

FEAST!



LOCAL FOODS MAGAZINE

VOL. TWO

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TABLE of CONTENTS



Finding Farmland



EJ Mushrooms



Farm to School



HAFA



FEAST! Marketplace



FEAST! Awards



Restaurant Week



Chef Profiles



Elevating Grains



On-Farm Food



Cold-Hardy Grapes



Agritourism

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Cover: Mao Moua is one of the founding members of the Hmong American Farmers Association and has been farming for 25 years. In the beginning she worked full time and farmed to earn extra income for her children's private school tuition.
Photo: Mike Hazard

Welcome to volume two of FEAST! Local Foods Magazine.

Our unique publication is not only an introduction to local foods issues and businesses in our region, it's your guide to the Sixth Annual FEAST! Local Foods Marketplace, Sat., Dec. 7, Mayo Civic Center, Rochester, Minn., 10am-4pm.

At the 2019 FEAST! festival, you'll find booth after booth of sustainably-grown, locally-sourced products from all over the upper Midwest. Opportunities abound to sip and sample as you shop hundreds of artisan-made goods, attend chef demos, enter to win a local foods gift basket and visit the children's area featuring the Minnesota Children's Museum of Rochester. Check out the popup Rochester Farmers Market and wine fest with take-home purchase options. For a sneak peek at the vendors and activities, check out our map and directory (p. 25-28).

We've packed Vol.2 with articles that dig into the core of local foods: profiles of people working the land and creating community—from the Hmong American Farmers Association in "Acres of Hope" (p. 18) to a young farmer's quest for land in "Finding Farmland" (p.6) to one veteran's journey from war to peace in "Growing a Mushroom Farmer" (p.10). We've also got the latest on-farm food trends and a primer on the farm to school movement, along with recipes, chef profiles and a guide to FEAST! Restaurant Week, Oct 7-13.

Thanks for being a local foods fan!

Warmly,
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finding farmland

A Journey from Precarious to Resilient

By Grace Brogan

Photos courtesy of USDA, Wild Woods Farm and Kate Edwards



Kate Edwards wanted to be a farmer since she was little. But, early on, she didn't see a path to get there. Raised in Iowa during the 1980s Farm Crisis—the worst disaster to hit US farmers since the Great Depression—she saw high stress, tough finances and struggling families. She also faced a male-dominated industry and was one generation removed from farming, with no access to land. In time, the other roadblocks faded, but the struggle to find secure, affordable farmland remained, almost snuffing out her dreams.

"I did some research on the types of operations and vegetables which took the least amount of land—knowing land was very costly," remembers Kate, who studied engineering in college and graduate school before diving into farming. "It seemed important to find the lowest capital input with the highest return."

She began by renting one acre from a family friend. Over the next few years, she expanded her lease and built a successful CSA farm—Community Supported Agriculture, a way for consumers to purchase a regular subscription of produce directly from the farmer—providing vegetables to over 150 families.

Then, five years into the agreement, the landowners changed their land use direction and didn't renew Kate's lease. She faced catastrophic losses. "I realized how precarious my land situation was. I was suddenly in a moment where I had no place to farm."

Luckily, a farming mentor stepped in and helped Kate develop a systematic approach to finding farmland. Within a few months, she had a long-term, lawyer-reviewed lease, which felt much more secure. Now she grows vegetables for nearly 200 families and has become an advocate for small farmers, co-creating a bill that will be considered in Iowa's next legislative session. It would give direct-market farms the same zoning exemption privileges larger farms already enjoy, helping to move policy to provide more support for small and mid-sized farmers.

up to the challenge

Kate is not the first—or last—person to face the dilemma of wanting to farm but having limited means to do it. Accessing and maintaining secure, affordable farmland is a significant



“Farmland Access is a foundational cornerstone for local food. Without access to affordable, secure land for farmers, we wouldn’t have the local food that we enjoy or the strengthening community connections and economies that local food systems help build.”

**—Kate Edwards,
Farmland Access Hub Navigator**

challenge to a wave of eager, new farmers. The desire and skills to farm are there, but the land often is not.

“We have a long history of working with farmers. In our conversations with farmers and partner organizations, the issue of farmland access came up again and again,” shares Jan Joannides, Executive Director of Renewing the Countryside (RTC), a nonprofit which supports rural livelihoods through innovation and education. “But when we asked what [lack of farmland access] meant or how to solve it, no one seemed to have a clear answer.”

So, with the assistance of a Bush Innovation Grant, RTC dug in to determine why new farmers couldn’t find land. Were prices too high? Was farmable land not readily available on the market? What they found was a myriad of reasons—rising land costs, less acreage available for sale, farmers living and farming longer than previous generations, and decreasing numbers of farms due to consolidation—with no simple solution.

This led RTC to develop the multi-state Farmland Access Hub. Funded in part by the USDA’s Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP), The Hub is a collective initiative of over 25 organizations across Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa who share expertise and connections to help new farmers gain affordable and secure access to farmland. Technical advisors, key to The Hub’s work, include attorneys,

real estate professionals, financial experts, and seasoned farmers. The initiative offers workshops, day-long boot camps, and one-on-one coaching with Farmland Access Navigators—experienced agricultural professionals who guide mentees through the complex process Kate faced herself.

As RTC developed the Farmland Access Hub, its staff learned about Kate’s success in finding farmland and asked her to become their Iowa navigator. She jumped at the chance. Since joining The Hub in 2017, Kate has mentored over a dozen beginning farmers.

“Kate’s years of experience in farming and having to switch properties herself made her a great person to work with for this process,” says Chris Sutton, one of Kate’s mentees who runs a vegetable farm in Solon, Iowa. “When I started, I didn’t know what I really needed in a piece of rented land. Having a multi-year initial lease was an important goal so I would have enough time to establish [my business] without having to switch to new land. Kate helped with introductions to farmers and connecting me with a lawyer who was well-versed in setting up leases for farmers. I think if I had done this process on my own, I would have settled for a less than ideal option.”

While accessing farmland is still a challenge for many new farmers, programs like The Hub build bridges and implement creative solutions so that communities, landscapes and local food eaters across the region have a future that includes small-scale, sustainable, community-based farms like Kate and Chris have created. To learn more, visit www.gotfarmland.org.

--Grace Brogan is a Montana and Minnesota-based writer, gardener, educator, and values-based economy activist.

farmland availability

The number of US farms has shrunk by more than two-thirds since the Great Depression: 6.8 million in 1935 to 2.05 million today.



Iowa farmland is three times more expensive now than in 1990.



Land availability in Minnesota has decreased nearly 70% in 30 years.



Roughly 400 farms have been lost in Wisconsin per year since the '90s.

(Source: USDA NASS, Iowa State Farmland Values Survey, MN Land Economics)

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Growing A Mushroom Farmer

One man's healing new career

By Katie Godfrey
Photography by Beruck Studios

Efraim Cadriel served for nearly 19 years as a combat medic and x-ray technologist. When he returned from Afghanistan, he worked in the Mayo Clinic Health System as a nuclear medicine technologist. Soon, he began experiencing trauma while working at the hospital. He didn't initially recognize that he was experiencing PTSD and depression, but when he realized his work was triggering the trauma, he made the decision to retire from the medical field.

Not long after, Efraim and his wife, Jessica, moved to 2.8 acres in Kasota, Minn., along with their four children. They enjoyed foraging for wild mushrooms throughout the area and were disappointed that their new property didn't have any morels, the highly sought-after, wild mushroom that only grows in the spring. Efraim started to research the possibility of growing morels on the property and quickly became absorbed in learning about the mushroom-growing process and the many kinds (not including morels) he could raise. Jessica took notice. "Jessica made the comment that she hadn't seen me so engaged in a while and told me that if I were to get into growing mushrooms she would support me 100 percent," Efraim recalls.

The couple co-founded EJ Mushrooms, LLC—"E" for Efraim and "J" for Jessica—in 2018. They started growing oyster, chestnut and lion's mane mushrooms, all of which are considered gourmet with medicinal properties. Efraim's favorite is lion's mane. "It's unique and looks like a snowball with icicles," he explains. "It's used as a seafood substitute for a lot of dishes; people compare it to crab or lobster meat."

This special mushroom may improve cognitive function and benefit people suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia, according to multiple studies cited in Medical News Today, medicalnewstoday.com, October 22, 2018.



Efraim Cadriel, co-founder of EJ Mushrooms, LLC, holding his favorite crop: lion's mane mushrooms.

Putting the plan into action

Efraim describes growing mushrooms as a four-stage process. First, a nutrient source called the substrate is mixed together and placed into a sterilizer for 24 hours. Once it is completely sterilized, he brings it into a lab where he introduces grain spawn for the specific species of mushroom he wants to grow.

The product is sealed in plastic bags and enters an incubation period in a dark, warm room for six to eight weeks, depending on the species. Last, the bags are brought into the "fruiting room" where the combination of light, cool temperatures and high humidity trigger the mushrooms to grow. After about a week, they're ready to harvest.

To launch their enterprise, Efraim and Jessica sought support from the Small Business Development Center in Mankato,

Mushrooms continued on page 12

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who helped them research different financing options. There, they came across the Grow a Farmer Fund. The fund offers low-interest loans of up to \$15,000 to small scale, sustainable farmers in southern Minnesota and is supported by donors who want to see a stronger local food economy. Managed by Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), the fund is a partnership between SMIF, Renewing the Countryside and Slow Money Minnesota. Additional Grow a Farmer loan clients include Antonia Navarro (a chicken farmer in Faribault), and three vegetable farms: Hare and Tortoise Farm in Zumbro Falls, My Sweet Greens MN in Zumbrota, and Pearson Organics in Oronoco.

EJ Mushrooms used their loan to convert a 25' x 28' detached garage into a year-round mushroom farm. They had to build walls and add air ducts and water softeners. The loan also supported the purchase of certain supplies like a humidifier, grow bags and the substrate to get the mushrooms started.

These days, you can find EJ Mushrooms in use at Chankaska Creek Ranch & Winery and the NaKato Bar & Grill. As the business continues to grow, Efraim hopes they'll be able to employ other veterans who are dealing with PTSD. "I know what it is to be at the end of your rope and not have hope," he says. "The program and the mushrooms have given me hope, and I want to share that message with people who have lost it."

—Katie Godfrey is the communications coordinator at Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation. Originally from Madison, Wisconsin, Katie has lived in Minnesota for 12 years.

EJ Mushrooms grows various types. Seen here (left to right) are Lion's Mane--Efraim's favorite--blue oyster and golden oyster.

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Local in the Lunchroom

Minneapolis *Farm to School* serves up more than food

By Elena Byrne

Photos courtesy of Minneapolis Public Schools Culinary & Wellness Services and Open Hands Farm

BBQ rubbed chicken, dirty grains, corn on the cob, watermelon and JonnyPops. No, it's not a three-course meal at your favorite comfort-food restaurant. It's a sample menu from the Minneapolis Public Schools Farm to School Program.



Farm-fresh education

Farm to school is a nationwide movement connecting school districts with local farmers to provide healthy meals and bring local food topics into the classroom. Although schools may implement the program differently across the US, the goal is the same: give kids access to good food, develop healthy eating habits and strengthen regional economies.

Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) has partnered with area farms since 2013 to create student-favorites like Ginger Apple Kohlrabi Slaw, Manoomin (wild rice) Salad, and Kid Kimchi. For 2019-2020, MPS has selected over 40 varieties of Minnesota-grown products, including free-range turkeys from Cannon Falls' Ferndale Market and vegetables from Northfield's Open Hands Farm. Contracts with MPS have meant serious business for the 15 farms and cooperatives.

"Over the years, as our farm business has grown from very small, selling to schools and institutions has been a huge part of that growth," says Ben Doherty, who operates Open Hands Farm with Erin Johnson and has been selling produce to MPS for 14 years.

John Peterson, farmer-owner of Ferndale Market, has had a similar experience. "Minneapolis schools are a significant customer. They're also a true partner, taking time to visit our farm each summer, and connect often on how to best forge win-win opportunities."

Peterson, who is a dedicated advocate for local foods and sustainable farming, said it's a joy to participate in the program, especially the MPS annual Farm to School Community Barbeque. Each fall it attracts about 800 community members. "As students are increasingly separated from how farming is done, I think there's a powerful connection forged when a student can interact with a farmer. It's an incredibly rewarding experience as a farmer to know where the food you work to raise is served, so we're grateful for the partnership."



Ben Doherty with Barrett the Carrot teaching kids about local food systems at Lyndale Elementary, March 2019.

Cafeteria to classroom

The program also strives to engage children in the classroom, teaching them where food comes from and how it's raised.

"We see education as a key piece of our farm to school work," says Kate Seybold, Farm to School Coordinator at MPS. She works with other staff, including teachers and the district's dietitian to build connections between cafeterias and classrooms. Programs like Minnesota Thursdays—where the district serves meals made exclusively of local foods on the first Thursday of each month—inspire students to think about food in new ways, according to Seybold. "The more we can continue to encourage our kids to be adventurous and thoughtful eaters, the more we can call our farm to school program a success."

Lunch money

In February, a bi-partisan bill was introduced by Sen. Mike Goggin (R-Red Wing) and Rep. Todd Lippert (DFL-

Northfield), seeking two million dollars to fund Farm to School programming across the state. Governor Walz signed a version of the bill in June.

Under the new provision, \$400,000 will be available to reimburse schools and early care providers who serve local foods. Although the funds are less than proponents had hoped for, they're enough to do a pilot program, creating new opportunities for schools and farmers.

"Getting farm to school language in the omnibus bill has been exciting!" says Seybold. "Being involved in a pilot will help a lot of school districts in proving the value of the program so they can work their way up [to more purchasing]."

To help with implementation, communities across the state—including Wabasha, Lake City, Rochester and Cannon Falls—will be hosting Farm to School Networking meetings this winter to link schools with local farms.

Purchasing from regional farms means more than food: it means growth for farmers, stronger local economies, student engagement...and the potential to improve nutrition and health for generations to come.

—Elena Byrne serves as Tradeshow & Communications Coordinator for *Renewing the Countryside* and has a doctorate in nutritional sciences with a focus on nutrition education.

Farm to School continued on page 16



Minneapolis Public Schools' turkey chili recipe, made with local turkey, was developed by James Beard Award Winning Chef Ann Kim and two MPS students at the district's first annual Jr Iron Chef Competition in 2015.

TURKEY CHILI

INGREDIENTS	PREPARATION
1 MED YELLOW ONION, DICED 1 GREEN & 1 RED PEPPER, DICED 1 TBSP CANOLA OIL 4 1/2 LBS. TURKEY THIGHS, DICED 1 TSP GARLIC, CHOPPED 1 TBSP KOSHER SALT 1 1/2 TBSP GRANULATED SUGAR 1 TSP EA. RED PEPPER FLAKES, BLACK PEPPER, OREGANO 1 TBSP PAPRIKA 2 1/2 TBSP EACH CHILI POWDER, CUMIN 1 1/2 TSP CINNAMON 4 CUPS PETITE DICED TOMATOES 1 1/2 CUPS CRUSHED TOMATOES 1 1/4 CUP WATER 1 1/2 CUPS PINTO BEANS 1 1/2 CUPS BLACK BEANS 3/4 LB. FROZEN SWEET CORN	1. DICE ONIONS, PEPPERS. SET ASIDE. 2. HEAT OIL IN A LARGE POT. COOK MEAT UNTIL TENDER. 3. ADD GARLIC, SUGAR AND SPICES. STIR AND MIX AS YOU GO. 4. COOK AT 165° FOR 20 MINUTES. 5. ADD TOMATOES AND WATER, STIR. ADD ONIONS AND PEPPERS. 6. STIR IN BEANS AND SIMMER FOR 10 MINUTES, THEN ADD CORN. 7. ADJUST SPICES TO YOUR LIKING. TOP WITH SOUR CREAM, CHEESE, CILANTRO, CORN CHIPS... BE CREATIVE!

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Acres of Hope



Xeng Thao (left) and his mother, Soua Her (above), working on the ten acres they lease on the HAEA farm.

How the Hmong American Farmers' Association is leveling the plowing field

By Kelli Boylen

Photography by Mike Hazard

Xeng Thao and his mother, Soua Her, are one of the inter-generational Hmong families farming the shed-dotted fields along Highway 52, just south of the Twin Cities. Every day, motorists drive past their plot and see their shed but have no idea why it's there, how much the land means to Xeng and his mother or what his family has done to help the rural economy.

Addressing despair and disparity

Hmong people came to Minnesota from Thailand and Laos as political refugees after the Vietnam War, from the 1970s to

the early 1990s. For many, like Xeng's family, farming was their skill, their way of life, and an important part of their dignity. When farming has been a family's livelihood for generations, starting over in a completely different culture can seem impossible. There's not only a language barrier but, often, a lack of access to land.

Trying to solve many of these problems and growing off the principle that the best people to support Hmong farming are the farmers themselves, families came together in 2011 and formed the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAEA). Their mission is to "advance the economic, social and cultural prosperity of Hmong American farmers and their families."

“Many Hmong farmers immigrated to the United States with only the clothes on their backs and a deep hope to create a better life for their children. And in doing so, they also nurtured and fed many families in the Twin Cities,” says Janssen Hang, senior organizer and co-founder of HAFA.

Using their agricultural heritage and knowledge from their homeland, Hmong farmers grew fresh produce and flowers that revitalized farmers’ markets in the Twin Cities. Today, these hard-working farmers make up more than 50 percent of those selling at metro farmers’ markets.



Although Hmong farmers greatly increased the supply of nutritious, affordable food, many continued to face economic hardship in their own households. When HAFA started, Hmong farmers generated an average of \$3,000 per acre—a fraction of the \$8,000 per acre other mixed-vegetable producers received.

“This clearly illustrated a great disparity between Hmong farmers and mainstream white farmers, even though Hmong farmers were (and still are) leading local food access in the Twin Cities farmers’ market system,” Janssen says. But he notes that within four years of the inception of HAFA, members’ income equaled or exceeded that of other Minnesota vegetable growers.



The HAFA farm

One way HAFA has advanced the prosperity of Hmong American farmers is through their 155-acre farm, 15 minutes south of the Twin Cities along Highway 52, which was acquired in 2013.

“HAFA connected with New Island Capital who was interested in our vision and the intent of land acquisition to provide land tenure to Hmong farmers while introducing the concept of cooperative farming,” says Janssen, whose organization has a ten-year lease on the land with the right to purchase it outright after eight.

On this Dakota County farmland, families who are HAFA members can lease parcels of land—five to ten acres. Each family also has a small shed, designed to store equipment and provide shelter from the elements. Currently, 19 families farm the HAFA land. Unfortunately, the farm is not large enough for all of HAFA’s 25 member-families, but all members have the opportunity to sell produce at HAFA’s Alternative Market Program no matter where their crops are grown.

According to Janssen, the HAFA Farm grows more than 160 varieties of fruits, vegetables and flowers. Here, Xeng and Soua lease ten acres (roughly the size of 7.5 football fields), which gives them land security to better plan their produce production.

“The farming we do on HAFA land benefits our family because it allows my mom to enjoy the lifestyle she had back in Laos/Thailand,” says Xeng, whose family came to the United States in 1990-91. The Thao family used to have about seven family members farming part-time on their ten acres, but this year it was just Xeng, who left his retail job for the growing season, plus his mom and one other family member.

They grow a wide variety of vegetables and berries, including rhubarb, raspberries, jalapenos and ground cherries, which they sell at farmers’ markets and through HAFA’s CSA (community supported agriculture, basically a weekly subscription for fresh produce). The HAFA Food Hub aggregates and sells members’ produce through CSA shares, schools, retailers and institutions. Xeng says HAFA has helped them sell more produce: “As a part of HAFA, we provide our produce to fulfill their CSA and other needs.”



HABA continued from page 19

Cultivating a better life

HABA members can also upgrade their business and agricultural skills. During the off-season, the organization runs a bi-cultural, bi-lingual training program to help their members succeed. Topics include soil health and fertility, cover crops, crop rotation, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) safety standards, farm machinery and farm business management.

“HABA allows the Hmong farming community a chance to learn about rules and regulation in a language they understand,” says Xeng.

It has also established a micro loan program available to members, specifically those who did not meet the requirements of other loan programs. Three members—Lillian, Wang Ger and Judy—borrowed \$14,000 to invest in high tunnel structures, which lengthens their growing season



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in the spring and fall. According to Janssen, it's been a life-changing addition to their business operations.

"HAFA's programs are designed to help new farmers access land, capital, credit, training and markets," says Sai Thao, Senior Lender Officer for Compeer Financial. Compeer supports HAFA's agriculture training program and provides business training, technical assistance and low-interest loans to HAFA farmers. Along with AgriBank, Compeer has contributed \$70,000 to help build infrastructure on the HAFA farm. "We're proud to partner with HAFA as they continue to develop innovative agriculture programs for new farmers

producing locally-grown food."

These programs have not only improved land security and increased market opportunities for Hmong farmers, they've enhanced their quality of life. "The presence of HAFA has increased farmers' capacity and enhanced their self-efficacy," says Janssen. "And, most importantly, it's changing the hopeless perception of Hmong farmers to a hopeful endeavor."

—Kelli Boylen is a freelance writer living in Driftless Region of Northeast Iowa. She is also a licensed massage therapist.



Fun-Fun Noodle Bowl

Courtesy of Yia Vang of Union Hmong Kitchen, unionkitchenmn.com

Spicy Chicken

- 1 lb. ground chicken
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tsp. ginger, chopped
- 1 tsp. Sambal Olek or sriracha (or your favorite Asian hot sauce)
- 1 tsp. Korean chili flakes (or red chili flakes, optional)
- 1 tsp. sesame oil
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground black pepper

Noodles, vegetables & herbs:

- 8 oz. Vermicelli/rice noodles, cooked
- 1/4 c. Yu Choy (or Chinese broccoli or baby bok choy), chopped and blanched
- 1/4 c. carrots, shaved
- 1/4 c. red cabbage, shaved
- 1/4 c. Mung bean sprouts
- 1/4 c. onions, charred on the grill then chopped
- 2 tsp. scallion, sliced
- Mint, Thai basil and cilantro leaves

Combine Spicy Chicken, cooked noodles and vegetables and herbs in a large mixing bowl to serve family style. Or assemble in individual bowls by placing the Spicy Chicken on the bottom, then noodles, with veggies and herbs on top. Enjoy cold. Serves four.



First, prepare the Spicy Chicken by combining all ingredients in a large sauté pan and cooking over medium-high heat until meat is browned and cooked through. Next, bring a pot of water to boil and cook noodles for 6-7 minutes (until soft), then strain, and rinse with cold water.



Cannon Falls

SAVOR LOCAL FLAVOR



Just east of Highway 52, between St. Paul and Rochester, lies the quaint riverside community of Cannon Falls. Dedicated to all things local—from an award-winning winery and craft brewery, to artisan markets and fine dining—it's a great place to spend the day...or a lifetime.

CANNON VALLEY TRAIL AND CANNON RIVER

Whether it's cross-country skiing on the 19.7 mile, paved Cannon Valley Trail or canoeing down the Cannon River, outdoor fun beckons all year long. Cannon Falls Chamber of Commerce, 103 Fourth St. N, cannonfalls.org, 507-263-2289.



RAW BISTRO

Raw Bistro is farm-to-bowl pet fare crafted right in Cannon Falls from 100% grass-fed beef and free-range poultry—along with organic produce and other real ingredients dogs need for optimal health and vitality. rawbistro.com, 507-263-5959.

FERNDALE MARKET

The Peterson family has raised turkeys without shortcuts for three generations. Visit their on-farm store for tantalizing free-range, antibiotic-free turkey products as well as goods from 100+ local farmers and food makers. ferndalemarket.com, 31659 Willow Trail, 507-263-4556



CANNON RIVER WINERY

Shed the stress of a long week with live music, good company and amazing wines at Cannon River Winery's inviting historic location. From full-bodied reds to dry whites, there's plenty to discover (or rediscover). 421 Mill St. W, cannonriverwinery.com, 507-263-7400.





TILION BREWERY

This destination microbrewery offers a rotating selection of seasonal brews and fresh takes on traditional styles. Join them as they tap a new English barrel-conditioned beer (firkin) every Saturday at 1:00. Tilionbrewing.com, 432 Mill St. W., 507-263-4497.



CANNONBELLES CHEESE

CannonBelles Coffee & Ice Cream

With flavors for every taste, CannonBelles Coffee & Ice Cream carries CannonBelles' full line of artisan-made, award-winning cheeses—crafted in Cannon Falls—plus specialty coffees and parlor-style ice cream. Cannonbelles.com, 402 W. Mill St., 507-757-1155.



OLY'S ROADHOUSE

Offering robust selections like brick-oven burgers and pizza and a full-bar rife with locally-sourced spirits, craft beer, ciders and signature cocktails, this welcoming spot redefines hospitality.

ARTISAN PLAZA FOOD HALL

Located 1.5 miles south of historic downtown, the Artisan Plaza Food Hall features three exciting eateries: the Market & Deli, Oly's Roadhouse Brick Oven Pub, and Falls Landing.

Artisanplaza.com,
1223 Fourth Street,
651-829-1138.



MARKET & DELI

The thriving Market & Deli showcases hearty soups and sandwiches, made with local ingredients, as well as a delicious array of gourmet meats and cheeses, organic groceries and fresh produce.



FALLS LANDING


This American eatery, inspired by North Country fish camps, supper clubs and hunting lodges, features hearty beverages, fine service and savory dishes prepared with local ingredients. It's destination dining at its best.

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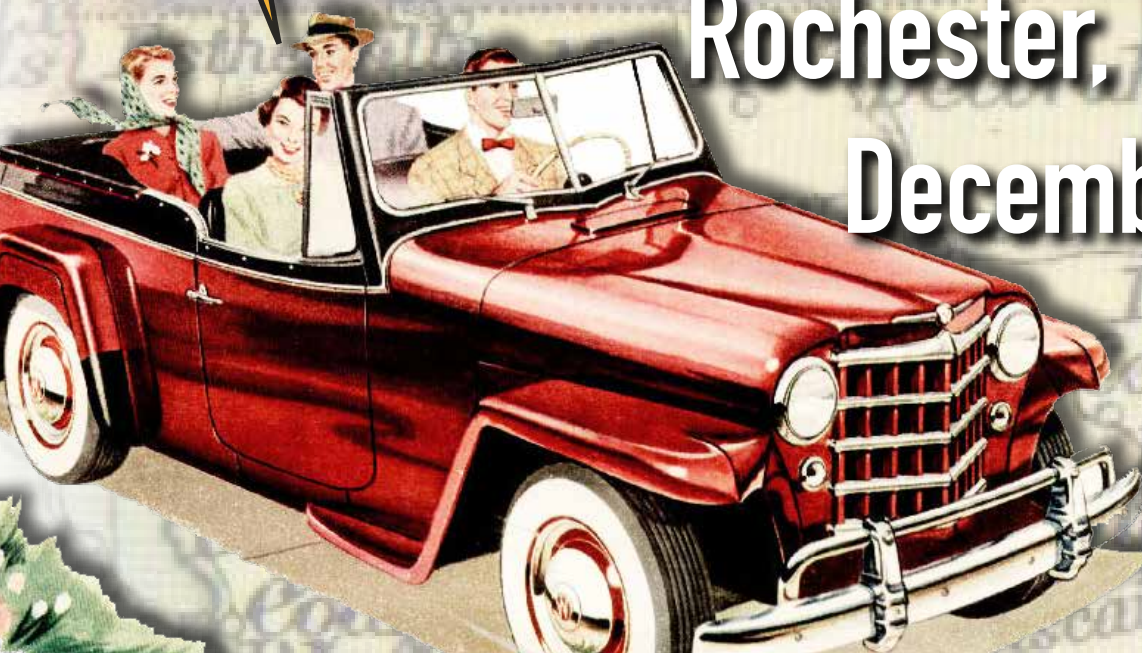
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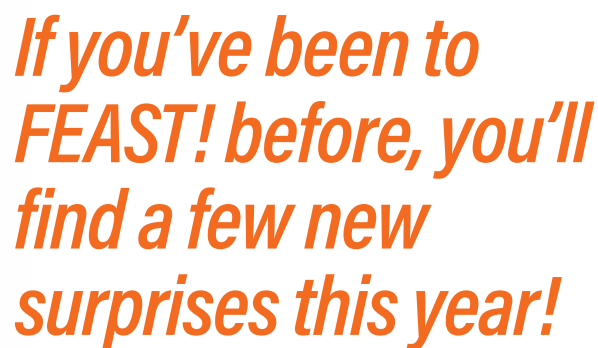
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Rochester, Minnesota

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VEGETABLE
Alfrombra

Art In the Lobby

String Survey will form a collective view of attendees's sentiments about local foods, represented as a colorful yarn weaving.

Help create a **Vegetable Alfombra** (carpet) for a giant display of local foods that emphasizes the endless possibilities when people work together.

Enjoy **local musicians** up close, and maybe dance off some holiday calories!

Kids Area & People's Choice Polling

Voters get a chance
to win a basket of
FEAST! goodies.

Chef Demos

Local and regional chefs cook with offerings from FEAST! vendors.

Stay tuned to facebook where we'll announce our special guest chef lineup.

Popup Rochester Farmers Markets

Join the RFM for it's second appearance at FEAST! and do your Saturday grocery shopping in one place.

Like and follow us
on social media
for special offers
and information!



Here's a sneak peek at our early bird vendors!

American Hazelnut Company,

Grower-owned producer of hazelnuts, oil and flour,
americanhazelnutcompany.com

Aspelund Winery,

Minnesota crafted fruit wines,
aspelundwinery.com

B&E's Trees,

Certified organic bourbon barrel aged maple syrup,
bandestrees.com

Bare Honey,

Raw honey with gourmet spices and infusions,
barehoney.com

Blue Fruit Farm,

Certified organic perennial fruit products,
bluefruitfarm.com

Caldo Foods,

Mediterranean dips, sauces and seasonings,
caldofoods.com

CannonBelles Cheese,

Hand-crafted artisan cheese,
cannonbelles.com

Carlson Roasting Co.,

Small batch coffee roaster,
carlsonroasting.com

Chocolate San Jose-Minneapolis;

Exquisite single-origin chocolate,
chocolatesanjose-minneapolis.com

Colonel Pabst,

Small-batch Worcestershire with a beer base,
colonelpabst.com

Country View Dairy,

Artisan yogurt made on farm,
countryviewdairy.com

CTL Foods, Inc.,

Soda Fountain® Malt Powder,
ctlfoods.com

Driftless Provisions,

Locally-sourced dry cured salami,
driftlessprovisions.com

Ferndale Market,

Family-farmed free-range turkey,
ferndalemarket.com

Four Daughters Vineyard and Winery,

Winery, cidery and event center,
fourdaughtersvineyard.com

Grandma's Gourmets LLC,

Hand-crafted jam, salsa and pickles,
grandmasgourmets.com

Heartland Burrito,

Frozen burritos with Midwest ingredients,
heartlandburrito.com

Jajja Wellness,

African superfood tonics,
jajjawellness.com

Joanna's Premium Tonic Syrups,

Hand-crafted tonic syrups for cocktails,
thisisjoannas.com

Kakookies,

Soft-baked superfood cookies,
kakookies.com

KellyG's Wild Rice Burgers,

Vegetarian wild rice burgers,
kellygswildriceburgers.com

Living Greens Farm,

Greenhouse-grown sustainable salad greens,
livinggreensfarm.com

Main Street Farm,

Regenerative poultry farm,
mainstreetproject.org

Midwest Elderberry Cooperative,

High-quality North American elderberry products,
midwest-elderberry.coop

Mostly Made,

Enchilada and lasagna fillings,
mostly-made.com

My Sweet Greens MN,

Urban farm specializing in microgreens,
mysweetgreensmn.com

O'Brien's Own Gourmet Granola,

Handmade "softer" granola,
obriensowngranola.com

Oak Valley Creations,

Hand-crafted dips, jellies and salts,
oakvalleycreations.com

Out Of The Kitchen LLC,

Black garlic sauces,
chefmitchmaier.com

Planet Princess Foods,

Gluten- and grain-free buns and bagels,
planetprincessfoods.com

Sara's Tippy Pies,

Hand-crafted alcohol-infused pies,
sarastippypies.com

Shokolate Haven,

Artisan chocolate,
shokolatehaven.com

Siren Shrub Company LLC,

Sweet vinegar flavoring concentrate,
sirensshrubs.com

Sno Pac Foods, Inc.,

Organic frozen fruits and vegetables,
snopac.com

Squash Blossom Farm,

Sourdough breads and pastries,
squashblossomfarm.org

Superior Small Batch,

Delicious vegan foods,
superiorsmallbatch.com

The Bee Shed, SBC,

Community-focused honey producer,
thebeeshed.com

Trail Creek Coffee Roasters,

Small-batch artisan coffee,
trailcreekcoffeeroasters.com

Treats by T~the pepper people,

Homemade homegrown ghost pepper sauce,
treatsbyt.com

West Indies Soul Food Inc.,

Signature Caribbean sauces,
westindiessoulfood.com

**Go to local-feast.org/2019vendors
for the most updated list as it grows!**



Best in Show!

Entrepreneurs work hard, all to please the customer—you! And for three years, FEAST! festival attendees have enjoyed voting for their favorite (and getting a chance to win one of the baskets overflowing with local-foods goodies). Here are our 2018 winners...



People's Choice: The Bee Shed

The Bee Shed is a local, community-focused, honey producer. They are beekeepers, educators and mentors working to raise awareness about the importance of honeybees and other pollinators to food sources.



Most Innovative Local Sourcing: Grandma's Gourmets

Grandma's Gourmets meets with growers to help them understand what quantities the business is seeking. This helps with planning for producer and grower.



Most Inspiring Social Benefit: Heartland Burritos

Chef Kyle helps aspiring food businesses, donates product to the local food pantry, and speaks to ESL (English as a Second Language) classes at his local high school to inspire kids to think about value-added food businesses as careers.



Most Engaging Booth: My Sweet Greens MN

This urban farm grows year-round microgreens in 15 varieties. Their FEAST! booth featured a video screen, colorful signs and lots of fresh, growing greens. As of January, their new name is The Greensted.

Additional 2018 winners were:



Ready to Grow Award from the Minnesota Dept of Agriculture: CannonBelles Cheese



Something Special from Wisconsin™ Award: CTL Foods

Stay tuned to FEAST! social media. We'll announce this year's trade show awards on Friday, Dec. 6, and the People's Choice Award at the close of the festival, Dec. 7th.



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FEAST! *Restaurant Week*

OCTOBER 7-13, 2019

Bleu Duck Kitchen is a full-service restaurant featuring a welcoming atmosphere and exhibition kitchen. With a weekly-changing menu, they focus on quality ingredients sourced as locally as possible. 14 4th St SW, bleuduckkitchen.com.



Located in the historic armory building, **Cameo at the Castle** serves globally-influenced cuisine and world class food and drink in a fresh, comfortable setting. 121 N. Broadway Ave Suite 100, cameoatthecastle.com.

Chester's Kitchen & Bar is classic American cuisine, serving lunch, dinner, Sunday brunch and late-night happy hour in the heart of downtown Rochester. 111 S. Broadway #108, chesterskb.com.



Falls Landing is an American eatery, inspired by North Country fish camps, supper clubs and hunting lodges, featuring hearty beverages, fine service and savory dishes prepared with local ingredients. Artisan Plaza, 1223 4th St S, Cannon Falls, MN, fallslandingmn.com.



Fiddlehead Coffee Co is a specialty coffee café and roastery with a menu of hyper-local food, a full bar and craft cocktails. 412 3rd Ave SE, fiddleheadcoffee.co.

Forager uses locally-sourced ingredients in their scratch kitchen. They strive to build sustainable relationships with local farmers to support a successful food ecosystem, 1005 6th St NW, foragerbrewery.com.



ek

It's back! Now in its third year, this culinary celebration blends the skills of area food producers with the best chefs and drink artists in southern Minnesota to wow you with tantalizing entrees, drinks, and three-course menus.

FEAST! Restaurant Week dishes are not only delicious, they also incorporate locally-grown ingredients, which helps area farmers and strengthens the economy. So, try one—or all 14—of the participating restaurants and support your local foods system. With everything from pizza and burgers to French cuisine and craft brews, helping your neighbor never tasted so good.



Le Petit Café is a European bistro with a seasonally-rotating menu, highlighting farm-fresh ingredients in a fine-dining setting. 301 N Broadway Ave, le-petit-café.com.



Pedal Pushers offers unique comfort foods—Blackened Chicken Grain Bowl, Norwegian Meatballs, Chicken Pot Pie—using locally-sourced ingredients whenever possible. 121 Parkway Ave N, Lanesboro, MN, pedalpusherscafe.com.

Little Thistle Brewing's taproom is an inviting, unassuming space to relax over a locally-crafted pint of beer with friends, families and neighbors. 2031 14th Street NW, littlethistlebeer.com.



People's Food Co-op is a community-owned grocery store with a full deli, hot & cold bars, and self-serve seating area. They promote local farmers and producers through an emphasis on fresh, healthy, sustainable food. 519 1st Ave SW, pfc.coop.



The Loop offers a variety of American cuisine, such as sandwiches, pizzas and main entrees. Enjoy lunch and dinner every day, with brunch and a vibrant late-night scene on weekends. 318 1st Ave SW, thelooprochester.com.



From a comforting family meal to delicious catered appetizers, **Tonic Local Kitchen & Juice Bar** features specialty juices & smoothies, hearty breakfasts, wraps, salads, and soups. 1217 2nd St SW, tonicfreshjuice.com.



Hidden in the basement of Grand Rounds Brewing Company & Restaurant, **Marrow** serves adventurous French-inspired food. 24 seats. One chef. Real food. Real wine. 4-3rd St SW.



Victoria's Italian Restaurant is a scratch kitchen with a variety of options, award-winning sauces, a full bar and extensive wine list. 7-1st Ave SW, victoriasmn.com.



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HOT OFF THE PASS

a visit with 3 local chefs

By Kelli Boylen



Paul Berglund

Chef in Transition

You talk of the simplicity of Japanese and Italian cooking. How do you apply that to your dishes?

Whether I'm making a traditional dish,

or adapting a new idea, I ask myself, "Are there components of the dish that don't need to be there?" If the answer is "Yes," I omit the ingredients.

Most popular original dish? A shaved cabbage salad with a vinaigrette made with Parmesan cheese. It's not particularly fancy, just very crave-able and satisfying. It leaves a lot of guests happily surprised.

First thoughts when you found out you won the James Beard Award? I was surprised, nervous about giving a speech, and proud and happy for all the work that The Bachelor Farmer team did to earn that. It validated what we were doing and allowed us to keep pushing our own boundaries as a chef team.

You debated between becoming a park ranger or a chef. How did you decide? I'm drawn to teams as much as I am to food. While I enjoy solitude, working with people fulfills me.

Cooking and baking: art or science? I see it more and more as a craft, something to practice. I enjoy it most when I think of it that way.

Favorite nugget of advice? I learned a Spanish phrase, "La union hace la fuerza," from coworker Juan Reyes at The Bachelor Farmer. The phrase is not as impressive in English, but it basically means, "Together, we are stronger." If I ever get a tattoo, that's what it's going to say!



Photos courtesy of Paul Berglund and Bharath Wootla.

Chefs continued on pages 35 & 37

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Tom Skold

Sous Chef

(second in command)

Luther College
Dining Services
Decorah, Iowa

Why did you become a chef? It was a good fit while pursuing a college degree on the intermittent 25-year plan.



Favorite farmer's market-inspired dish? Green Garlic Pesto. Clever farmers have figured out that if they thin a garlic patch and bring the green garlic (like a big green onion) folks like me will buy it.

You've said, "If it doesn't grow in Iowa you don't need to eat it." Any exceptions? We're kind of thin on natural caffeine sources, though we've got great roasters, so it's hard to mind. Olives and oil, of course, avocados, and most wouldn't do without chocolate. I'll stick to the spirit of the quote, which is: to live here is to be surrounded by abundance.

Why did you switch from restaurants to a college? I've had great fun working in restaurants, but I've been at it since 1977. For me, it's about providing hospitality with a small "h," holding space for others to experience joy and belonging.

Challenges cooking for college students? Keeping it fun and fresh for guests who dine with us many times a week. Students are under lots of pressure. We hope their time with us gives them a chance to breathe and leave nourished and refreshed.

"Simple Servings?" This is a line in the cafeteria where food is prepared without the top eight food items that cause allergic reactions: wheat, soy, dairy, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish.

How does your crew do seasonal for so many students? Luther grows a garden and supplies us with fresh produce in season. We also build menus by semester and weave in flavor profiles that include seasonal themes.



Photo courtesy of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa



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chefshackbaycity.com

How did you become a "godmother of food trucking?" Some of our colleagues back in the day started calling us that...and we kept it! Chef Shack was among the first mobile units to start using better ingredients back in 2005.

Do you just have food trucks or do you also have a physical location? Our permanent location resides in a weekend "French country cottage" dining destination in rural western Wisconsin called Chef Shack Bay City.



Photography by Amber Ristow, Amber Jean Photography - Ellsworth, WI



How has travel influenced what you cook and bake?

The creativity and inspiration that comes from travel is immeasurable. It's what constantly keeps us rebirthing our brand.

It's said you're a "communicator of flavor." What does that mean? It means we deliver strong bold flavors that sear a flavor memory into people's brains!

You grow much of your own produce and herbs. Why? We grow produce and herbs so we can have the beauty of picking super fresh ingredients that can be prepped and placed right on the plate. We also use fish and game from a 20-mile radius.

What's this I hear about Indian-spice mini donuts??? Chef Shack's legendary handmade Indian spice mini donut was born after my first trip to India in 2003. I was blown away by the varied array of pastries throughout the country. So, I came back and created a donut in the spirit of my travels.

How do people react when they bite into one of those mini donuts? Their heads blow off in glee. They're addictingly delicious!

Elevating Grains

By Beth Dooley

Photos courtesy of Katie Cannon Photography

Fresh and flavor are not adjectives most of us associate with grains, especially flour. But throughout the country, local millers, bakers, chefs, university researchers and home cooks are rising up in a battle against spongy bread, tasteless pasta and dreary pilafs.

Here, in the region once known as “The Bread Basket of the World,” farmers like Ben Penner and Luke Peterson raise heritage varieties of wheat with distinct baking and flavor profiles; university professor Kathy Draeger grows hullless barley for its lovely, nutty flavor, and the Wagner Farm raises and malts its own barley for the family’s business, Vertical Malt.

In fields once dominated by corn and soybeans, farmers are planting oats, barley, rye and winter wheat as alternative grains. These crops, grown for the protection and enrichment of the soil, help capture water, retain topsoil and nutrients,

thus reducing the need for chemicals. They also provide habitat for wildlife and pollinators while producing nutritious, delicious food.

Locally-grown grains also have incredible flavor, nutrition and fiber. When freshly milled, their flour actually tastes like the grain because oxidation begins right after milling, quickly diminishing the grain’s nutrients and flavor. Just sniff a bag of freshly-milled Baker’s Field Flour, and note its toasty scent. Or enjoy Sunrise Flour Mill’s fresh rye; it’s tangy, nutty and sweet.

And flavor is just part of the story. At Sunrise Flour Mill, founders Marty and Darrold Glanville, began milling organic heritage wheat because of Darrold’s health. When he started milling his own flour for bread, he felt better within weeks. As word spread, the Glanvilles started selling fresh flour at the Mill City Farmers Market, co-ops and restaurants. These days, in their newly built mill in North Branch, Minn., the Glanvilles

If you recognize the difference between a farmer’s market tomato and the ones available in the supermarket, then you’ll appreciate the flavor of local grains.



Photo by Katie Cannon



Darrold Glanville, co-founder of Sunrise Flour Mill, standing by the Unifine Mill, a high-velocity impact mill which shatters grain into tiny particles, creating a super-fine flour that retains the nutrition of the whole grain.

are producing heritage wheat flour that looks and performs like white flour but contains all the nutrients and flavor of whole wheat. It is perfect for making light-textured sandwich loaves and baguettes as well as delicate cookies.

So, if these grains provide environmental and health benefits, why don't more farmers plant them? It often boils down to commercial viability.

"If we expect our farmers to change the way they grow food—food that is good for us and for the planet—we have to provide them with a profitable alternative," says Dr. Don Wyse, University of Minnesota professor and the force behind the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative. "Our farmers are running a business."

Forever Green, a collaborate effort of UMN researchers, area farmers, millers and chefs, is introducing a perennial cousin to wheat—Kernza®—that grows well organically and produces grain for milling, cooking and forage, year after year. "Perennial crops increase the productivity and profitability of a farm and create new economic opportunities while enhancing our environment," says Dr. Jacob Jungers, UMN professor.

To mitigate the risks associated with planting beneficial foods, farmers need reliable markets. That's where we eaters come in. Seek out and buy fresh alternatives. Wander through the Rochester Farmers Market and discover Pam Benike's

Grains continued on page 40

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The mill is open to the public for pickup on Tuesdays 9:00 AM to noon. Order online at sunriseflourmill.com, or find us Saturdays at the Mill City Farmers Market.

Prairie Hollow whole wheat bread, baked with freshly-milled flour from her farm's heritage wheat. Look for Renaissance Bread and Pastries' sourdough breads, order Kathy Draeger's barley and find locally-grown oats, cornmeal and baking mixes from Whole Grain Milling at the People's Food Co-op. Bread, pasta and whole grains from local farms and artisan millers are more than bland carriers for other ingredients. They hold a place, all their own, at our tables.

—*Beth Dooley is a James Beard Award-winning cookbook author. She's currently working on a cookbook about regenerative agriculture, tentatively titled, The Perennial Kitchen.*



Join the Grain Revolution!



The Artisan Grain Collaborative (AGC), comprised of bakers, chefs, farmers, brewers, nonprofits and many others, offers education and creates awareness about regenerative agriculture as well as the art and science of cooking, baking, milling, brewing and distilling with specialty grains.

Find AGC events at graincollaborative.com

For classes, tours, recipes and products, check out...

Sunrise Flour Mill, North Branch, Minn.,
sunriseflourmill.com

Baker's Field Flour & Bread, Minneapolis, Minn.,
bakersfieldflour.com

Meadowlark Organics, Ridgeway, Wisc.,
meadowlarkorganics.com

Early Morning Harvest, Panora, Iowa,
earlymorningharvest.com

Fermentation Fest, Reedsburg, Wisc., Oct. 5-13,
fermentationfest.com

Barley Salad

Recipe courtesy of Beth Dooley

- 3 c. cooked barley*
- 2 c. sliced cherry tomatoes
- 1/4 c. chopped black olives
- 1/4 c. fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 c. American Hazelnut Company hazelnut oil (Gay Mills, Wisc.)
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1/4 c. chopped fresh basil
- 1/4 c. finely minced parsley
- 2 tbsp. finely minced mint

While it's easy to think of barley as the grain for soups and stews, it makes a fabulous alternative to pasta in salads. Serves 4 to 6

In a large bowl, toss together the tomatoes and olives with the barley. In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, oil and garlic. Toss in just enough of the dressing to lightly coat the salad. Toss in the fresh herbs and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

* To cook barley, turn about 3/4 to 1 c. of hulled or hullless barley into a pot and cover with three inches of water. Set over high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until the barley is tender, about 40-50 minutes. Drain off excess water and allow to cool before using in the salad. Store extra barley in the refrigerator for up to a week or freeze.





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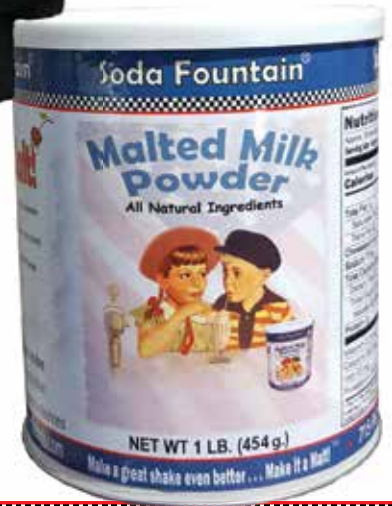
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Come & Get It!



Field-to-Plate Dining, Down on the Farm

By Lisa Kivirist & John Ivanko
Photography by John D. Ivanko Photography

Thanks to the growing local food movement and increasing interest for rural experiences, more farms now offer on-farm dining. From pizza nights to multiple-course meals, you'll find a wealth of culinary adventures where you can explore perfectly ripe, seasonal flavors and tour the farm, connecting directly with where the ingredients are grown.

Supporting New Start-Ups

On-farm food is not only a delicious new form of agritourism, it also offers farmers an opportunity to diversify income streams. However, expanding into serving prepared foods takes a lot more time and effort than just compiling a few good recipes and setting out picnic tables. Farmers often head down an unfamiliar and (typically) expensive path since such ventures require commercial kitchens and other infrastructure investments distinctly different from their farming enterprise.

That's why Minnesota nonprofit Renewing the Countryside and the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture created *Come & Get It! What you need to know to serve food on your farm*, a 120-page publication offering regulatory insights to newcomers. This free resource was funded, in part, under a North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture

Research and Education (NCR-SARE) Partnership grant and helps farmers determine if on-farm food service might be a good fit for their situations.

"We saw this exploding interest in on-farm food experiences as an opportunity for farmer education and resource connection, which led us to create *Come & Get It!*," explains Brett Olson, Creative Director at Renewing the Countryside. "This resource is really the only one of its kind in the country. It's a first step in understanding the regulations and costs required to serve food on farms in Wisconsin and Minnesota."

A team of seven farms—four from Wisconsin and three from Minnesota (see list below)—contributed to *Come & Get It!*, collaboratively sharing their stories and experiences.

"We learned so much in our start-up process, and we were very happy to share our story with other farmers so they can successfully hit the ground running," says Mary Ann Bellazzini of Campo di Bella in Mt Horeb, Wisc., where she and her husband, Marc, opened a winery and restaurant on their farm in 2015. They specialize in seasonal, farm-to-table fare like braised lamb shanks, Italian sausage with mushrooms over polenta and French apple cake. "Having more options for the public to visit and experience where food comes from helps our whole local food movement grow."

Tips for On-Farm Dining

For those new to these events, you're in for a memorable, tasty treat. However, on-farm dining differs from a typical restaurant meal. Be open and prepared to be an engaged, considerate guest, and you'll maximize your own experience while supporting and respecting your farmer host.

Here are some key things to remember:

- **Check Dates, Times & Ticket Requirements**

Most farms offer events on a certain day and time of the week and may require reservations and tickets purchased in advance. Research the logistics and only go to the farm during scheduled events.

- **Think Slow Food**

Appreciate that these are not full-time, full-service restaurants with large kitchens and staff. Lots of factors, including a rush of customers, can cause an unexpected wait for your order, especially on busy pizza farm nights. Consider the wait a bonus and stroll around the farm. Come for the full experience and relax, savoring the process.



- **Understand Farm Rules**

Remember you're visiting a working farm and respect its rules, which are often clearly posted. Be mindful of areas closed to exploration. Don't wander into barns or pens and keep a safe distance from animals.

- **Dress Appropriately**

Most on-farm food events happen outside, so be sure to dress for the situation. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a sun hat, as shade is often scarce.

—*Lisa Kivistik and John Ivanko* authored *Homemade for Sale*, *Farmstead Chef*, *Rural Renaissance*, *Soil Sisters* and *Ecopreneuring*. They run *Inn Serendipity Farm* in Wisconsin, powered by renewable energy.

Farm Food continued on page 44

Autumn Apple Pizza with Roasted Squash and Gorgonzola

Courtesy of Diane Webster, Borner Farm Project, Prescott, Wisc.



Combine all-purpose, unbleached flour, whole wheat flour, yeast and salt in a large bowl. Mix well. Combine the water and olive oil in another bowl; add to dry ingredients. Mix well. Turn the dough onto a floured surface and knead until smooth, adding just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to the board. Grease a large bowl; place the dough inside, cover, and refrigerate overnight.

Next day, preheat oven to 500° (with pizza stone if available). Remove dough from fridge, turn onto a floured work surface and divide into two balls. Flatten the dough balls and let them rest until they warm a bit and begin to relax. On the floured surface, roll each ball out to a 12"-14" diameter circle. Sprinkle a cookie sheet or pizza peel with cornmeal and placed rolled dough on it.

Basic Pizza Dough

1 1/2 c. all-purpose, unbleached flour
1 1/2 c. whole wheat flour
1 tsp. instant yeast
1 tsp. salt, plus more for sprinkling
2 tbsp. olive oil for dough
2 tbsp. olive oil for topping
Rubbed or fresh chopped sage
Apples, quartered and sliced
Sweet Winter Squash, sliced thin and roasted (butternut and delicata)
Gorgonzola, Mozzarella, Parmesan
Cornmeal

Brush all but the edge of the dough with olive oil. Sprinkle with rubbed sage and arrange caramelized onions, apple slices and roasted squash. Top with Gorgonzola, mozzarella and shredded Parmesan cheese. Place in preheated oven for 6-12 minutes until cheese is bubbly and slightly browned. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Visit a Come & Get It Farm

Wisconsin

Campo di Bella, 10229 Sharp Rd. Mt Horeb,
campodibella.org

Together Farms, W93 Norden Rd, Mondovi,
togetherfarms.com

Suncrest Gardens Farm, S2257 Yeager Valley Rd,
Cochrane, suncrestgardensfarm.com

Borner Farm Project, 1266 Walnut St., Prescott,
bornerfarmproject.com

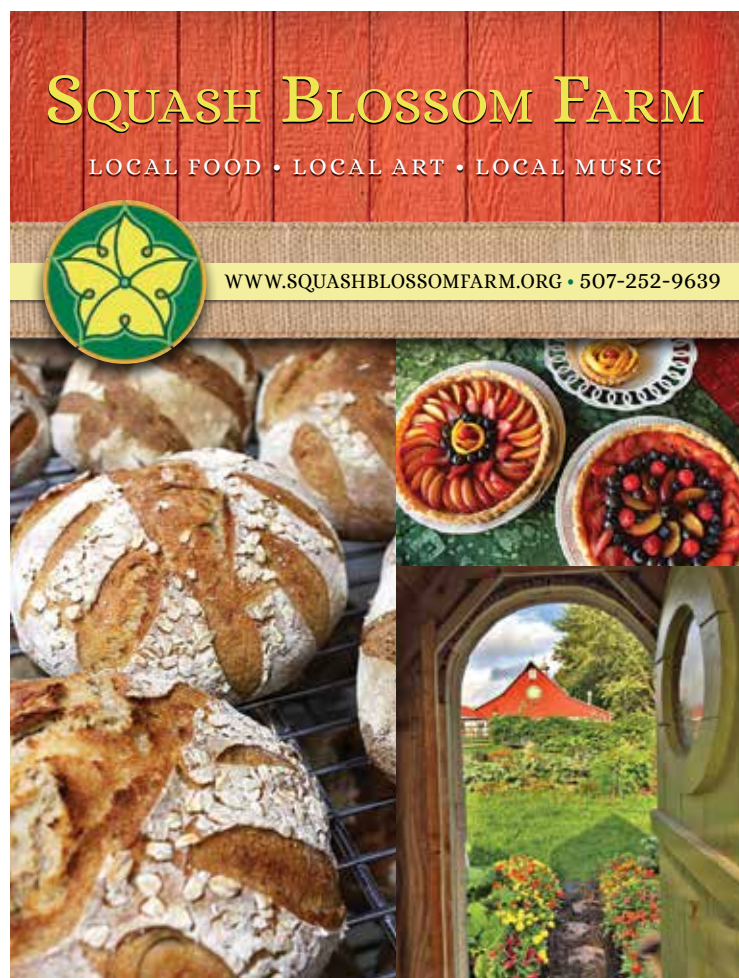
Minnesota

Squash Blossom Farm, 7499 60th Ave NW, Oronoco,
squashblossomfarm.org

DreamAcres Farm, 17289 Co Rd 8, Wykoff,
dreamacresfarm.org

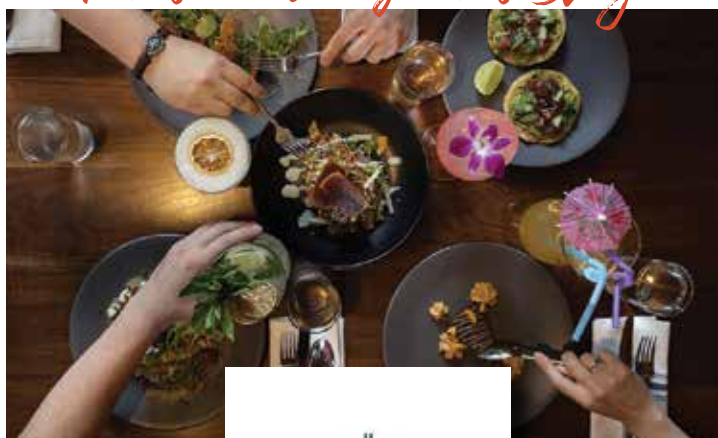
Moonstone Farm, 9060 40th St SW, Montevideo,
moonstonefarm.net

For details and dates of the offerings at each farm and other on-site events, see our Agritourism Guide on page 47.



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Warming up to cold-hardy grapes

By Margo Stich

For two decades, the Upper Midwest wine industry has experienced significant growth despite a climate too harsh for the classic European grape varieties. So, how do our wineries do it? Cold-hardy grapes. These breeds not only withstand our harsh winters, they produce award-winning, local wines expressive of our region.

Revolutionaries

Elmer Swenson is often credited with revolutionizing grape growing in the Upper Midwest. He began breeding new varieties in 1943 on a farm near Osceola, Wisc., by intercrossing French hybrids with the local, wild species, *Vitis riparia*. In the early '70s, while working at the University of Minnesota (UMN), he developed his first cold-hardy hybrids: Edelweiss—which makes a fruity, Riesling-like white wine—and Swenson Red, which produces a hearty, rustic red. Both became joint releases by Swenson and the UMN.

Swenson independently released other varieties, including Brianna, Sabrevois, St. Croix, St. Pepin, La Crosse and Prairie Star, while the University initiated a wine grape breeding program in the mid '80s and later added a state-of-the-art enology lab and research winery. The University currently tests over 100 seedlings in search of new varieties, examining cold hardiness, disease resistance, productivity, cluster size and growth habit.

“Identifying seedlings with the desired characteristic, then fully testing vines and the fruit they produce, often takes 15-17 years before breeders are confident enough to release a new variety,” says Drew Horton, research winemaker at the UMN enology department in St. Paul.

Cold-hardy grape varieties bred and released by the UMN now include Frontenac, Frontenac Gris, La Crescent and Marquette—one of the first cold-hardy grapes to produce a bigger, drier, more tannic table wine.

Blended to be the best

Dustin Ebert, owner and winemaker at Salem Glen Winery in Rochester, Minn., knows that taking these unique grapes from crop to wine presents challenges in the vineyard and



in the wine-making process. To assure the highest quality, he generally sources about 30-40 percent of his grapes from his on-site vineyards and the rest from within 120 miles.

“This allows us to mitigate some risk due to weather or other potential problems,” notes Ebert, who produces a variety of cold-hardy wines, from dry reds like Marquette and Sabrevois to semi-sweet whites like La Crescent and Frontenac Gris.

Ebert has recently been pleased with Petite Pearl, a grape introduced by independent breeder Tom Plocher of Hugo, Minn. “It is a very versatile red grape that lends itself to several wine styles,” says Ebert. “It is lower in acid than many of the

other regional grape varieties. We currently make our heaviest dry red and a vibrant, complex rosé with Petite Pearl.”

Katie Kujak, assistant winemaker at Villa Bellezza in Pepin, Wisc., finds that blending cold-hardy grapes produces the best wine possible. “Blending makes the wine unique,” says Kujak. Like other winemakers, she strives for balance, where alcohol, acidity, tannin, sweetness and fruit concentration come together harmoniously.

Villa Bellezza’s Cotes Du Pepin 2017 is an award-winning example of this. The dry white, a blend of La Crescent and Prairie Star cold-hardy grapes, received a Double Gold Medal (98 Points out of 100) in the Best Hybrid Blend class at the 2018 San Francisco International Wine Competition.

“This award is a testament to the blending ability we have with our grapes,” says Kujak. “Awards, such as this, are bringing more recognition to our region as a whole and showing what can be done with cold-climate grapes.”

For more on cold-hardy grapes and regional wineries, visit mngrapes.org, iowawinegrowers.org and wiswine.com or attend the FEAST! Local Foods Marketplace, December 7, 2019, Mayo Civic Center, Rochester, Minn., where you can sample and purchase wines from all over the Upper Midwest.

—Margo Stich is a freelance journalist in Rochester. She’s been active in various aspects of the food and wine industry in Southeast Minnesota since 1996.



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Farm-Fresh Getaways

From on-farm pizza nights to bottle feeding a calf, agritourism in the Upper Midwest offers ways to relax or jump into farm life. **Here are a few of our favorites.**

Fantastic Fare

■ Wood-fired pizza with made-from-scratch sourdough crust, plus free live music, artful garden décor and home treasures—**Squash Blossom Farm** has it all. Sundays, June-Sept. 2020, Squash Blossom Farm, Oronoco, MN, squashblossomfarm.org, 507-252-9639.

■ Pizza Nights at the **Borner Farm** feature seasonal wood-fired pizzas with a variety of farm-fresh ingredients. Alternate Fridays through Oct. 2019 & summers 2020, The Borner Farm, Prescott, WI, bornerfarmproject.com, 952-649-9813.

■ Picnic-style pizza at **Suncrest Gardens** includes gluten-free and vegan options and live music on most weekends. Saturdays in Oct 2019; Fri-Sat, May-Sept. 2020, Suncrest Gardens, Cochrane, WI, suncrestgardensfarm.com, 608-626-2122.

■ 100% grass-fed, organic beef burgers with live music and bonfire. Fri-Sat through Oct. 2019 & Thursdays June-Aug 2020.

Together Farms, Mondovi, WI, togetherfarms.com, 715-210-4740.

■ Three days, 20+ farms, five unique components. The jam-packed, award-winning **SOIL SISTERS** culinary event celebrates Wisconsin's family farms and rural life in and around the farming communities of Monroe, New Glarus, Blanchardville and Brodhead, Wisc., over the first full weekend of August, 2020. soilsisters.wixsite.com/soilsisters

Farm Stays

■ Immerse yourself in the simple pleasures of the countryside or lend a hand with chores at green-stay farm nestled in the rolling hills of Minnesota.

Moonstone Farm, Montevideo, MN, moonstonefarm.net, 320-269-8971.

■ Relax in a comfortable suite above a lush restaurant at this winery full of amenities, including a view of the 20-acre farm's sheep, ducks, orchard and vineyard. Dining and wine tasting open to the public Fri-Sat nights, year round. **Campo di Bella**, Mount Horeb, WI, campodibella.org, 608-320-9287.

■ Discover glamping (glamorous platform-tent camping with king-size beds & luxurious linens) in the oak savanna valley of Luna Valley Farm. Arrive early on Fridays to indulge in wood-fired pizza made with farm-grown ingredients. Through Oct 2019 and summers 2020, **Luna Valley Farm**, 3012 Middle Sattre Road, Decorah, Iowa, lunavalleyfarm.com.

Art, Shopping & Theater

■ Stroll along this open-air, Italian-inspired piazza sipping mulled wine and shopping the wares of area artisans at this fun outdoor holiday market. Sundays, **Villa Bellezza Winery**, Nov 24-Dec 21, 2019, 12pm-4pm, villabellezza.com, Great River Road/State Highway 35, Pepin, WI, 715-442-2424.

■ Ever wanted to try murder mystery in a 100-year-old barn? Then check out **Empty Nest Winery's** year-round events and join them for Murder Mystery Dinner Theater on Nov 30 and New Year's Eve. emptynestwinery.com, Waukon, IA, 563-568-2758.

■ Offering retreats, performances and plays throughout the summer, **DreamAcres** is an off-the-grid, organic farmstead offering educational and cultural programs—and darn good Friday night pizza in the summer. DreamAcres Farm, dreamacresfarm.org, Wykoff, MN, 507-352-4255.

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