: broccoli, kale, chard, Brussels sprouts, celeriac, celery, onions, cabbage, lettuce, mesclun, spinach, carrots, beets, turnips, rutabagas, radishes, parsnips and even tomatoes and cherry tomatoes from our unheated greenhouses. By late November and early December, the temperatures drop too far below freezing for the tomatoes to survive. We yank up the plants and replace them with spinach. This is the spinach that is ready to harvest by mid-March.

Winter: the pace slows

People always ask me, “What do you do in the winter?” Well, it is a time for a slower physical pace to restore a farmer’s body, spirit and mind. I spend a lot of time reflecting on the successes and challenges of the past season. But wintertime still has its share of work: ordering supplies, budgeting, taxes, learning and sharing with other farmers at farming conferences. Then there’s the updating of employee and safety manuals, bookkeeping, website updates, organizing CSA membership, planning distribution and delivery routes for the season ahead, hiring and scheduling employees and work shares, keeping the edges of the greenhouses plowed, removing snow from the tops of the greenhouses and more.

All this work in hope and preparation for spring: The time of energy, rebirth and new beginnings. That time of the season for not only farmers, but all of us, to get another shot at playing out our roles ... hopefully with a little more grace and understanding of the season of action ahead. 🌱

Tracie Smith is the owner of Tracie’s Community Farm in Fitzwilliam.




Photos: courtesy Tracie’s Community Farm; bottom right: Jodi Genest



A Day in the Life

FARMER JOHN'S PLOT, DUBLIN

PHOTO ESSAY BY KIMBERLY PECK

Farmer John's Plot, located in Dublin, is a nonprofit working farm that sells its produce through its farmstand on Chesham Road, at the Fresh Chicks' farmers' market in Peterborough, and through CSA shares, local grocers and to local schools. Beginning in early spring, farmers John Sandri (bottom photo, r) and Garrett Sundstrom (l) — along with a cadre of volunteers, internship participants, community members and the farm staff — work to grow a wide range of vegetables that the farmers call “beyond organic.” This term, the farmers say, means they don't use organic replacements for chemical pesticides and fertilizers; instead, they work toward long-term soil health using compost, cover cropping, rotations and companion planting. This spring, Farmer John's Plot offerings will include fresh free-range eggs; a new hoop house promises early greens for CSA members and farmstand customers. For more information visit: farmerjohnsplot.org. 





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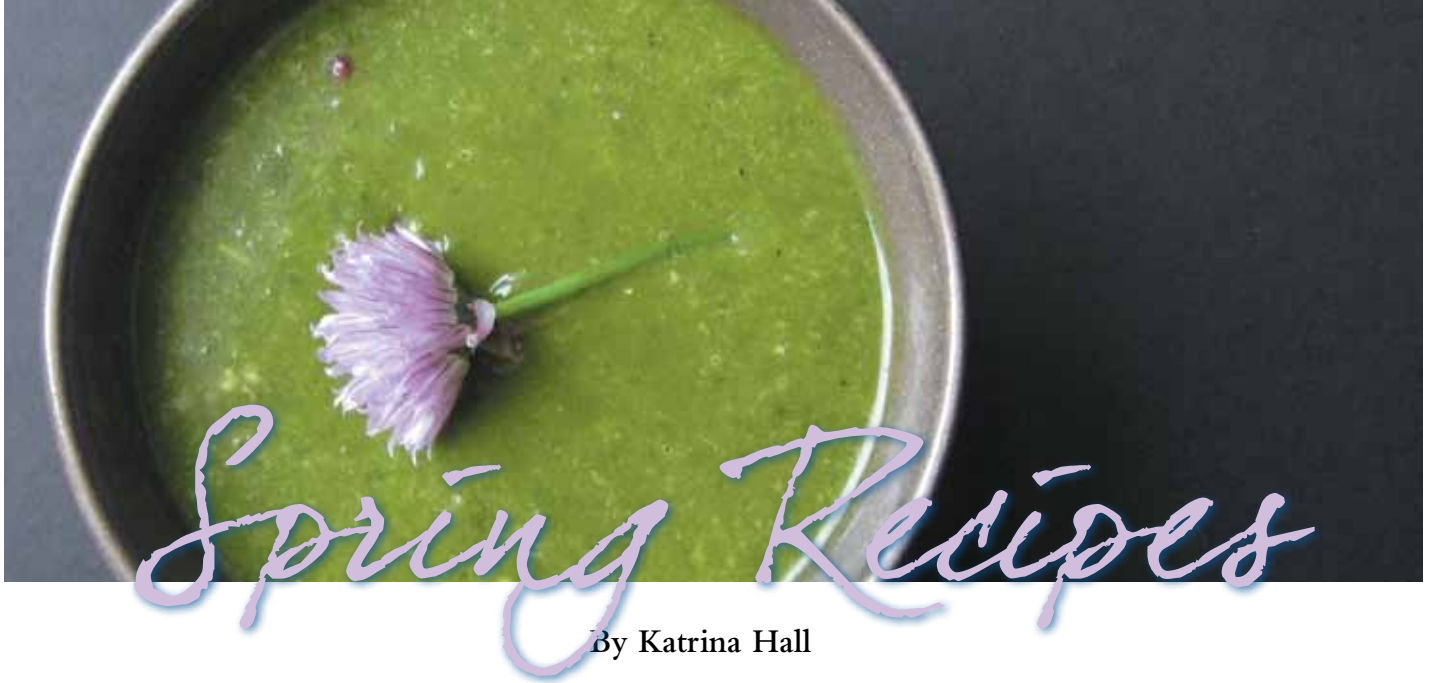


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By Katrina Hall

Spring Greens Soup

Late winter and early spring in New Hampshire are tough on those who like fresh greens. Unless you or a farming friend have a hoop house or greenhouse, it will be a while before you'll be eating fresh, healthy greens — which we all crave at this time of year. This is a great soup that will invigorate your winter-weary body. I like to mix the greens and herbs in a big bowl and inhale the scent of spring before cooking.

Serves 3

- 3 1/2 cups water
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 4 scallions, trimmed and sliced
- 2 cups kale, torn and stems removed
- 2 handfuls salad greens (I use mostly spinach and arugula)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Salt and freshly cracked pepper, to taste
- 1/3 cup mint, chopped
- Pinch of nutmeg

Local ingredients available in spring: scallions, kale, salad greens, mint

In a large pot, simmer sweet potato in water until just tender. Add scallions, kale, greens, olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes.

Remove from stove. Add mint and nutmeg. Puree soup with an immersion or regular blender. Season to taste with additional salt and pepper.

Serve with warm, crusty bread and cheese.

Asparagus Frittata

This Italian omelet contains no milk or cream — and is cooked very differently than a French omelet. The asparagus is cooked first; then the egg mixture is gently cooked

and finished under a broiler. This frittata is perfect for breakfast, brunch, lunch or dinner. It also travels well in a lunch box or brown bag with an ice pack.

Serves 2

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1/2 teaspoon mint, oregano or dill
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 4-5 spears of asparagus, tough ends removed, sliced diagonally in 1-inch pieces

Local ingredients available in spring: eggs, mint, oregano, asparagus

Heat olive oil in an enamel skillet or omelet pan, swirling the oil around the sides of the pan to coat well. Mix the eggs in a bowl with a fork. Add water, herbs, salt and pepper and Parmesan cheese.

Mix in asparagus and pour into the hot skillet. Reduce heat to medium-low. Preheat the broiler to 500°F. As the eggs cook in the skillet, use a fork to gently pull the edges toward the center, tipping the pan so the uncooked egg mixture flows to the edges.

When the frittata is firm, remove from the burner and slide into the broiler for a few minutes, watching carefully. When the frittata begins to brown, remove from broiler and let cool. Run a dull knife around the edge of the frittata to loosen from pan. Cut into slices and serve.

Smashed Potatoes (for Two)

What a delicious way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day! Or a Tuesday. Or Sunday supper. We all love potatoes and this is a great way to use those tiny potatoes; now from the market and later from your garden.



Serves 2

- 1 pound baby potatoes
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Fresh pepper
- 1 tablespoon fresh dill, snipped

Local ingredients available in spring: baby potatoes, butter, dill

Place the potatoes in a saucepan, cover with water and bring to a boil. Cook potatoes at a slow boil for 20 minutes or until tender. Drain and set aside.

Using the same hot saucepan, melt the butter and oil together. Set aside.

With the bottom of a glass, gently press down on each potato until it is slightly flattened. Lift the potatoes carefully with a metal spatula and place on a cookie sheet. Brush a little of the olive oil and butter mixture on each "smashed" potato.

Bake at 400°F for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with salt, pepper and dill. Serve while hot. 🌱



Katrina Hall, who founded the Hancock Farmers' Market in 1990, formerly worked as a chef, herbalist and baker. In 2008, she started a food blog, "She's in the Kitchen," where her passion for cooking, photography and food has finally found a home.

Photos: Katrina Hall



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Farmers' Markets

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MONDAY

Peterborough: May–October, 12–6 pm, Monadnock Community Hospital, northeast parking lot, 603-357-1849 or 603-924-1913, Facebook: Fresh Chicks Local Outdoor Market.

TUESDAY

Keene: May–October, 9 am–2 pm, behind The Colonial Theatre, Main St., 603-446-9474, Facebook: Keene Farmers Market. (Winter Market: 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10 am–2 pm through April at 25 Roxbury St.)

WEDNESDAY

Peterborough: May–October, 3–6 pm, Depot Sq., peterboroughfarmersmarketnh.com.

Close by in Brattleboro, Vt.: May–October, 10 am–2 pm, Gibson–Aiken Center, Main St., 802-224-8885, brattleborofarmersmarket.com. (Winter Market: Saturdays, 10 am–2 pm, through March, the River Garden on Main St.)

THURSDAY

Keene: June–October, 10 am–2 pm, Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth Hitchcock, rear employee entrance, 603-354-5454, ext. 2126.

Rindge: June–October, 3–6 pm, West Rindge Common Park at the corner of Rt. 202 and Bradford St., 603-899-9805.

FRIDAY

Walpole: May–October, 4–7 pm, Town Common, 603-756-3168, walpolefarmersmarket.com. (Winter Market: 3rd Saturday through April.)

Close by in Bellows Falls, Vt.: May–October, 4–7 pm, Waypoint Center, downtown Bellows Falls, 802-387-6128, bffarmersmarket.com.



SATURDAY

Gilsum: May–October, 8 am–12 pm, Gilsum Village Market, Main St., 603-352-3220.

Hancock: May–October, 9 am–12 pm, horse sheds behind church in Hancock, 603-525-3172.

Hillsborough: July–September, 9 am–12 pm, Butler Park, corner of Central and Main St., 603-464-2953, hillsboroughpride.org.

Jaffrey: June–September, 9 am–12 pm, Coll's Market and Deli parking lot, Old Sharon Rd., 603-532-7168.

Keene: May–October, 9 am–2 pm., behind The Colonial Theatre, Main St., 603-446-9474, Facebook: Keene Farmers' Market. (Winter Market: 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10 am–2 pm through April at 25 Roxbury St.)

Milford: June–October, 9 am–12 pm, Granite Town Plaza, Elm St., milfordfarmersmarket.com. (Winter Market: Most 1st and 3rd Saturdays through April, 9 am–12 pm.)

Washington: May–October, 10 am–1 pm, Washington Town Common, 800-746-8783.

Close by in Brattleboro, Vt.: May–October, 9 am–2 pm, Rt. 9 near the covered bridge, 802-224-8885, brattleborofarmersmarket.com. (Winter Market: Saturdays, 10 am–2 pm, through March, the River Garden on Main St.)

Close by in Goshen: June–October, 10 am–1 pm, lot between fire station and Grange Hall, 603-475-5082.

SUNDAY

Antrim: June–October, 10 am–2 pm, Place in the Woods Trading Post, 603-588-2446.

Temple: May–December, 11 am–2 pm, Temple Town Common, Rt. 45, 603-878-0802.

CSAs

Some farms offer year-round CSAs; please call for availability.

Alstead Center Farm
Alstead ~ 835-2937

Coll's Farm Market & Deli
Jaffrey ~ 603-532-7540

Daloz Mill and Farm CSA
Hancock ~ (CSA in transition.
Please direct inquiries to P.O. Box 203,
Hancock, NH 03449.)

Darling Hill Community Farm
Greenville ~ 603-878-3130

Farmer John's Plot
Dublin ~ 603-289-5927

Fertile Fields Farm
Westmoreland ~ 603-399-7772

Hillside Springs Farm
Westmoreland ~ 603-399-7288

Holland Farm CSA
Milford ~ 603-673-0667

Hungry Bear Farm
Wilton ~ 603-654-6626

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Picadilly Farm
Winchester ~ 603-239-8718

Pitcher Mountain CSA
Stoddard ~ 603-446-3922

Stonewall Farm
Keene ~ 603-357-7278

The 1780 Farm
Chesterfield ~ 603-363-4476

Temple-Wilton Community Farm
Wilton ~ 603-654-6082

Tracie's Community Farm
Fitzwilliam ~ 603-209-1851

Village Roots CSA
Acworth ~ 603-477-5533

CSA stands for "community supported agriculture," a way for people to buy fresh food directly from the farmer. Typically, a CSA farm charges a set price for membership during a growing season. In return, members receive shares in the farm's bounty (usually weekly) throughout the growing season. CSAs are valuable to both members and farmers: Weekly members get a basket of fresh local produce direct from the farm; farmers get working capital in advance so they can concentrate on the business of farming.



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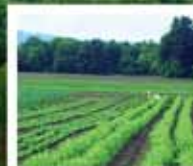
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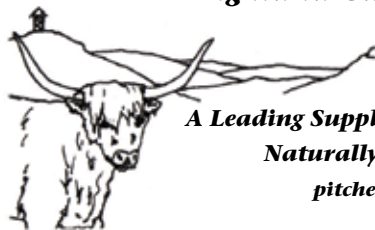
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MARCH

- 2 Fri.** (5-9 p.m.) First Friday. Downtown Peterborough.
- 3 Sat.** (8 a.m.-5 p.m.) Northeast Organic Farming Association of NH 10th Annual Winter Conference. Sanborn Regional High School, Kingston. Nofanh.org, 603-224-5022.
- 3 & 4 Fri. & Sat.** (10-11:30 a.m.) Maple Sugaring. Stonewall Farm, Keene. Stonewallfarm.org, 603-357-7278.
- 4 Sun.** (5-7:30 p.m.) Maple Madness Dinner. The Inn at East Hill Farm, Troy. Reservations required. East-hill-farm.com, 603-242-6495.
- 6 Tues.** (6-8:30 p.m.) Artisan Bread Techniques. Sunflowers Restaurant, Jaffrey. 603-593-3303.
- 10 Sat.** (9 a.m.-1 p.m.) Open Barn Day. Wellscroft Farm, Harrisville. Wellscroft.com, 603-827-3464.
- 13 Wed.** (9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) Beginner Soft Cheesemaking Workshop. Dancing Dog Farm, Dublin. Dancingdogfarm.com, 603-563-8122.
- 17 Sat.** (10 a.m.-1 p.m.) St. Patrick's Polypore Foray. Wichland Woods, Nelson. Fee: \$45. Wichlandwoods.com, 603-357-2758.
- 17 Sat.** (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) State 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl. Walpole Elementary School, Walpole. 603-352-4550.
- 17 & 18 Sat. & Sun.** (Times: TBA) Crescendo Acres Farm Open Sugarhouse Weekend. Crescendo Acres Farm, Surry. Crescendoacres.com, 603-332-9380.
- 24 Sat.** (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) Sap Gathering Competition. Stonewall Farm, Keene. Stonewallfarm.org, 603-357-7278.
- 24 Sat.** (1-4 p.m.) Beginner Soft Cheesemaking Workshop. Dancing Dog Farm, Dublin. Dancingdogfarm.com, 603-563-8122.
- 24 & 25 Sat. & Sun.** New Hampshire Maple Weekend. Sugar houses throughout the state. Nhmapleproducers.com, 603-225-3757.
- 31 Sat.** (9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.) Cheshire County 4-H Day. Keene State College, Keene. 603-352-4550.

APRIL

- 1 Sun.** (5-7:30 p.m.) Caribbean Night. The Inn at East Hill Farm, Troy. Reservations required. East-hill-farm.com, 603-242-6495.
- 4 Wed.** (Time: TBA). Blueberry Pruning Demonstration. Call Cheshire County Cooperative Extension for details: 603-352-4550.
- 6 Fri.** (5-9 p.m.) First Friday. Downtown Peterborough.
- 7 Sat.** (9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) Beginner Soft Cheesemaking Workshop. Dancing Dog Farm, Dublin. Dancingdogfarm.com, 603-563-8122.
- 7 Sat.** (9 a.m.-12 p.m.) Beginner Beekeeping Class. Imagine That HONEY, Swanzey. 603-381-1717.
- 11 Wed.** (7 p.m.) NH Grange Movement: Its Rise, Triumphs and Decline (Lecture). Fitzwilliam Town Library, Fitzwilliam. 603-585-6503.
- 13 Fri.** (3-8 p.m.) Art Display and Auction Opening. Stonewall Farm, Keene. Gallery open daily 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. through April 28. Stonewallfarm.org, 603-357-7278.
- 14 Sat.** (9 a.m.-3 p.m.) 4-H Beef Field Day, Cheshire Fairgrounds, Swanzey. 603-352-4550.
- 14 & 15 Sat. & Sun.** (10-11:30 a.m.) Dairy Delights. Stonewall Farm, Keene. Stonewallfarm.org, 603-357-7278.
- 18 Wed.** (1-4 p.m.) Beginner Soft Cheesemaking Workshop. Dancing Dog Farm, Dublin. Dancingdogfarm.com, 603-563-8122.

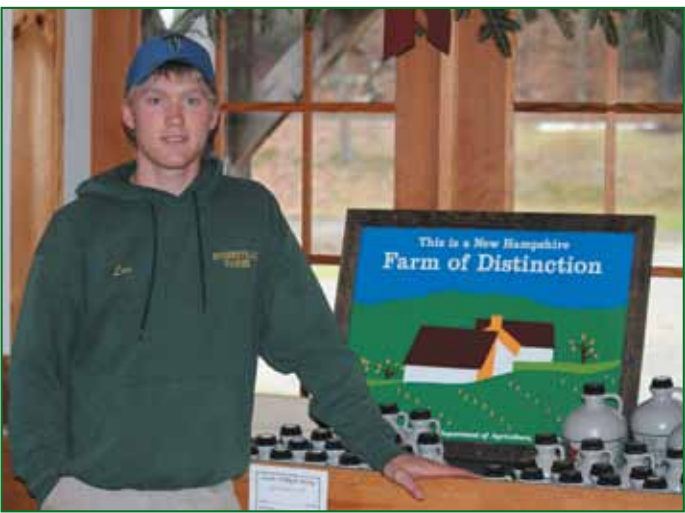


Visit with lambs at "Open Barn Day" at Wellscroft Farm in Harrisville.

- 21 Sat.** (Time: TBA). Fruit Tree Pruning and Grafting Demonstration. Call Cheshire County Cooperative Extension for details: 603-352-4550.
- 21 Sun.** (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) Monadnock Earth Day Celebration. Keene Recreation Center, Keene. 603-757-7548.
- 22 Sun.** (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) Earth Day Log Inoculation. Wichland Woods, Nelson. Fee: \$45. Wichlandwoods.com, 603-357-2758.



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 FIND YOUR FARMER



Levi Oliver Hubbard
 18 Years Old
 Homeschooled, Graduated June 2011
 Farming Interests: Vegetables, Berries, Christmas Trees, Maple Syrup

Levi Oliver Hubbard has been farming all his life. He grew up on the family farm, Homestead Farms, on the banks of the Connecticut River in Walpole.

“My dad opened the farm in 1992 and I’ve been involved with it since my early childhood,” says Hubbard. Since finishing his high school studies last year, Hubbard has been working full-time on the farm and is in charge of all the outside farming operations — from growing to managing the harvest.

Homestead Farms grows vegetables, strawberries and blueberries; it also has a Christmas tree plantation and a “cut-your-own” tree operation during the holiday season. Hubbard says Homestead Farms also has a small sugaring operation which it has been slowly expanding each year. A kitchen is located right at the farmstand where the family and its employees bake doughnuts, muffins and cinnamon rolls from scratch.

The farm is open for business May through October, six days a week; it reopens the day after Thanksgiving, and is open every Saturday during the holiday season. Hubbard says he starts planting tomatoes in the farm’s greenhouses by the first of March in anticipation of opening in May.

His goal for the future of the farm? “To stay an active participant in the farm,” says Hubbard “... and increase our hours and production.”

— Interviewed by Andrea Chickering Sawyer, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Cheshire County Cooperative Extension.

SUPPORT LOCAL FARMS
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 Contact us at mfcc@cheshireconservation.org
 or 603.756.2988 ext.116

23 Mon. (9 a.m.-3 p.m.) Spring Family Farm Day. The Inn at East Hill Farm, Troy. east-hill-farm.com, 603-242-6495.

23-28 Mon.-Sat. Greater Keene Restaurant Week. Keenerestaurantweek.org.

28 Sat. (11 a.m.) Wichland Woods Backyard Mushroom Demonstration. Alyson’s Orchard, Walpole. 603-756-2988, ext.116.

28 Sat. (9:30 a.m.) Getting Off to a Good Start with Your Fruit Trees and Shrubs. Alyson’s Orchard, Walpole. 603-756-2988, ext.116.

28 Sat. (begins at 6 p.m.) Annual May Day Celebration. Tracie’s Community Farm, Fitzwilliam. Traciesfarm.com.

MAY

4 Fri. (5-9 p.m.) First Friday. Downtown Peterborough.

5 Sat. (10-11:30 a.m.) Beginner Beekeeping Class. Imagine That HONEY, Swanzey. 603-381-1717.

5 & 6 Sat. & Sun. (10-11:30 a.m.) Woolly Weekend. Stonewall Farm, Keene. Stonewallfarm.org, 603-357-7278.

5 & 6 Sat. & Sun. (8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) Wellscroft Annual Fence Clinic. Wellscroft Farm, Harrisville. 603-827-3464.

6 Sun (Time: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.) Mushroom Log Inoculation, Morel Bed Making & Mycological Landscaping. Wichland Woods, Nelson. Fee: \$45. Wichlandwoods.com, 603-357-2758.

12 Sat. (Time: TBA). Dancing of the Ladies. Stonewall Farm, Keene. Stonewallfarm.org, 603-357-7278.



The “ladies” dance again this spring at Stonewall Farm in Keene.

12 Sat. (9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) Beginner Soft Cheesemaking Workshop. Dancing Dog Farm, Dublin. Dancingdogfarm.com, 603-563-8122.

12 & 13 Sat. & Sun. (9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. ends 4 p.m.) New Hampshire Sheep and Wool Festival. Deerfield Fairgrounds, Deerfield. Nhswwa.com.

13 Sun. (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) Mother’s Day Open House. Monadnock Berries Garden Center, Troy. Monadnockberries.com.

16 Wed. (1-4 p.m.) Beginner Soft Cheesemaking Workshop. Dancing Dog Farm, Dublin. Dancingdogfarm.com, 603-563-8122.

19 Sat. (begins 4:30 p.m.) German Maifest. Sunflowers Restaurant, Jaffrey. 603-593-3303.

19 Sat. (begins 9 a.m.) Children and the Arts Festival, downtown Peterborough. Childrenandarts.org.

26 Sat. (11 a.m.-2 p.m.) Outside Bratwurst Grill. German John’s Bakery, Hillsborough. Germanjohnsbakery.net, 603-464-5079.

ONGOING EVENTS

First and Third Sundays (2-4 p.m.) What is Co-Housing? Free tour of eco-village homes, with potluck dinner. Nubanusit Neighborhood & Farm, Peterborough. Peterboroughcohousing.org, 603-924-7491.

Send your calendar events to: editor@monadnocktable.com

Photos: Jodi Genest

Photo: courtesy Cheshire County Cooperative Extension

Farm Directory

Some farms are open seasonally.
Please call ahead. Telephone area code is
603 unless otherwise noted.

ACWORTH

Acworth Village Gardens
835-7986, Eggs, Vegetables.

Blueberry Acres
835-2259, PYO; Blueberries.

Knight Farm
835-9077, Beef, Cheese, Pork, Yogurt.

Squatters Farm
970-560-2574, Eggs, Vegetables.

Two Girls Farm
Beef, Chicken, Eggs, Garlic, Pork,
twogirlsfarm.org.

ALSTEAD

Alstead Center Farm
835-2937, CSA,
alsteadcenterfarm@gmail.com

Bascom Maple Farm
835-6361, Maple Syrup & Products,
bascommapple.com.

Beryl Mountain View Farm
835-2246, Farm Campsites;
Grass-fed Beefalo Freezer Meat
& Sides, Honey,
berylmntnviewfarm@comcast.net.

Comstock Family Farm
835-6182, Farmstand, PYO; Fruits,
Vegetables, comstockfamilyfarm.com.

Darby Brook Farm
835-6624, PYO; Fruit, Vegetables.

Days Natural Family Farm
209-9133, Chicken, Duck, Eggs, Meat
(Goat, Rabbit).

Dustin's Sugarhouse
835-6070, Maple Syrup & Products.

Flying Cloud Dairy
835-2519, Cream* & Milk* (Raw).

Kercewich Farm
835-2520, Cream & Milk (Raw),
Maple Syrup & Products, Meat
(Grass-Fed Beefalo, Lamb & Pork),
Turkey, Yogurt (Raw).

Merrymeeting Farm
313-6059, Chicken, Eggs, Meat (Beef).

Sanctuary's Alpaca Farm
756-3410, Alpacas, Fiber,
sanctuarysalpacafarm.com.

Sunset Farm
835-6210, Flowers (Cut), Vegetables.

Village Roots CSA
477-5533, Herbs, Vegetables.

ANTRIM

Hidden Hill Farm Alpacas
588-3320, Alpacas, Breeding Stock,
hhfalpacas.com.

Tenney Farm
588-2020, Eggs, Fruit, Vegetables,
tenneyfarm.com.

Windfall Farm
588-3296, Farm Shop; Eggs (Free-
Range), Fleeces, Flowers (Cut),
Turkeys*, Vegetables, Yarn,
windfallfarmnh.com.

BENNINGTON

Back Mountain Beefalo Farm
289-6846, Meat (Beef, Pork), Turkey.

CHESTERFIELD

Hubner Farm
363-4675, Meat (Beef).

The 1780 Farm
(818) 929-2901, CSA; Farmstand,
PYO, Chicken, Herbs, Meat (Beef,
Pork), Vegetables.



Sue Bunton, of 3 Fox Studio, Keene, finds her inspiration in nature.

DUBLIN

Dana Farm
Honey, Vegetables,
danafarmdublin@gmail.com.

Farmer John's Plot
289-5927, Farmstand; Vegetables.

Morning Star Maple Sugar House
563-9218, Maple Syrup & Products.

FITZWILLIAM

Boulder Meadow Farm
585-3461, Llamas, Sheep,
Wool Processing,
bouldermeadowfarm.com.

Patchwork Southdowns
585-9814, Meat (Sheep), Wool.

Tracie's Community Farm

72 Jaffrey Rd., Fitzwilliam, NH
Spring, Summer, Fall Shares
Stand: Veg., Herb & Flower Plants
Store: Veg., Fruits, Eggs, Cheese,
Flowers, Walpole Creamery Ice Cream
www.traciesfarm.com

Tracie's Community Farm
209-1851, CSA, Farmstand; Cheese,
Eggs, Fruit, Plants (Flower, Herb),
Vegetables, traciesfarm.com.

Webb Hill Farm
585-3442, Herbs, Vegetables (Starter
Plants).

FRANCESTOWN

Green Ledge Farm
547-3454, Chicken, Meat (Grass-Fed
Beef*), greenledgefarm.com.

Lost Village Farm
547-3509, Meat (Grass-Fed Beef).

Rocky Meadow Farm
547-6464, Meat (Grass-Fed Beef).

GILSUM

**Bee Tree Farm &
The New Hampshire Honey Bee**
313-0186, Beekeeping Supplies,
Honey, nhhoneybee.com.

Ridge View Farm
352-9044, Plants (Bedding,
Seedlings), Vegetables,
simplsite.com/ridgeviewfarm.

GREENFIELD

Cloverly Farm
562-5754, Vegetables,
cloverlyfarm.com.

Pamomile Fine Handmade Soaps
547-2198, Herbal Soaps,
pamomile.com.

Spring Pond Farm
547-2964, Farm Tours, Farm Shop;
Alpacas (Registered Huacaya Breeder),
Garments (Hand-Knit), Yarn.

GREENVILLE

Darling Hill Community Farm
878-3130, CSA; Eggs, Herbs*,
Vegetables*.

Washburn's Windy Hill Orchard
878-2101, PYO (Apples & Pumpkins);
Fruit, Vegetables.

HANCOCK

Brimstone Hollow Farm
525-3070, Felt, Fleeces (NH-Made
Romney), Meat (Lamb), Roving
(Natural & Hand-Dyed), Yarn
(Handspun).

Daloz Mill & CSA
PO Box 203, Hancock, NH 03449,
CSA; Vegetables*.

Longview Forest Products
525-3566, Maple Syrup.

Mountain View Farm
525-8005, Maple Syrup, Products
(NH-Made), Vegetables.

Norway Hill Orchard
525-4912, PYO; Apples.

HARRISVILLE

Railroad Express Sugar House
827-3245 (call first), Maple Syrup &
Products.

**Wellscroft Farm and Wellscroft
Fence Systems, LLC**
827-3464, Eggs, Meat (Lamb & Goat).

HILLSBOROUGH

Bit O'Heaven Fiber Farm
464-4392, Roving (Hand-Printed),
Wool (Alpaca, Angora & Mohair),
Yarns (Handspun).

Clark Summit Alpacas
464-2910, Open Farm Days;
Handmade Items, Roving, Yarn,
clarksummitalpacas.com.

Western View Farm

464-3015, Meat (Freezer Lambs),
Roving & Yarn (Shetland).

JAFFREY

Boutwell Sugar House
532-7621, Maple Syrup.

Coll's Farm Market & Deli
532-7540, CSA; Eggs, Maple Syrup
& Products, Vegetables.
collsfarmllc.com.

Hijinks Farm
562-5775, Farmstand; Eggs*, Fruit*,
Honey, Maple Syrup, Vegetables*,
hijinksfarm.com.

Monadnock Sugar House
Maple Syrup & Products,
monadnocksugarhouse.com.

Wild Star Farm
532-2434, Meat (Rabbit),
Vegetables.

KEENE

Borden Maple Tree Farm
352-6466, Maple Syrup & Products.

Green Wagon Farm
Farmstand, PYO (Strawberries);
Honey, Maple Syrup & Products,
Vegetables.

Maple Lane Farm
352-2329, PYO (Apples); Fruit,
Maple Syrup & Products, Vegetables.

Mt. Caesar Alpacas
355-3555, Farm Store; Clothing,
Fiber, Yarn, mtcaesaralpacas.com.

Stonewall Farm
357-7278, CSA, Farmstand, PYO;
Cheese, Eggs, Maple Syrup &
Products, Meat (Beef), Vegetables,
stonewallfarm.org.

Whippie Farm
352-4868, Eggs.

Wichland Woods
357-2758, Mushrooms,
wichlandwoods.com.

LANGDON

**Clark's Sugar House/Valley View
Bison** 835-6863, Maple Syrup,
Meat (Bison).

Shorts Sugar House
835-2909, Maple Syrup & Products.

MARLBOROUGH

Earth Haven Farm
876-4036, Hay, Fleeces (Romney),
Meat (Grass-Fed Beef & Beefalo,
Lamb).

Webber Sugar House
876-4554, Maple Syrup & Products.

MARLOW

Hodge Podge Farm
446-7917, Chicken, Eggs, Honey,
Turkey.

Mack Hill Farm
446-6261, Eggs, Honey, Maple Syrup
& Products, Meat (Beef, Lamb,
Pork), Mushrooms, Turkey,
mackhillfarm.com.

Painted Shadow Farm
446-3944, Chicken, Fiber, Turkey.

Ruffled Feathers Farm
446-9474, Chicken, Eggs, Herbs,
Meat (Pork, Rabbit), Maple Syrup,
Plants (Vegetable Starts).

MASON

Barrett Hill Farm
878-4022, Fruit, Vegetables,
barretthillfarm.com.

MILFORD

Butternut Farm
673-2963, Plants (Bedding, Herb),
Vegetables, butternutveggies.com.

Holland Farm

673-0667, Farmstand; Eggs, Goat
Products (Cheese, Milk & Soap),
Vegetables, hollandfarmcsa.com.

Lull Farm

673-3119, Berries, Eggs,
Vegetables, lullfarmllc.com.

McLeod Bros. Orchards

673-3544, Apples, Pumpkins,
Vegetables, mcleodorchards.com.

Miracle Acres Farm

673-9077, Honey, Maple Syrup,
miracleacresfarm.net.

NELSON

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847-9763, Fleece, Lambs, Roving,
Sheep (Romney), Yarn (Handspun
and Cheshire Sheep).

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(Goat), Turkey, hiddenbirchfarm.
com.

Holland Homestead Farm

827-3025, Goat Products (Cheese,
Milk, Bath & Soap Items).

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878-9876, Fruit, Plants (Annuals,
Perennials, Starter Vegetables).

Sleeping Monk Farm Alpacas LLC

878-2183, Alpacas, Batts, Fleeces
(Raw), Products (Felted Sheets,
Finished Goods,), Roving, Yarn,
sleepingmonkfarm.com.

Smith's Berries

878-1719, PYO (Blueberries).

PETERBOROUGH

Dancing Dog Farm
Milk (Goat),
dancingdogfarm.wordpress.com.

Far Sight Farm

924-4333, Chickens (Pasture-Raised).

Nubanusit Neighborhood & Farm

924-3850, CSA, Tours Every Sunday
2-4 pm, peterboroughcohousing.org.

Rosalys Garden & Farmstand

924-3303, Farmstand, PYO; Fruit*,
Herbs*, Vegetables*,
rosalysgarden.com.

Sunnyfield Farm

924-4436, Chicken, Eggs, Meat
(Beef, Lamb, Pork), Milk, Vegetables,
sunnyfieldfarm.org.

RICHMOND

Ewe Mountain View
239-8008, Bunnies (Angora), Eggs,
Fleeces.

RINDGE

Fairmont Farm
899-5445, Fleece.

Fieldstone Farm

899-6009, Maple Syrup.

Sunflower Field Farm

899-2817, Maple Syrup & Products.

White's Farm Stand

899-5000, Farmstand; Maple Syrup
& Products, Vegetables.

SHARON

Alpacas of Kilblaan Farm
924-6113, Alpacas, Fiber,
kilblaanfarm.com.

STODDARD

Pitcher Mountain Blueberries
446-3655, PYO (Wild Blueberries).

Pitcher Mountain CSA

446-7094, CSA; Vegetables,
pmcsa.org.

Pitcher Mountain Farm

446-3350, Chicken, Eggs, Meat (Beef).

ShearLuck Farm

847-9708, Meat (Lamb), Wool.

SULLIVAN

Bo-Riggs Cattle Company
352-9920, Meat (Beef, Lamb).

Hollow Oak Farm

847-3417, Meat (Beef, Lamb),
Vegetables, Wool (Felting Supplies,
Rovings, Yarn).

Moon Meadows Farm

847-3291, Meat (Boar, Goat),
moonmeadowsfarm.com.

SURRY

Crescendo Acres
352-9380, Farm Store; Maple Syrup
& Products, crescendoadres.com.

Surry's Wild & Woolly Farm

352-7193, Eggs.

SWANZEY

Stowell's
352-8059, Custom Meat Services
(Curing, Slaughtering, Smoking,
Wrapping), Meat (Beef, Pork).

TEMPLE

Autumn Hill Farm
878-0802, Fruit*, Vegetables*.

Ben's Sugar Shack

562-6595, Maple Syrup & Products.

Connolly Brothers Dairy Farm

924-5002, Eggs, Ice Cream, Meat
(Beef), Milk.

Fiber Dreams Farm

396-9136, Dyes, Fiber (Batts, Felt,
Roving, Yarn), Rabbits (Angora),
Sheep.

Herban Living Farm

878-0459, Chicken, Eggs, Herbs,
Meat (Beef), Vegetables,
herbanlivingbandb.com.

New Field Farm

878-2063, Blueberries, Vegetables,
newfield.locallygrown.net.

Nomadic Farms

547-5389, CSA.

Temple Mountain Beef

878-4290, Meat (Beef).

TROY

East Hill Farm
242-6495, Chicken, Honey, Meat
(Beef, Lamb, Pork),
east-hill-farm.com.

Monadnock Berries

242-6417, PYO; Fruit, Vegetables,
monadnockberries.com.

Tri-Well Farm

313-3264, Cheese (Artisan Goat
Milk), Goat Milk (Raw),
triwellfarm@gmail.com.

WALPOLE

Abenaki Springs Farm
445-2147, CSA; Chicken, Fruit*,
Meat (Pork), Turkey, Vegetables*,
abenakispringsfarm.com.

Alyson's Orchard

756-9800, Farmstand, Fruit, PYO,
alysonorchard.com.

**Boggy Meadow Farm**

756-3300, Cheese,
boggymeadowfarm.com.

Brookfield Farm

445-5104, Meat (Grass-Fed Beef*,
Goat, Lamb), Milk*.

Crescent Farm

756-4049, Meat (Beef, Pork).

Fletcher Farm

756-4230, Hay*, Milk*.

Homestead Farms

756-4800, PYO (Berries), Farmstand;
Maple Syrup, Plants (Bedding),
Vegetables.

Milkhouse at Great Brook Farm

756-4358, 313-8808, Cheese, Eggs,
Honey, Maple Syrup, Meat (Beef,
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Walpole Creamery

445-5700, Ice Cream,
walpolecreamery.com.

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756-3948, Tastings, Tours; Wine,
bhvineyard.com.

Walpole Valley Farms

756-2805, Chickens (Pastured), Eggs,
Maple Syrup, Meat (100% Grass-Fed
Beef, Pork), Turkeys (Pastured),
Vegetables, walpolevalleyfarms.com.

WASHINGTON

All Good Farm
495-0520, PYO (Blueberries); Maple
Syrup, Vegetables.

Eccardt Farm

495-3157, Farm Store; Meat (Beef,
Pork, Veal), Milk.

Lovell Mountain Farm & Gardens

495-0055, Eggs, Herbs, Plants
(Starter Vegetables), lovellmtn.com.

Mirage Alpacas

495-3435, Alpacas, Goats, Sheep,
miragealpacas.com.

WEST CHESTERFIELD

Kizazo Farm
256-6764, Chicken, Eggs, Vegetables.

WESTMORELAND

Edgefield Farm
399-9975, Meat (Whole Lamb),
edgefieldsheep.com.

Fertile Fields Farm

399-7772, CSA; Herbs*, Vegetables*,
fertilefieldsfarm.com.

High Hopes Farm

399-4305, PYO (Blueberries & Rasp-
berries), highhopesorchard.com.

Hillside Springs Farm

399-7288, CSA; Fruit, Vegetables,
hillsidefarm.com.

Long Ridge Farm

313-8393, CVM/Romeldale Breeding
Stock, Fleece (Raw), Rovings, Yarn,
longridgefarm.com.

Milkweed Farm

209-8676, Vegetables.

Old Ciderpress Farm

399-7210, PYO (Apples); Apples,
Chestnuts, Heirloom Cider.

Stuart & John's Sugar House

399-7778, Maple Syrup & Products,
stuartandjohnssugarhouse.com.

WILTON**Hungry Bear Farm**

654-6626, CSA-Vegetables, Herbs,
hungrybearfarm.com.

Nomadic Farms

547-5389, CSA; Vegetables.

WINCHESTER**Black Cat Honey**

392-0008, Bee Products, Honey,
blackcathoney.com.

Cheshire Garden

239-4173, Fruit (Jams, Jellies),
cheshiregarden.com.

Country Critters Farm

239-8657, Cheese (Aged & Fresh),
Milk (Farmstead Goat).

Full Measure Farm

239-4006, Meat (Whole Lamb), Fiber
(Cotswold).

Manning Hill Farm

239-4397, Eggs, Meat (Beef, Pork),
Milk, manninghillfarm.com.

My Old Farm Pure Maple Syrup

239-6751, Maple Syrup.

Picadilly Farm

239-8718, CSA; Eggs, Meat
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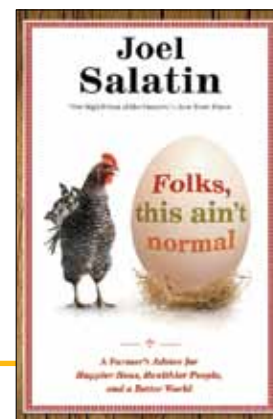
Folks, This Ain't Normal By Joel Salatin
 (Published by Center Street, a division of Hachette Book Group, October 2011, Hardcover, \$25.99)

Joel Salatin doesn't find much that is "normal" these days. What's common today is not the norm: From children growing up with no concept of where food comes from — no interaction with livestock, gardens or farms — to households with not much more than a microwave in the kitchen and no means to cook from "scratch."

It's not normal, it's not healthy and it's not sustainable. But this farmer from Virginia has some solutions. Each chapter in his recent book includes a devastating look at what's wrong, but concludes with a list of simple things we can all do to bring a return to normalcy. Along the way he discusses some fascinating and innovative farming techniques — all small-scale and low-tech — which he and others have used to bring healthy organic foods to the table.

You may have read about Salatin in Michael Pollan's book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. Like me, you're probably not going to agree with everything Salatin says, especially his extreme views on the "food police." But there's a reason for government inspections of slaughterhouses. He and his farmer friends are very conscientious, but not every neighboring farmer — or plumber, electrician or mechanic for that matter — is so perfect. I don't mind a little government oversight. By Salatin's definition, things may have been more normal back in 1906 when the *Fannie Farmer Cookbook* was in every kitchen, but let's remember that Upton Sinclair had good reason to publish *The Jungle* that year.

Salatin is on firmer ground when he argues for livestock grazing on pasture. Sunlight grows plants of all kinds and livestock graze the untillable pastures, turning the sun's energy into nutritious meats and rich fertilizer. Likewise, I suggest "grazing" this book like a cantankerous goat. Some of it feels untilled — so take what you can digest and move on, your mind richly fertilized, hungry for a return to normalcy.



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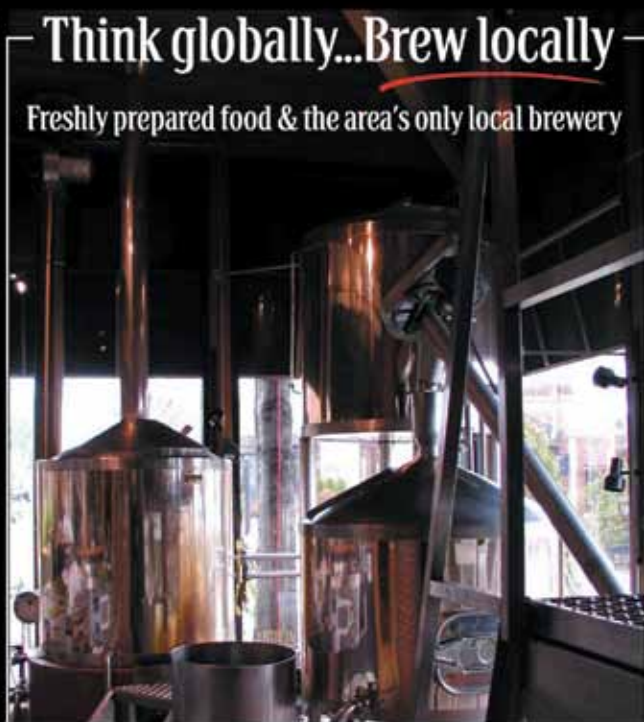
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GOTTA LOVE A DUCK!

By Jeanne Prevett Sable

it's spring — time to order your ducklings! Why raise ducks?

According to David Holderread, author of *Storey's Guide to Raising Ducks*, they are "... one of the most versatile and useful of all domestic fowl."

One important reason to keep ducks is duck eggs, considered by cooks to be superior for baking. Ducks are also easy to care for, don't require expensive coops, are great foragers and eat insects in the garden — including pests such as snails, slugs and Japanese beetles. They are also disease resistant, can tolerate cold, and, yes, they love the rain.

I visited Janas Sonstrom, who keeps ducks at her enchanting little homestead in Chesterfield (where she also raises chickens, vegetables and grains) and asked her about the ins and outs of raising ducks.

How do you use your duck eggs?

I always reach for a duck egg when making anything from corn bread to buckwheat pancakes. The food comes out lovely — moist and light. Relatively speaking, things baked with chicken eggs seem flat and dry, though they're still very good. I have five ducks that are egg layers.

Aren't they, well — "sitting ducks" for predators?

The duck house (a sturdy wooden shed) keeps them safe at night. Ducks are very easy to contain outdoors. You don't need much height. This flexible pet fencing is tall enough. Last summer we lost four, probably to a fox or

coyote. They were free ranging and, at the end of the day ... you know how little kids don't want to come in. This is their winter playground (a row of garden arches covered in clear plastic).

What do your ducks like to eat?

They all have different tastes. Ducks like snails, not inchworms like the chickens do. Both like earthworms, so I give some to the chickens, some to the ducks and the rest go to the worm bins. Ducks like tender leafy greens and grass. I sprout buckwheat, mung bean, sunflower and other seeds for them. It's economical. I grow millet for the chickens, and wheat. The chickens like all kinds of scraps. And they will go for my currants or cherries, which the ducks leave alone. I let the ducks come into the greenhouse and forage around. They eat bugs. Sure, they destroyed some parsley, but that was my sacrifice.

Do you eat duck meat?

I'll eat them if I have to cull the flock, but I really don't like eating my ducks. I don't care for duck meat.

Do ducks and chickens get along?

Not really. Ducks gently nudge, while chickens peck. So the ducks are happier kept apart.

What varieties of ducks do you have and where do you get them?

We started with khaki Campbells, a breed developed in England. They are efficient foragers. I also keep Welsh harlequins — they're gorgeous in both their silver and gold color phases — a creamy background with a brilliant blue wing flash on the silver ones. I got my first ducks from Agway, and later from David Holderread — an authority on ducks.




Isn't it hard keeping enough water available for them to splash around in?

I catch rain off the roof for them. They're spoiled. They get a stock tank and a pool (a plastic liner set into the ground and secured at the edges with concrete blocks).

Doesn't all that standing water attract mosquitoes?

Ducks love to eat mosquitoes. They have textured parts at the edge of their bills that strain the water and capture all the goodies. I recycle some of the duck water for fertilizer and replenish it with water from a rain barrel.

Any other reasons for keeping ducks?

Well, they're sweet. If I put a new hat or coat on, they notice. Ducks have excellent vision. They can spot a hawk or plane at a distance. I like having my quackers around. They're cheerful, you know? They're my little sweetie ducks. I love them so much! 

Jeanne Prevett Sable is a writer, musician and author of *Seed Keepers of Crescentville*. She lives in Fitzwilliam.



Photos: Marcia Passos Duffy

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