



# *edible* WHITE MOUNTAINS<sup>®</sup>

Celebrating **New Hampshire's** Abundance of Local Food, Season by Season  
Issue 2 • Fall 2009

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APPLES

## FALL 2009

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# GRIST FOR THE MILL

I hope you'll enjoy this fall issue brimming with stories about New Hampshire's bounty and the folks that make it possible.

As I meandered around the state over the summer, meeting more inspirational people, I was especially moved by the plight of our dairy farmers. New Hampshire was once home to some 2,600 dairy farms. Figures from July suggested that the state had a mere 130, while last month it was reported dairy farm numbers slipped quickly to just 123. You don't have to be an accountant to realize that you just can't stay in business if it costs \$18-20 to produce a hundred pounds of milk that sells for only \$10-12.



**Meeting USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack at Carter Hill Orchard** Photo by Barry Wright

England dairies just can't compete. The dairy company Dean Foods, based in Dallas, Texas that controls a large percentage of the fluid milk market in this country, announced second-quarter earnings last month of \$64.1 million, a 31% increase over last year.

So what's to do? Both state and federal legislators appear to be trying to address this huge uphill battle, involving complex issues for both the short and long term. Most recently, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack authorized small and temporary price support increases for cheese and nonfat dry milk. Over the summer, Vilsack held a town hall meeting at Carter Hill Orchard in Concord. As former governor of Iowa, he appeared both empathetic and understanding for the dire situation our dairy farmers face. While policy in D.C. is in the works, please consider taking any opportunity to talk with and write to your state and federal legislators about your concerns for the fate of New Hampshire dairy farms. On a personal level, perhaps you can try to buy one NH dairy product a week or month, including cheese and ice cream—I know, tough assignment!

Consumers may question why some locally produced food at times might cost more than foods made with commodity ingredients by a low paid labor pool. Consider the fact that in the 1960's, Americans spent 18% of their household income on food compared to less than 10% today. Good, clean and fair food has not become expensive, rather agri-business has become so efficient at producing highly-processed, low quality food cheaply.

Who would have thought there was so much to consider about something as simple as food? Since the adage 'Attitude is Everything' has proven to be rather powerful, perhaps during these tough times, it's important to keep the glass half full—of local milk that is!

Please continue with me on this journey—Let's get to know the faces and shake the hands of those who feed us!

KC

We haven't seen farm milk prices this low in 30 years. In contrast, costs for dairy farmers including land, feed and fuel have escalated. These farmers continue to lose money on every gallon of milk they produce. The cause? A national, dysfunctional milk pricing system that's been around since the Great Depression. The federal government limits milk prices without restrictions on production volume. Large agri-business dairies have much cheaper production costs—our small New

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# EDIBLE CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

**9 TOMATOES ON THE TERRACE**  
UV Slow Food, Hanover Inn  
4-6pm [slowfooduv.org](http://slowfooduv.org)

**11-13 AGRICULTURAL FAIR**  
Hillsborough County  
641.6060 [hcafair.com](http://hcafair.com)

**12 TWO SISTER'S GARLIC DAY**  
783.4287 Canterbury 9-4  
[scanlon6@juno.com](mailto:scanlon6@juno.com)

**12 GROWING ORGANIC GARLIC**  
NOFA-NH, Concord 9-3  
224.5022 [nofanh.org](http://nofanh.org)

**12 TOMATO TASTING & CORN ROAST**  
Springledge Farm, New London 1-3pm  
526.6253 [springledgefarm.com](http://springledgefarm.com)

**12 NATURAL HERITAGE AGRICULTURAL FAIR**  
Warren Farm, Barrington 10am-4pm  
335.2605 [nh.ag.fair@live.com](mailto:nh.ag.fair@live.com)

**16 FALL FOOD SHOW: Come 1, Come All!**  
Dole & Bailey ~ Northeast Family Farms  
CR Sparks, Manchester 1-4pm  
800.777.2648 [www.doleandbailey.com](http://www.doleandbailey.com)

**19 1st ANNUAL NH FISH & LOBSTER FEST**  
Celebrating 400 Years of Local Seafood!  
Noon-4:00 PM [prescottpark.org](http://prescottpark.org)

**21 COOKING HEALTHY: FALL VEGETABLES**  
Demo & Tasting w/Liz Barbour, The Creative Feast  
603.321.5011 • [www.thecreativefeast.com](http://www.thecreativefeast.com)

**24 NH GROWER'S DINNER**  
The Old Salt at Lamie's Inn  
Hampton 926.8322  
[nhfarmtorestaurant.com](http://nhfarmtorestaurant.com)

**24 FOOD, INC. THE MOVIE**  
The Music Hall, Portsmouth  
[www.foodincmovie.com](http://www.foodincmovie.com)



**30 THREE TOMATOES TRATTORIA**  
Benefit Dinner for Headrest  
Lebanon 448.1711  
[threetomatoestrattoria.com](http://threetomatoestrattoria.com)

**24 CULINARY HISTORY SYMPOSIUM**  
A Study of the Past Through Food  
Shaker Museum, Enfield  
632.4346 [newhampshirefarms.net](http://newhampshirefarms.net)

**24 NH GROWER'S DINNER**  
Enfield Shaker Village  
632.4346 [nhfarmtorestaurant.com](http://nhfarmtorestaurant.com)

## OCTOBER

**1-4 DEERFIELD FAIR**  
NH Made Building  
463.7421 [deerfieldfair.com](http://deerfieldfair.com)

**4 HARVEST DAY MUSTER FIELD FARM**  
Sutton 10am-4pm  
927.4276 [musterfieldfarm.com](http://musterfieldfarm.com)

**2 FOOD INC, THE MOVIE**  
Hopkins Center, Hanover  
[www.foodincmovie.com](http://www.foodincmovie.com)

**3-4 HARVEST DAYS**  
Canterbury Shaker Village  
783.9511 [shakers.org](http://shakers.org)

**7 NH GROWER'S DINNER**  
First Course Culinary Training Program  
352.1385 x210 [nhfarmtorestaurant.com](http://nhfarmtorestaurant.com)

**10 NEW HAMPSHIRE HERB & GARLIC DAY**  
Backyard Medicine NOFA-NH 9am-3pm  
Massabesic Audobon Center, Auburn, NH  
603.268.0548 [www.nofanh.org](http://www.nofanh.org)

**11 HEIRLOOM HARVEST DINNER**  
Meadows Mirth Farm, Stratham  
[slowfoodseacoast.org](http://slowfoodseacoast.org)

**17 KEENE PUMPKIN FESTIVAL**  
[pumpkinfestival.com](http://pumpkinfestival.com)

## NOVEMBER

**3 AUTHOR BARBARA KINGSOLVER**  
Music Hall, Portsmouth  
436.2400 [themusichall.org](http://themusichall.org)

**6 & 11 THE CREATIVE FEAST COOKING CLASS**  
New Traditions for Thanksgiving  
603.321.5011 [www.thecreativefeast.com](http://www.thecreativefeast.com)

**7-8 NH OPEN DOORS**  
Self-Guided Tour Food, Wine, Art  
735.6420 [nhmade.com](http://nhmade.com)

**8 FARM DINNER & FIDDLE MUSIC**  
Inn at East Hill Farm 5pm  
800.242.6495 [east-hill-farm.com](http://east-hill-farm.com)

**14-16 NEW ENGLAND CRAFT & SPECIALTY FOOD FAIR**  
Rockingham Park, Salem  
603.332.2616 [castleberryfairs.com](http://castleberryfairs.com)

**20-21 THANKSGIVING FARM FARE**  
Stonewall Farm, Keene  
357.7278 [stonewallfarm.org](http://stonewallfarm.org)

**21 HOLIDAY FARMERS' MARKET**  
[seacoasteatlocal.org](http://seacoasteatlocal.org)

# GRANITE FOOD STUFFS

## FALL STRAWBERRY CROP!

Think local strawberries are only around in June? Think again. Several New Hampshire farms have been growing 'Day-neutral' strawberries that come to harvest around September and October. According to Becky Grube Sideman, associate professor of plant biology and a sustainable horticulture specialist at UNH, fall strawberries are a different variety from the most common 'Short Day' plants that yield loads of berries around the summer solstice. Day-neutral strawberries will blossom and set fruit no matter how long or short the days are. Check out these farms to pick up a quart or two and freeze for winter smoothies!

**Warren Farm** Barrington • 868.2001  
**Spring Ledge Farm** New London • 526.6253  
**The Haynes Homestead** Colebrook • 237.4395

## GO FISH

Although the Granite State enjoys a mere 18 miles of coastline, it supports a seafood industry that has been part of the fabric of our community for over 400 years. Until most recently, the processing and distribution of New Hampshire seafood was based on an inefficient and costly system; locally caught seafood has been trucked great distances to be cut, filleted and packaged, only to have it brought back to consumers where it originated. **The New Hampshire Seafood Fresh & Local** initiative has created a more direct path from 'boat to basket' cutting out both time and handling. Products that carry this seal were caught in New Hampshire, making the fish the freshest available, and directly supports the local economy. Established mainly along the seacoast, there is hope and potential to expand the distribution so that locally caught seafood can be available in other areas of the state. A collaborative website directs you where to buy NH Seafood, restaurants that put it on their menus, and availability of seafood throughout the year. There's also great info on the health benefits of seafood and other consumer information.

[www.nhseafood.com](http://www.nhseafood.com)



## INDIE RESTAURANTS, LOCAL FARE

Foliage season is an especially good time to take a drive through the breathtaking Mount Washington Valley. When hunger strikes, look for one of the 23 restaurants with the **Valley Originals** shingle hanging out front. By their very nature, these independent restaurants are unique in ambience, recipes and service. The **Valley Originals** are a group of locally owned and operated eateries who've banded together and garnered momentum to stand up to the powerful national restaurant chains. They enjoy group-buying power similar to a food co-op membership and benefit from patronage refunds. They procure foods through several distributors, including **Dole & Bailey**, purveyors of local, farm-raised meats. Over the past decade, the **Valley Originals** have donated funds to local charities such as Jen's Friends Cancer Foundation and towards culinary scholarships. The restaurants vary in the type and amount of locally grown and produced foods on their menus. **Vote with your fork!** Let these and other restaurants know you support their independence and your desire for local foods. [www.thevalleyoriginals.com](http://www.thevalleyoriginals.com)

## PUMPKIN MUNCHIN'

Despite the many varieties of hard and heirloom squashes the harvest brings, the humble pumpkin remains a field to table staple. From *pumpkin whoopie pies* to *pumpkin soup tureen* to *fried pumpkin blossoms*, the venerable orange fruit proves rather versatile in the kitchen. So mark your calendar for the **Annual Keene Pumpkin** festival and check out their website for hundreds of tempting pumpkin recipes.

Saturday, October 17, 2009  
[www.pumpkinfestival.com](http://www.pumpkinfestival.com)

## COOL BEANS

Once in a while our eyes feast upon something we think is much too pretty to taste such as an intricately decorated birthday cake or the perfect heart crema on a latte. Maybe that's how **Connie Ronda** of Barrington felt after harvesting her Scarlet Runner Beans. Their vibrant royal purple bodies look as though they've been splashed with jet-black ink from an artist's paintbrush. Surely these colors would not stand up to a brutal soaking and boiling to make them palatable. Maybe just a few could be spared for showcasing nature's bounty another way. For the past year Ronda has been making **Cool Beans** jewelry from locally grown legumes and finds picking them at just the right time to be the secret of their amazing color. Jacobs Cattle beans, with its unique pattern, tend to be a popular ingredient in her creations. Mung beans are her new favorite accent due to their complementary color and size. Many of the other beans she uses have names that are just as enticing as the colors: Baby Orca, Molasses Face, Flagolet, Vermont Cranberry. Unique to wear, unique to give, locally grown and made.

**Cool Beans** Jewelry available at Calef's Country Store, Barrington and Serendipity of Exeter [coolbeans@metrocast.net](mailto:coolbeans@metrocast.net)

## VEGAN NIRVANA

That's the name of the cookie that, if you're lucky enough to get one before they sell out, is loaded with both flavor and goodness. **Lou's** restaurant, the classic eatery and landmark that's been on Main Street in Hanover since 1947, is home to these delectable treats. True to their name, they contain no animal products, but are chock full of oatmeal, pumpkin, chocolate chunks, plump raisins, cranberries and walnuts. One cookie is ample dessert for two. Or with a glass of milk, you've got yourself an easy, but satisfying breakfast or lunch.

**Lou's Vegan Nirvana Cookies**  
30 South Main Street, Hanover 603.643.3321



## CULTURE SPEED

In 1986, the founding father of the Slow Food Movement, Italian Carlo Petrini, recognized that the industrialization of food was standardizing taste and leading to the annihilation of thousands of food varieties and flavors. He wanted to reach out to consumers and demonstrate to them that they have choices over fast food and supermarket homogenization. He rallied his friends and his community, and began to speak out at every available opportunity about the effects of a fast culture.

Today, Slow Food USA seeks to create dramatic and lasting change in the food system by reconnecting people with traditions, plants, animals, fertile soils and waters that produce our food. If you want to help inspire a transformation in food policy, practices and the market for good, clean and fair food, consider joining Slow Food and participating in one of New Hampshire's chapters.

[www.slowfoodusa.org](http://www.slowfoodusa.org)  
**Slow Food Monadnock Region**  
[aastatorsen@hotmail.com](mailto:aastatorsen@hotmail.com)  
**Slow Food Seacoast Portsmouth**  
[www.slowfoodseacoast.org](http://www.slowfoodseacoast.org)  
**Slow Food University of New Hampshire**  
[www.unhslowfood.com](http://www.unhslowfood.com)  
**Slow Food Upper Valley - NH, VT**  
[www.slowfooduv.org](http://www.slowfooduv.org)



## WINE & CHEESE TRAILS

OK, so the Granite State is not exactly Napa Valley, nor do we share Vermont's reputation for producing excellent cheese. Not yet anyway. New Hampshire winemakers and cheese artisans have been working their craft against the elements of climate and infrastructure, and are now producing many worthy libations and victuals. There are now over a dozen wineries in the state and at least seven cheesemakers. *New Hampshire's Wine & Cheese Trails* guide makes visiting, tasting and sampling each an easy pleasure. Published by the state Department of Agriculture and the Department of Travel and Tourism, the guide offers three trails to explore: Near Coast, Valley Vineyards, and Merrimack & Lakes regions. There's a description of the wineries and dairies on each trail and directions for visiting. Download a brochure or call the state to request a copy by mail.

[www.agriculture.nh.gov/documents/winecheese.pdf](http://www.agriculture.nh.gov/documents/winecheese.pdf)  
603.271.3788



## AFTER THE WINERY TOURS...

Natural Cork, the kind used in wine closures, is a perfect choice for recycling. It's 100% natural, biodegradable and renewable. When recycled, natural wine corks can become flooring tiles, building insulation, automotive gaskets, craft materials, soil conditioner and sports equipment. Because of natural cork's ability to retain carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from its inception as a wine cork through its reuse as a recycled cork product, it is a perfect example of sustainable packaging. Known as **ReCORK America**, the program is focused on obtaining used and surplus corks. In New Hampshire, you can drop off or mail corks to: **Real Green Goods** 35 South Main St. Concord, NH 03301  
[www.recorkamerica.com](http://www.recorkamerica.com)



## HOT OFF THE COOK'S STOVE

Preparing delicious Italian cuisine at home does not have to be difficult. Mary Ann Esposito, host of PBS' *Ciao Italia* cooking show, and New Hampshire's own celebrity chef, was inspired by the times to write a cookbook full of recipes that use just five ingredients each. That's right, five, excluding salt and pepper of course. Esposito's theory is that less can be more if you use only a small amount of good quality ingredients. Then you can make something out of almost nothing as her grandmothers did. She believes that the highest-quality food products are a benchmark for Italian cooks – the brightest vegetables, the most fragrant herbs, the just-caught fish, the fruity cold-pressed olive oil, the natural grain-fed chickens, the aged artisan cheeses and fresh breads. From salads to entrees to desserts, home cooks can draw on Esposito's 75 recipes for quick good cooking.

**Ciao Italia Five-Ingredient Favorites by  
Mary Ann Esposito**

©September 2009 [St. Martin's Press; \$29.99]  
[www.ciaoitalia.com](http://www.ciaoitalia.com)

# COOKING FRESH

PHOTO BY CAROLE TOPALIAN

## COFFEE ROASTED DUCK BREAST WITH LENTILS, ROASTED PUMPKIN PUREE & SWISS CHARD

2 Duck Breasts  
1 strong pot of Coffee  
2 Star Anise  
5 Peppercorns  
1 Cinnamon Stick  
4 Whole Cardamon Cloves  
1/2 cup French Lentils  
1 Onion  
1 Carrot  
1 stalk Celery  
1 small Sugar Pumpkin  
4 tbsp Butter  
1 bunch Swiss Chard chopped, stems  
removed  
1/2 tbsp chopped Fresh Garlic

**Matt Provencher, Executive Chef**  
**RICHARD'S BISTRO**

36 Lowell St., Manchester, NH  
603.644.1180 [www.richardsbistro.com](http://www.richardsbistro.com)

The day before, brew a strong pot of coffee, pour over spices and let sit for 1 hour. Place in refrigerator until cooled completely. Pour over duck breasts and let sit for 1 day.

Place lentils in a pot, cover with cold water, place over medium heat and bring to a boil before turning heat low to cook until lentils are tender. While lentils are cooking small dice the carrots, onion and celery. When lentils are almost cooked, put vegetables in the pot with lentils.

Wash and cut the pumpkin in quarters. Scrape out seeds, season with salt and pepper, place butter on the pumpkin pieces and roast in a 350°F oven until tender. When pumpkin is completely cooked, scrape out pulp, place in blender with a little water or stock and puree until smooth.

Remove duck from marinade and place skin side down in a lightly oiled, warm heavy-bottom sauté pan. (Discard marinade) Cook until skin is slightly browned. Place pan in a 350°F oven and bake until medium rare. While duck is in oven, prepare other ingredients for serving: Heat lentils with a little butter and stock. Season with salt and pepper. Heat pumpkin puree. Sauté garlic and Swiss chard.

To Assemble: Place pumpkin puree on plate, spoon lentils on top of puree, slice breast into 4 thin slices and finish with Swiss chard on top.

## FIG AND FENNEL BREAD

1 ½ cups warm water (105°F to 115°F)  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 envelope rapid rise yeast  
3 cups bread flour  
1 8-ounce package dried figs, chopped  
(about 1 ½ cups)  
1 cup rye flour or wheat flour  
2 tablespoons toasted fennel seeds  
1 tablespoon salt

**Chef/Owner Liz Jackson**  
**LIBBY'S BISTRO**

111 Main Street, Gorham, NH  
603.466.5330 • [www.libbysbistro.net](http://www.libbysbistro.net)

In large bowl of heavy-duty mixer fitted with paddle attachment mix together all dry ingredients. Mix using lowest speed; gradually add water, mixing until all flour has been incorporated (or to mix by hand, stir vigorously with wooden spoon until dough comes together). Replace paddle with dough hook and knead until smooth and elastic (or to knead by hand, transfer dough to floured work surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes). Place dough in oiled bowl; turn to coat. Cover with plastic wrap, and let dough rise in warm draft-free area until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Turn dough out onto work surface and knead gently until deflated. Knead in remaining ¾ cup figs. Cut dough in half; shape each piece into 12-inch-long loaf. Brush baking sheet with oil; transfer loaves to sheet. Cover with plastic let rise in warm draft-free area until almost doubled in volume, about 35 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Bake bread until crust is golden and loaves sound hollow when tapped, about 45 minutes. Cool bread on rack.

## WHAT'S IN SEASON\*

**GREEN THUMB** Apples, Arugula, Beans, Beets, Beet Greens, Blueberries, Bok Choi, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Melons, Onions, Parsnips, Peaches, Pears, Peppers, Potato, Pumpkin, Raspberries, Rutabaga, Salad Greens, Scallions, Spinach, Strawberries, Swiss Chard, Tomato, Turnip, Winter Squash, Zucchini....**DAIRY** Cheese, Ice cream, Milk, Yogurt...**POULTRY** Chicken, Duck, Eggs, Turkey...**SEAFOOD** Cod, Haddock, Lobster...**PASTURE-RAISED MEAT** Beef, Bison, Lamb, Pork, Rabbit, Venison \*Pending weather & regional availability



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Canterbury, NH 603 783-9334 [www.anrdllc.com](http://www.anrdllc.com)



**APPLE SWEET POTATO CRISP**

- 1/2 cup slivered Almonds
- 2 cups Rolled Oats (not instant)
- 3/4 cup Spelt or all purpose Flour
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 1/2 cup Honey
- 1/2 cup unsalted Butter, melted
- 1/2 tsp Almond Extract
- 5 large Apples, peeled, cored, and sliced  
(Honey Crisp and Spartan together)
- 2 medium Sweet Potatoes, peeled  
and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 teaspoon Cinnamon

In a large bowl, combine the Almonds, Oats, Flour, and Salt.

In a smaller bowl combine Honey, melted Butter, and Almond Extract and pour over the oat mixture. Stir until the mixture comes together in moist crumbs.

Place apples and sweet potatoes into a 9X13 inch baking dish and toss with cinnamon. Spread oat/honey topping evenly over the apples and sweet potatoes.

Bake in a 375°F oven for 45 minutes or until the crumb mixture is golden and the sweet potatoes are soft. Let cool for 15 minutes before serving.

Serve with unsweetened whipped cream.

Liz Barbour

THE CREATIVE FEAST

603.321.5011 [www.thecreativefeast.com](http://www.thecreativefeast.com)



*Farmstand through mid-October*  
Route 12-A, Plainfield, NH  
603.298 5764  
Mon-Sat 10-5:30  
Sun 10-4:30  
[www.edgewaterfarm.com](http://www.edgewaterfarm.com)

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- Local Sourcing & Sharing
- Connecting Through Food
- Living an Edible Life!

[www.greatgrandmother.org](http://www.greatgrandmother.org)



# NOTABLE EDIBLES

## EASY AS PIE

As a nutritionist, there were a lot of things I had to tell patients that I knew they didn't want to hear. I often advised people that if they wanted to eat well, then they had to spend more time, spend more money, or both. That's why I love when I come across a product that's convenient, moderately priced and healthy. **Rustic Crust** all natural and organic pizza crusts are made by hand with non-GMO whole grain flour and extra virgin olive oil. On a tour of his immaculate Pittsfield, New Hampshire bakery, owner and chef, **Brad Sterl** showed me the fresh yeasty leaven starter that has been nurtured for years and still rendered into every pizza crust. Sterl prides himself on the integrity of his high quality ingredients that comprise a short list and are easy to pronounce. His bakery and procedures adhere to superior production standards and are constantly audited by third parties. In addition to pizza kits and complete frozen pizzas available at some markets, there are Rustic Crusts suitable for both vegan and gluten free palates. These crusts won't put your favorite pizza parlor out of business, but they are nice to have on hand when you're in a pinch. Top with pesto or tomato sauce, fresh veggies, leftover chicken, a sprinkle of farmstead cheese and you're in for some good 'n easy eatin'.

**Rustic Crust** [www.rusticcrust.com](http://www.rusticcrust.com)

—K. W.



## DIY: MUSHROOMS

Mushroom lovers may start with the purchase of a few foraged or homegrown exotics at the **Wichland Woods'** booth adjacent to the Saturday farmers' market in Keene, but sooner or later they'll hear the buzz from acolytes who have attended **Dave Wichland's** mushroom growing seminars and experienced the sweet taste of success. Then they too will be learning to inoculate logs and grow shitakes, create mushroom enlivened forest paths and spread light-tolerating fungi around the garden perimeter.

Over the course of a seven hour seminar, in the cozy yurt that pops up fungi-like in his own woodland property, Dave showed slides and passed around samples of mushrooms and mushroom by-products showcasing the versatility of the fungi kingdom — mushrooms as medicinals, art objects, paper, natural dyes and, of course, *edibles*.

After a break for potluck lunch that included mushroom tea and sautéed homegrown mushrooms, participants went to work on a number of hands on projects that spread mycelium (mushroom spawn) in a variety of environments. Students helped out as Dave chain-sawed rye straw into chunks which he fed into a wood chipper to shred. Stuffing shredded straw into large hemp coffee sacks, they helped set the sacks to pasteurize for an hour in a huge covered cauldron of limestone laced water, then raised them to drain, spread the straw to cool on a large tarp and mixed in blue oyster or elm oyster mycelium.

Participants tightly repacked the impregnated straw in plastic bags and then pricked the bags with a number of nail holes. Homework assignment: take home several bags, leave in a cool dark place and wait until the mycelium spreads, multiplies, and fruiting bodies burst through the holes and turn into several flushes of delicious mushrooms. Harvest, cook, enjoy. (Reader, I ate my homework.)

Fall is the time for preparing logs for next year's shitakes and the right time to load the first hot soups and stews of the colder months with fragrant porcini, chanterelles and black trumpet mushrooms. You'll find Dave, wife Jennie and son Henry, mushroom enthusiasts all, at the market through early October. If you are hoping for something in particular, call ahead. In addition to seminars offered at Wichland Woods and other local venues, Dave is available for personalized consultations and fungi installations.

—Barbara Michelson

**Wichland Woods** [www.wichlandwoods.com](http://www.wichlandwoods.com) 603.357.2758



## MOVE OVER V-8

If Hollis farmer **Rick Hardy** invites a friend over for a drink, the shot he pours might be green and smell like grass. That's because Hardy of **Brookdale Fruit Farm** has discovered wheat grass juice.

Hardy began growing certified organic wheat grass this past spring in a greenhouse on his land, just behind his retail farm stand on Route 130 near the center of town. Now, he's selling the grass, which must be juiced to access its nutritional benefits.

For years, Brookdale Fruit Farm has produced apples, blueberries, strawberries, peppers, kale, spinach, broccoli, cabbage, and dozens of other antioxidant-rich vegetables and fruits. Hardy added wheat grass as a favor to two friends, Diane LaCourse, a personal trainer, and Carmina Lolley, a registered nurse, both of Nashua.

Lolley and LaCourse tried growing wheat grass in a sunny window at LaCourse's studio.

But they quickly gave up. "We had bugs," Lolley said. Hardy came to the rescue. "I didn't know all the benefits, but I knew people took it for health," the farmer said. "I had the space, and I told them that if people wanted it, I'd grow it all year."

To develop the highest quality plants, Hardy conducted several experiments: he grew some wheat grass plants for so long that the stems turned yellow and flopped over; he over-watered others, inviting mold. Healthy wheat grass is a deep green color from the soil to the tip of the blade and stands between three and four inches tall. It is at its freshest up to about a week after it is picked, Hardy said.

Wheat grass has been touted as a cure for everything from poor digestion to cancer, although after roughly 30 years, the jury is still out on many of its claims. LaCourse and Lolley say they recommend wheat grass juice to clients who don't eat their vegetables. And there are plenty who aren't getting the five to nine servings recommended by the experts. "All greens are power-packed. A little ounce (of wheat grass juice) has amazing benefits," Lolley said.

Hardy, however, said it took some time for him to appreciate the fuss over wheat grass juice. His first sip tasted like grass. "I felt like a healthy cow," he joked, pouring two shots into cups, one for himself and one for me.

—Hattie Bernstein

**Wheat Grass** by appointment only – **Brookdale Fruit Farm**

41 Broad Street, Route 130, Hollis, New Hampshire

603.465.2240 [www.brookdalefarms.com](http://www.brookdalefarms.com)



## WOOD TO LIVE BY

Wooden bowls have been a classic staple of New England farm kitchens forever. They are versatile and worthy of many uses: resting bread dough, serving garden salads or holding apples and pears or onions and garlic. **Paul Silberman** of Webster is the head and hands behind **New Hampshire Bowl & Board**, making simple yet lovely handcrafted bowls, boards and utensils. In addition to being locally made, no trees are intentionally destroyed when Silberman gets out his tools. Instead, he artfully reworks furniture scrap and remains of urban tree removal in a 28-step process using organic wood glue from a Portsmouth shipyard recipe. The source of the wood gives each bowl a distinctive style. Cherry is the wood of Silberman's choice, but he also fashions some classics in maple or black walnut. Each bowl is hand sanded and finished with bee's wax and mineral oil to highlight the unique grain. Since New Hampshire is the second most forested state in the country, it's nice to enjoy a piece of our stately trees indoors. If you are looking to treat to yourself, your holiday host, or someone on your gift list, you'll want to give these bowls and boards a look. A portion of the purchase price is donated to non-profit organizations that sustain craftspeople and the natural environment.

### **New Hampshire Board & Bowl Company**

Call for retail locations or outlet store hours:

1213 Battle St, Webster, NH

603.648.9566

[www.newhampshireboardandbowl.com](http://www.newhampshireboardandbowl.com)



## WHAT'S GOING ON WITH FARM TO SCHOOL?

Obesity rates, small farm hardships, loss of rural spaces: These are just a few of the reasons that we should all be concerned about what's being served in school cafeterias and campus dining halls around New Hampshire. If you want to consider how you can start a conversation about your school's lunch program, you might draw from these programs and initiatives, and look to the future.

### The Orchard School Farmers & Foragers

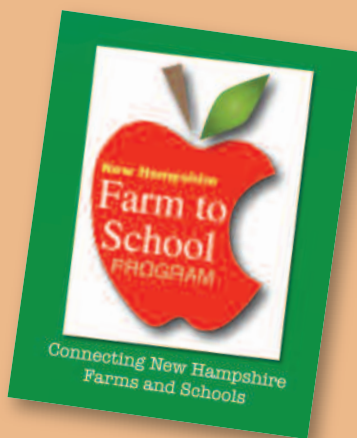
Located in East Alstead, this non-profit pre-school, kindergarten and community center abuts an organic farm, orchard and bakery. Students learn skills such as planting, tending, building, preserving, cooking and more. The early education curriculum exposes young children to maple sugaring, farm buildings and equipment along with greenhouses and livestock. [www.theorchardschool.org](http://www.theorchardschool.org)

### New Hampshire Farm to School Apples & Cider Project

Working with apple growers, school food service directors, and produce distributors, NHFTS has re-established a trade connection between NH apples and NH schools that had been missing since the 1950's. Today, more than half of NH's schools, some 120,000 students, have the opportunity to crunch on NH-grown Macs, Galas or Empires and drink NH apple cider, all available from their school cafeteria. Equally important, NH students have the opportunity to learn about nutrition and sustainability: how to make healthy food choices, where food comes from, and why eating local is smart! [www.nhfarmtoschool.org](http://www.nhfarmtoschool.org)

### The Meeting School

The farm science class at this Quaker boarding and day high school in Rindge requires students to apply the book learning of biology directly to the life cycle of plants and animals on the farm. Algebra courses collect data from egg production and plant yields to build graphs and model equations. [www.mv.com](http://www.mv.com)



### The Community School

This small Tamworth day school serving grades 7 to 12 has a 4-acre certified organic farm where students seed, plant, weed and harvest. Students cook with the garden harvest, practicing kitchen skills. They also learn about compost, mulch, cover crops and pest management through companion planting. The TOC's Organic Garden offers a summer CSA and their harvest at the Tamworth Farmers' Market. [www.communityschoolnh.net](http://www.communityschoolnh.net)

### The Local Harvest Initiative

This is a growing partnership between University of New Hampshire's Office of Sustainability and Dining Services along with local food producers. Through this initiative, UNH is committed to serving locally, regionally, and sustainably grown, produced, and manufactured items as much as possible. Many of these items are included regularly in the dining halls and campus retail outlets, while others are purchased for special events such as the annual Local Harvest Feast. UNH also commits to being a sustainable food community that promotes healthy food systems from farm-to-fork for positive impact on health and nutrition outcomes.



**Above: UNH students feast on the bounty at a local Harvest Dinner. Credit: Ron Bergeron, UNH Photo Services.**

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**Dave Santamaria, owner of Santa's Tree Farm in Colebrook and member of the NCFE Co-op with coordinator Julie Moran pause in front of delivery van.** (Photo: Barry Wright)

## FARM FRESH INGENUITY

Just when you think nobody works harder or longer hours than any farmer you know, say hello to Colebrook's **Julie Moran**. She is the hustler behind the **North Country Farm Fresh Co-op** (NCFE Co-op), a non-profit cooperative comprised of local farmers and produce growers who market goods to restaurants and grocers. Moran sports a pert haircut, sparkly blue eyes and looks like she could hold her own with any high school track star. A few years ago at the height of middle age, this former physical therapist relocated from Candia to Colebrook for her physician husband's work. Moran found herself baffled by lack of a local foods community.

"I went looking for farmers everywhere," she remembers. At the same time, the local eateries and restaurants appeared to rely solely on the Sysco truck to create their menus. Moran, once a self-professed 'junk food junkie' couldn't understand the disconnect between sprawling hills of farmland and good restaurants who knew little of local food availability. True to her form, Moran sprung into action. First she called on restaurants to learn about what foods they desired that could be produced

locally. Then she met with farmers and helped them determine their interest and harvesting capabilities.

Today through the Co-op, Moran coordinates a locally produced food network between nine farms and five regional restaurants, including the famed Balsam's Resort in Dixville Notch. But it's not all phone calls and negotiations; throughout the growing season and beyond, Moran herself physically picks up produce, eggs and farm-raised poultry and meat and delivers them in a full size van (paid for out of her own pocket) to restaurant kitchens. She keeps hours similar to farmers—early morning, late evening, 7 days a week. She helps to harvest vegetables when one of the Co-op's farmers needs an additional pair of hands and has been interning at Haynes Homestead in Colebrook transplanting crops and tending to fall strawberry plants.

Although industrious and intellectual in her own right, Moran reached out to other organizations, taking a course at UNH Cooperative Extension's Natural Resource Business Institute. She garnered advice from the state's Department of Agriculture and secured fiscal sponsorship through the North Country Resource Conservation and Development Council. Among other agencies, the Co-op receives grant funds from the USDA Rural Development program to provide intensive technical assistance to their farmers. Most recently, the Co-op received USDA assistance to help farmers develop strategic plans to meet market demands. "This area is full of fertile soil and great farmers who together provide the perfect match for some of New Hampshire's best agricultural products," states Moran.

Geographically, the Co-op encompasses the region from Pittsburg to Jefferson with Colebrook as its core center. Moran covers Coos County as both advocate and activist, raising the agricultural significance of the North Country Farm Fresh Co-op, helping to define New Hampshire's increased notoriety for local foods. After all, Eat Green or Die! —K.W.

**North Country Farm Fresh Co-op**  
PO Box 447 Colebrook NH 03576  
603.237.8685  
cooscoop@yahoo.com

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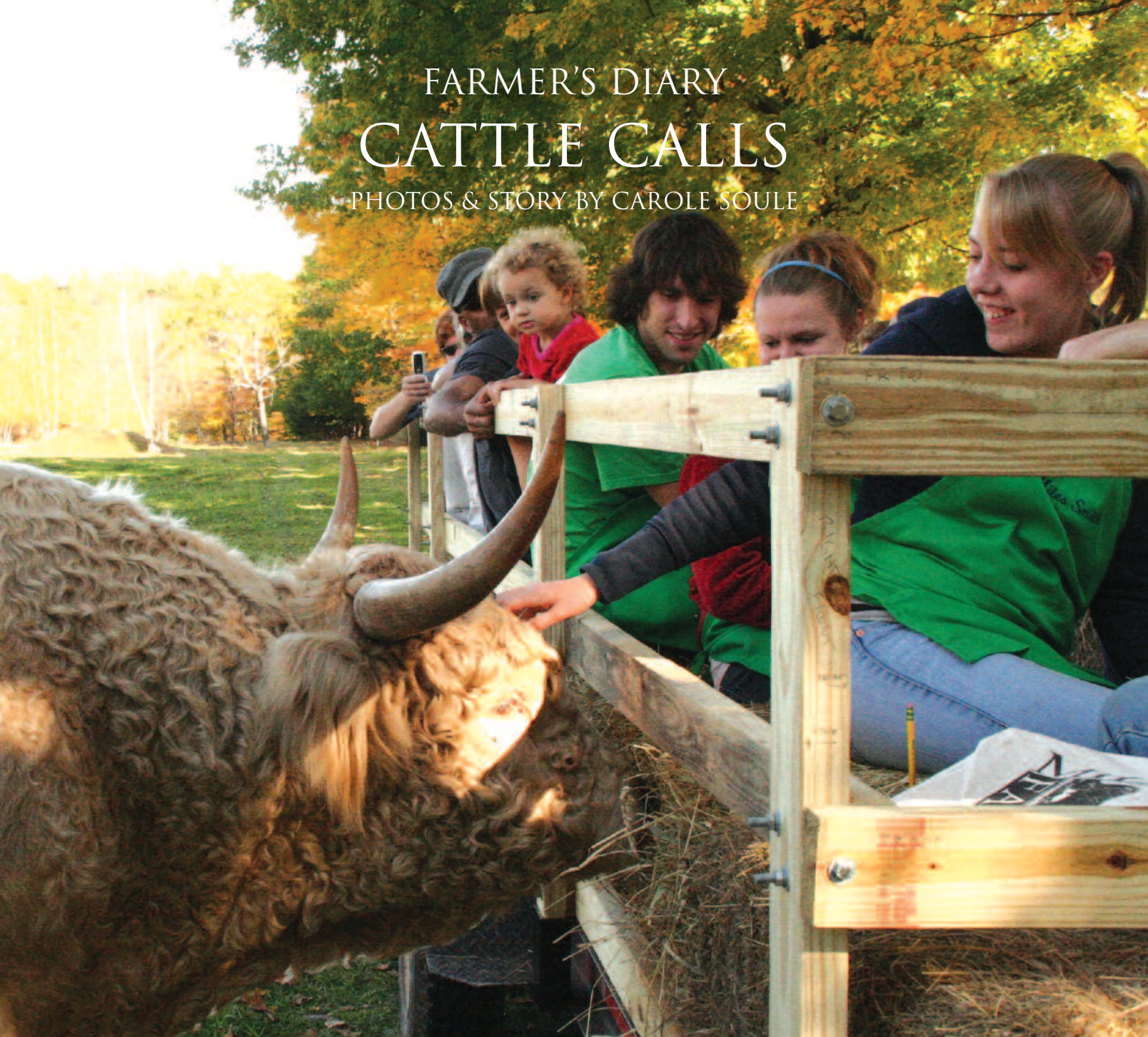
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# FARMER'S DIARY CATTLE CALLS

PHOTOS & STORY BY CAROLE SOULE



The bellowing started just before midnight. In a deep sleep, I tried to justify that it was a loose bull or a cow looking for her calf. The deep throaty calls seemed to come about once a minute and were not normal. I dressed, grabbed my cell phone and headed into the pasture. Cocoa, one of our Scottish Highlander cows, had given birth moments before I arrived. The calf was safely on the ground looking weak and startled, with Cocoa standing over her. After a quick call to Donna Peck, our vet for reassurance, I decided the calf was OK. Next call was to wake up Bruce, my partner, who brought up the wheelbarrow to carry the calf, mother following, to the barn. In the light of the full moon the calf looked blue so we named her on the spot: BluMoo.

Miles Smith cleared this land in the 1850's and it has been a working farm since. We raised horses for years and brought in some sheep to eat brush in 2000. After coyotes killed five of the sheep, we purchased our first two Scottish Highlander cows, considered "weather resistant". Their woolly coats shed water and snow and keep them warm without the layer of fat that other cattle need. Miles Smith Farm cattle are raised without antibiotics because cattle raised in a stress-free environment don't typically need medication. They use their long horns to keep the coyotes away. In fact the herd can be aggressive to all canines; when visitors bring dogs into the pasture the cattle will, if given the chance, attack the dogs.

The Highlanders are not aggressive towards humans; rather they are docile and usually run away when confronted. There are

exceptions of course, but those few cattle that do show aggressiveness end up in the freezer. The shy ones are also culled out of the herd. In close quarters a shy animal trying to escape can be as dangerous as an aggressive one that attacks.

After a week in the barn we put Cocoa and BluMoo back with the herd. When BluMoo is six months old we'll wean her from Cocoa. Weaning is noisy and I often wonder what the folks living at the nearby golf community think of the racket. During weaning each calf gets a halter with lead line to learn to lead and get used to being handled. We put the calves in the holding pen with the mothers in an adjoining pasture where they can see, sniff and moo to each other. For a few days now I've been listening to a symphony of three weaned calves calling to their mothers who, of course, bellow back. This method is less stressful for the animals but the constant mooing keeps me, and probably my golf neighbors, awake for a few nights.

The herd is checked at least once a day and we are especially vigilant when a calf is expected. So far this year we have lost two calves and one cow. Losing a calf is hard, but losing a cow is rending. The cow we lost, a favorite, and in many of my photos, escaped from the pasture to have her calf. She must have had trouble giving birth and by the time we found her it was too late. Most of the time the Highlanders give birth easily but sometimes a calf is in the wrong position (head first is correct) or too large and the cow needs our help. If a cow escapes and we can't find her, we can't help.

It may seem odd that a farmer who raises beef cattle is moved by the loss of a single cow. Each animal on the farm is considered our

worker, while our job is to watch over and protect them. It is a good day on Miles Smith Farm when we save a cow or a calf.

As much as I enjoy my animals, equally important to me are my customers. Everyone who buys meat from Miles Smith Farm is voting to support this small farm on a rocky hillside in Loudon. That vote means appreciation for how the meat is raised and handled, knowing that none of our beef has ever been "recalled", and that our animals are handled humanely. Whenever you buy locally you are voting to keep your food source safe by telling local farmers to keep growing vegetables, fruit and raising animals. Your vote counts. Buy one local item a week and you'll help keep farms in business and your dollars in the local economy.

I recently saw the film "Food, Inc". If you have ever eaten fast food (and who hasn't?), you need to see this film. You might continue to eat fast food, but you will know the real cost of the inexpensive food you eat. Parts of the movie are disturbing, but the good news is that we all can make a difference. Local farmers need to know you want to make a change. They need your vote. *eWM*

*Carole Soule and her partner Bruce Dawson have raised cattle since 2002. Carole watches over the herd while Bruce drives the farm equipment. The animals have a story to tell and Carole is their voice. Who said cattle can't talk!*

#### **Miles Smith Farm**

56 Whitehouse Rd, Loudon, NH 603.783.5159  
[www.milessmithfarm.com](http://www.milessmithfarm.com)



# WINTER CSA'S EAT LOCAL YEAR 'ROUND

BY MICHELLE COLLINS



The luxury of visiting your local farmers' market or buying fresh, locally-grown produce from the farm down the road doesn't have to end as the days grow shorter. Farms all over the New Hampshire have begun offering a **Winter Community**

**Supported Agriculture (CSA)**, demonstrating that eating locally is a feasible year round.

"People were anxious to have it happen," said **Larry Pletcher**, Owner of **The Vegetable Ranch** in Warner. "It's a very popular concept."

As a CSA member, consumers are offered a certain number of "shares" from a farm. The typical share consists of vegetables and other farm products such as eggs, homemade bread, farm-raised meat, cheese, and fruit. Interested consumers purchase a share, or membership, and in return receive a box of seasonal produce and foods each week throughout the summer farming season. In the winter, the pick-up might be every two weeks.

"To be a profitable farm, it takes some of the pressure off of summer. You don't have to make (all your) money in five months," Pletcher said.

The Vegetable Ranch has been growing and selling certified organic produce for 20 years, and specializes in traditional New England produce, including some heirlooms and European varieties. Last year was the first time The Vegetable Ranch incorporated a winter CSA. This year their winter shareholders have already doubled. From December to early May, the Ranch offers strictly produce to their winter CSA members, including winter crops like potatoes, parsnips, bok choy, spinach, winter squash, carrots, beets, turnips, onions, sprouts and lettuce. Pletcher points out that the produce they sell in the winter, stores well in cold weather. Operating year-round also guarantees his employees a stable job, obviously critical in this economy.

"It's a different concept from a farming standpoint," Pletcher said. "Most of it is just the fun in doing it."

Another advantage of offering a winter CSA assures that farmers will receive payment early in the season, helping to increase the farm's cash flow, but the benefits also extend to the customer. CSA members benefit whether it's in the summer or winter as it allows consumers to visit their farm on a regular basis, understanding more where their food comes from and enjoy a consistently healthy diet while supporting their local economy.

**Patrick Connelly**, Owner of **Field to Fork Farm** in Chester, is also on his second year of offering a winter CSA, and started the

program due to his customers' heightened interest in wanting to buy and eat local year-round.

"People get it in their mindset they want to eat local and organic," Connelly said. "There's a limited amount of farms that provide (year-round)."

Field to Fork Farm's winter products will be available to CSA shareholders from August through January. Their main offerings are the farm's certified organic eggs free ranging hens, as well as unpasteurized cow's milk, and goat, chicken and beef, all free range and grass fed. Since its inception last year, Connelly has already had to expand his winter CSA for the upcoming season.

"We expanded just the meat portion and the egg portion," Connelly said. "There's a tremendous demand for raw milk....It's kind of the nature of producing milk and eggs; both are year round."

In addition to both a consistent income and supply of local foods, Connelly admits that offering a winter CSA helps him to concentrate more on farming and take the marketing aspect off his plate. "A lot of the farms that exist are older farms and they're just starting to learn how to respond to local demands," Connelly said. "(The CSA) pretty much takes care of marketing, which is great."

Farms across New Hampshire offer winter CSA shares, but don't wait until the snow flies to sign up as the offerings can fill up fast and farmers need to plan. *eWM*

## **Brookford Farm**

Rollinsford [www.brookfordfarm.com](http://www.brookfordfarm.com) 742.4084

## **Field to Fork Farm**

Chester [www.fieldtoforkfarm.com](http://www.fieldtoforkfarm.com) 548.4331

## **Heron Pond Farm**

South Hampton [www.heronpondfarm.com](http://www.heronpondfarm.com) 591.8720

## **Meadow's Mirth**

Stratham [www.meadowsmirth.com](http://www.meadowsmirth.com) 767.2610

## **Stonewall Farm**

Keene [www.stonewallfarm.org](http://www.stonewallfarm.org) 357.7278

## **Sustainable Farm Products, Strafford**

[www.sustainablefarmproducts.com](http://www.sustainablefarmproducts.com) 664.5151

## **The Vegetable Ranch**

Warner, [vegetableranch@gmail.com](mailto:vegetableranch@gmail.com) 496.6391

## **Other Resources:**

[www.agriculture.nh.gov](http://www.agriculture.nh.gov) or [www.nofanh.org](http://www.nofanh.org)

*Michelle Collins is a freelance writer who contributes regularly to The Nashua Telegraph. Her work has also been published in The Hippo, Taste of the Seacoast, and Parenting N.H. [michellecollins@gmail.com](mailto:michellecollins@gmail.com)*

# NUBANUSIT NEIGHBORHOOD & FARM OLD FASHIONED FARMING IN A NEW COMMUNITY

BY BARBARA MICHELSON



In October of 2008, I drove to Peterborough with my husband, Jim, and two similarly curious friends to visit Nubanusit Neighborhood & Farm (NNF) as a very preliminary investigation of co-housing for our relocation in the distant future. I had long been interested in the co-housing movement, following it through print and Internet stories, but I had never actually seen a co-housing community.

It's difficult to describe co-housing succinctly since it can take many forms, from urban to rural and all points in between. Hallmarks are neighborhoods physically laid out to create neighborliness, usually car-free zones, and with homes facing much-traveled walkways. Although the homes are complete with bed, bath, kitchen and living areas, they are relatively small to conserve personal energy as well as natural resources. Co-housing communities feature a common house with a large kitchen and dining room for shared meals and meetings, and other shared facilities that individual homes may lack, like a dedicated playroom and guest rooms. At NNF there are additional shared amenities including 40 acres of woodland, almost a mile of Nubanusit riverfront and a 30-acre "farm."

The farm is now taking shape, but on the day we first came looking, there was little more than the frame of a horse barn, two horses and a llama, making do in temporary shed lodgings while construction on the barn progressed. There were several recently cleared and planted upland pastures and a lovely just-mown hayfield.

Shelley Goguen Hulbert, one of NNF's founders, is a woman who it seems can envision just about anything. When she heard that the dilapidated Salzburg Inn property was for sale, previously used for years as a motel and restaurant complex, she pictured a co-housing neighborhood and farm. She imagined energy-efficient cluster homes with a renewable-energy central heating system, professional offices in a renovated 150-year-old former governor's residence, and certainly, a

biodynamic farm with dairy cows, pigs, chickens, fruit trees, berry plants, an apiary, and vegetable gardens to supply most of the neighborhood's food. During our brief visit, she readily convinced me that Jim and I, too, were part of the vision.

It seemed clear that after countless hours of meetings and years of hard work done by the small band of neighbors who had joined early in the planning stages of NNF, that the most exciting and fun work lay just ahead. So in March 2009, we abandoned the "five-year plan" and our lives on Eastern Long Island to be part of this interesting endeavor. While Jim and I were improvising, the farm, at least, had an action plan. After a number of years of neglect, the fertile soil needed a year of attention to reduce compaction and eliminate weeds before it could be planted in crops.

Our family's Connemara pony was the first new animal to arrive in early spring, followed by five just-weaned pigs, as well as ten Easter Egger, ten Isa Brown and 24 Rhode Island Red laying hens, 200 Cornish Rock broilers, and three Muscovy ducks. Shelley's two lovely Jersey cows, Pumpkin and Magnolia, were impregnated over last winter and moved in to loaf on the lush pasture. Neighbors labored together to create raised beds, and to plant and tend strawberry and raspberry plants and the large vegetable garden. Soil was amended for blueberry plants to be set in come spring 2010. Shelley, with husband and co-founder, Robin Hulbert, erected moveable pens for the many animals and took on the task of soil improvement.

When an individual or family decides to move to NNF, they agree to act as steward of the shared land and commit themselves to using organic and/or biodynamic methods. One of the cornerstones of biodynamic farming for the eighty some years it has been

**Nubanusit Neighborhood & Farm residents take a rest after working in the garden.** credit: Clive Russ

practiced, is a system that is as near closed as possible, and therefore heavily reliant on animal husbandry. In the ideal closed system, a farm produces its own fertilizers and any other needed inputs and doesn't rely on outside sources for seeds, fuel and other requirements. At NNE, the pigs live outdoors in transportable enclosures, and the job they do so instinctively is to till the soil with their little trotters. Chickens are put on the tilled land to hunt for insects and fertilize. Some of these ideas are now being embraced by farms all over, as Michael Pollan's best selling book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, has spread farmer Joel Salatin's practices on his pastoral Polyface Farm in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

This fall we'll "harvest" the pigs we have raised since they were weanlings and the broilers that arrived as day-old chicks. The animals will be slaughtered on-site, a practice that is considered the least stressful for animals. Neighbors, few of whom have grown up with farming, muse about the psychic impact this will have on us and the neighborhood children who engaged so much with the young animals. It would, of course, be much less stressful for us to continue in denial and buy something shrink-wrapped at the grocery store.

Dairy cows occupy a special niche in the biodynamic scheme, venerated for their spiritual qualities as well as for their valuable manure. Last fall, cow horns were packed with manure and buried to



decompose throughout the winter. In spring the composted matter was removed, put in water, and stirred vigorously by hand, to make a preparation that we spread over the fields in minute quantities intended to have a homeopathic effect.

The pastured cows will come in this fall to calve. Neighbors will share the rich milk with the calves in the cool seasons when we, too, will need its nourishment most. Shelley will teach interested neighbors how to milk and make yogurt. Hopefully we'll be able to spell her at times from the grind of daily milking. In anticipation of this great bounty, Jim and I sign on to learn cheese making, believing that on some days the supply will exceed the demand.

**Above: Pigs are just part of the neighborhood at the Nubanusit co-housing community. Credit Barry Wright**

**Right: Early gardens at Nubanusit Neighborhood & Farm with parking garage and barn in background. Credit: Barry Wright**

Another important tenant of biodynamic farming is using celestial charts to determine the optimum times for working with particular crops. So far removed are we from observing the skies, that this aspect requires the greatest suspension of disbelief, although it's a traditional farming method that dates back centuries. If, however, there are ten things to do in the garden and the biodynamic calendar declares today a good one for working with root crops, why not hoe the beets and leave trellising the peas for another day? Unfortunately, the rainy weather plays havoc with this system, and some days we do everything simply because the sun is out and the fields aren't a swamp. Still a system that asks the grower to think of earth as exhaling in the morning and inhaling at night, exacts a certain sensitivity on the growers' part that ought to be beneficial.

I spend much time reading about biodynamic farming and examining the many areas in which the mystical beliefs have entered the mainstream through other doors. For example, this business of hand-stirring manure preparations which invites a certain amount of levity from skeptics, is vindicated at a mainstream gardening lecture I attend, in which it is "proven" that aerated manure teas are more effective than anaerobic. The suggested method of aeration, an aquarium air-filtration system, seems far sillier than paddle stirring.

There will be plenty of time to evaluate when the harvest is in and the bounty is on our tables. Meanwhile, I have traveled with the home-field hay to sell to area farmers who know nothing of our methods, and heard them exclaim excitedly about the wonderful quality. And little as I know about either farming or science, when a group of people—bound by affinity and commitment to a shared lifestyle—spreads across a field, buckets in hands, to offer nourishment to the fields they are so engaged in creating, I feel the cosmos could take notice. eWM

*Barbara Michelson sold her catering business on Eastern Long Island before moving with her husband, Jim, and Scottish terrier, Mackenzie, into Nubanusit Neighborhood & Farm. She spent the summer learning about animal husbandry, biodynamic farming and finding great food places in NH. She has a Grande Diplome from the Paris Cordon Bleu, enjoyed a 30-year career in food from executive dining room chef on Wall Street to market grower in the fields of L.I.*

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# GOT CHEESE?

## HOW ONE NEW HAMPSHIRE DAIRY DIVERSIFIES TO SURVIVE

BY HELEN BRODY  
PHOTOS BY BARRY WRIGHT

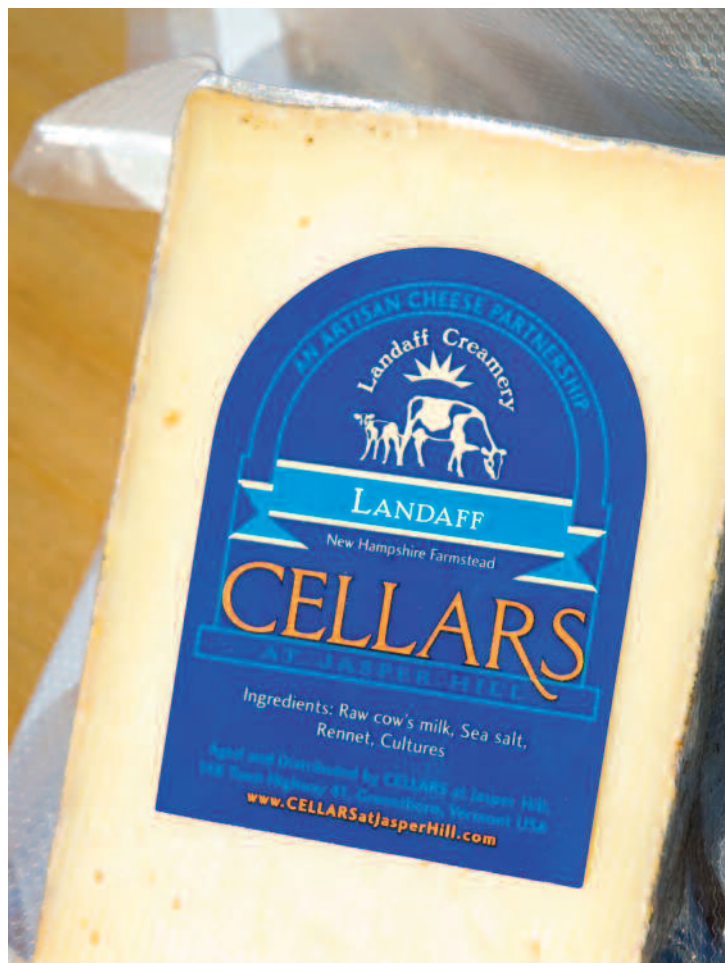
Landaff, New Hampshire, population 378, is nestled in the foothills of the White Mountain National Forest. In the 1950s, ten dairy farms dotted the lush hills surrounding Landaff. But that was then. Low milk prices and long, hard hours have forced all but Doug and Debby Erb of Springvale Farms to move away from dairy farming or sell their land. The last option was never seriously considered by these

two farmers. They chose instead to make their farm sustainable by creating a value added product from their frothy rich milk.

The couple milk 100 or so registered Holsteins, not with the indifferent approach of vast dairy enterprises, rather with the care and devotion that only small farmers can give to their animals. Such care spawns high quality milk. The Holsteins happily move about an immaculate space on a bedding of sand that assures both cleanliness and comfort under foot. Sunshine streams in the windows of the Erbs' renovated free stall barn where the cows lazily cue up for a luxurious massage rendered by an enormous rotating brush, obviously designed by someone who was devoted to all things bovine. Oh, and the jostling cows come away clean and totally satisfied! For those skeptics who doubt a cow can actually assume a look of pure contentment, take a trip up to Landaff. From early spring through late fall these pampered animals enjoy rotational grazing as Doug and Debby prod them from paddock to paddock of pastureland. During the winter months the cows are fed homegrown forages.

Although dairies are the second largest agricultural income producer in New Hampshire, and it is this valuable green pasture that helps to assure the preservation of New Hampshire's quality of rural life, the dairy family is up against the grim reality of today's milk prices. As global economies have slowed, the prices paid to the dairy farmers by the processors for their Class I fluid milk does not equate with the labor, costs, and the quality of their product. Despite their affection and care for the animals and land, the Erbs, too, had to face a bleak future, or worse, consider the merits of staying in business at all. Springvale Farms dates back to the 1950s when Doug's father, a veterinarian, bought and combined several farms to create a dairy farm and veterinarian clinic.

But love of place does not translate into food on the table nor expenses for daily living. In fact, the Erbs were following in the dismal pattern of their neighbors by accumulating a staggering debt. As devoted farmers, the very idea of giving up their livelihood or their



**The mellow, but distinct Landaff cheese is sent to age at the Jasper Hill cave in Greensboro, VT.**

“In farmstead cheese, each batch is a one-of-a-kind sensory experience.”

400-acre farm was inconceivable. Thus began the search for viable, income-producing alternatives.

The first step was to find ways to sell their fluid milk in the form of a food or “value added product” where their milk would bring in more dollars per pound of product and, as Debby says “would make our farm sustainable in the future.” Daily, intense dinner table discussions ensued between the couple that has been married for 32 years. Yogurt, butter and buttermilk were possibilities, but what intrigued Doug and Debby the most, and what seemed most feasible, was cheese. Because their cheese would be made from their own cows’ milk, it could be advertised as a farmstead cheese. “The cheese of choice among aficionados is a farmstead cheese because,” as Doug notes, “a farmstead cheese is unique to the farm pasture, the cows that produce the milk, and the cheesemakers.” As the flavors of the grasses change during the season, there are nuanced changes in the cheese that give it an intriguing taste experience. This is impossible to discern with cheeses using milk from a variety of farms and blended for consistency. “In farmstead cheese,” continues Doug, “Each batch is a one-of-a-kind sensory experience.”

While Doug became the chief researcher for their farmstead cheese endeavor, Debby continued to spend most of her time caring for the cows and calves. Doug started things rolling in 2006 by taking cheese-making classes through the Vermont Institute of Artisan Cheese at the University of Vermont and became a certified cheese maker. The next critical step was to decide what style of cheese they should make. While struggling with this decision, highly-touted cheesemakers Mateo and Andy Kehler, co-owners of Jasper Hill Farm & Cellars in Greensboro Vermont, introduced the Erbs to a third generation Welsh Caerphilly cheesemaker. Englishman and noted cheese maker Chris Duckett brought a sample of his cheese across the Atlantic for tasting.

“It was a little tired from wear and travel,” Doug said, “but even so, we loved it.” So off to Somerset, England he went to train at Westcombe farms using Duckett’s original Welsh recipe. The Erbs call their Landaff cheese ‘Caerphilly-style’ because it is a unique farmstead cheese from their own cows.

Looking back, it seems the choice of cheese and learning how to make it were the easy parts. The veterinary clinic was to be



After removing cheese from the press mold, Doug Erb stacks the wheels into the refrigerator.

## LANDAFF MACARONI AND CHEESE

4 tablespoons butter  
4 tablespoons flour  
2 cups whole milk, hot  
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1/3 pound smoked ham, chopped finely (optional)  
1/3 pound Landaff Cheese, grated (2 cups lightly packed)  
salt to taste after adding cheese and ham  
1 pound pasta shells, cooked

Preheat oven to 375 and butter an 8 cup shallow casserole dish. In a medium sized saucepan melt butter and stir in flour and cook for a minute or so. Whisk in hot milk. Cook, stirring occasionally for ten minutes. Sauce should coat a spoon and have a nice sheen. Fold in 1/2 cup of the grated cheese, optional ham, and cayenne. In a large bowl (or pasta pot) fold sauce into pasta shells. Taste for salt. Spoon into prepared casserole dish. Sprinkle remaining cheese over the top and bake for 20 minutes. Place under broiler for five minutes to brown the top.

**Note:** Although I find the flavor a bit strong, the rind of the cheese can be grated with the cheese and incorporated into the recipe.

Yield: 4-6 servings as a main course

transformed into the very heart of the facility, but before that metamorphosis, the entire building needed a total clearing out. Then fate intruded. Just as the initial deconstruction phase began, Debby broke a leg. With the creamery's equipment poised for delivery in two weeks, Debby recalled why she loved living in a small town. "Word got out," she says, "and one day 12 people showed up with skill saws ready to tear down walls and jack hammers to break up concrete and move things along."

As of last December the clinic had been transformed into a pristine facility with a passing inspection score of 100. The equipment, much of it shipped from France, included the molds that are "micro-perforated" so there is no need to use the traditional cheesecloth for draining. After the inspector's approval, all the Erbs needed was the starter, rennet, and baker's rack on which to set the cheese as it drained. Today, outside their gleaming facility, a visitor can gaze at the paintings of their prize cows and learn about the cheesemaking from signs and photographs. For those who harbor the notion that the making of cheese is a leisurely affair, consider the Erbs schedule; their day begins at five in the morning and ends at eight at night.

## LANDAFF CREAMERY WELSH RAREBIT OR FONDUE

4 Tbsp Butter  
4 Tbsp Flour  
2/3 cup whole Milk (hot)  
1 cup Ale such as Loon Golden Ale, Woodstock Inn Brewery, NH)  
1 pound Landaff Creamery Cheese, rind removed and very finely grated  
1 teaspoon Dry Mustard  
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce  
pinch Cayenne pepper (or to taste)

In a medium sized heavy saucepan, melt butter and stir in flour. Cook for a few minutes before gradually whisking in hot milk over low heat. Stir until mixture begins to get very thick. Stir in ale and simmer again until mixture begins to thicken. Whisk 1/2 cup grated cheese into ale mixture at a time, waiting until cheese melts before adding the next 1/2 cup. Add dry mustard, Worcestershire, sauce, and cayenne, to taste. Pour over toast halves and serve, if desired, topped with a slice of tomato.

Yield: 4-6 servings Welsh rarebit  
2 1/2 cups for use as a Fondue

**Note:** If using as a fondue, cut up bread into bite-sized pieces, leaving on the crust to make it easier to pick up, and dip into cheese sauce. Dipping steamed vegetables into the sauce works well too.

Doug and Deb make six batches of cheese a month using about 3,000 pounds of milk for each batch. The cheese is then sent to Jasper Hill Cellars to age in their caves.

At this point the cheese making takes only about one-half a day's milking from the Erb's total milk production. People are beginning to recognize the flavor of this cheese as delicious fare to accompany a cocktail as well as its melting properties that make it versatile in cooking. In many recipes, Landaff Cheese is a viable replacement for cheddar. Add Landaff cheese to the classic macaroni and cheese favorite (see recipe), use it instead of cheddar as a welsh rarebit (after all the cheese is Welsh!) and in casseroles. Although a bit more expensive, the variety it gives to what otherwise might be an everyday dish warrants the extra cost.

Ninety percent of Landaff cheese is being sold through Jasper Hill Cellars and is now making a bow nationwide. About ten percent of the cheese is sold at the Bath Brick Store in Bath, NH and at the Landaff Creamery itself. Their website references other retailers for their cheese.

In a sense, Debby and Doug Erb mixed some old fashioned farm virtues with a new vision and are turning a desperate situation into what they hope will be a thriving venture. New Hampshire dairy farmers need our support, especially during these tough times. Buy their milk as often as you can and don't forget to say "Cheese" too, please! *eWM*

### Landaff Creamery

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*Helen Brody is the author of the book New Hampshire: From Farm to Kitchen and founder of the New Hampshire Farms Network at [www.newhampshirefarms.net](http://www.newhampshirefarms.net)*



During texturing, Debby Erb seasons the curd with sea salt.

# RENEWING AMERICA'S FOOD TRADITIONS

## FARMERS AND CHEFS FOSTER HEIRLOOMS FROM FIELD TO FORK

BY TRACEY OSBORNE MILLER

If you've spotted a black tomato, speckled lettuce or a red squash as New Hampshire's farmers' market continue into the fall season, you probably thought the summer's rain got the best of them. But those irregularities may be the mark of precious heirloom edibles with unique tastes, colors and textures that can't be found in factory-farmed, industrial produce.

To restore place-based foods at risk in New England and enhance biodiversity, the **Chef's Collaborative**, a network of chefs that fosters a sustainable food system, along with its partner, **Slow Food USA's Renewing America's Food Traditions (RAFT)**, launched the Grow Out pilot program in Portsmouth, Providence and Boston this past spring.

Seven farmers around New Hampshire's seacoast were given seeds to "grow out" some of the 16 varieties of heirloom vegetables. Seven chefs in the region also agreed to feature the unique produce on their menus. Seed Savers Exchange, Fedco Seeds and Old Sturbridge Village donated the seeds.

Linking farmers to chefs helps assure a market for the heirlooms. Restaurants in turn share the stories about the food traditions and

**Heron Pond Farm in New Hampton grew out luscious Early Blood Rooted Turnip Beets** *Credit: Andre Cantelmo, Sr.*



### RAFT HEIRLOOM VEGETABLES

Boothby's Blond Cucumber • Boston Marrow Squash • Early Blood Rooted Turnip Beet • Forellenschuss or Speckled Lettuce • Gilfeather Turnip • Jimmy Nardello's Sweet Italian Frying Pepper • Long Pie Pumpkin • Marfax Bean • Siberian Sweet Watermelon • Sibley's/Pike's Peak Squash • Stowell's Evergreen Sweet Corn • Student Parsnip • Trophy Tomato • True Red Cranberry Bean • Wethersfield (Red) Onion • Winningstadt Cabbage

complement the heirlooms with their menus. The unique color and taste entice customers to experience foods they might have passed by at the farmers' market.

According to Ben Watson, Chair of Slow Food USA's Ark of Taste & Presidia program, "Heirloom varieties are ideal for smaller farms because they're not all ready for harvest at one time, unlike their hybrid contemporaries that were designed for harvesting mechanically in one pass". Watson helped select the heirlooms for the Grow Out and is also working with farmers in western New Hampshire to expand heirloom harvests. "Hybrids are hardier and can be developed in a wide range of conditions and geography, but taste and nutrition fall by the wayside," claims Watson.

Grower Josh Jennings of Meadow's Mirth Farm in Stratham adds that hybrids are grown primarily for disease resistance, integrity during transport and storage. "Taste and color tend to be why heirlooms are preserved. They must be delicious and offer something special," Jennings says.

Evan Mallet, chef and owner of the Black Trumpet Bistro, hosted the launch of the Grow Out. He believes, "The meeting was revolutionary and we're going to continue seeing results from farmers who were inspired and are expanding their portfolio to include heirlooms. We're also seeing more people coming into our restaurant that believe in the same thing we believe in and who are more aware of what heirloom means."

Cultivating the heirlooms from field to fork helps educate consumers about the variety and taste of these almost by-gone seeds. "Some chefs do a lot of promotion and that helps our business," continues Meadow's Mirth Jennings. "People are afraid to try unusual things, but if a restaurant prepares it they're more likely to try something new." Fortunately, there are both an Heirloom Farm Dinner and a Restaurant Harvest Week planned to celebrate the New England RAFT Grow Out.\* (See Sidebars)

Chef turned farmer, Garen Heller of Back River Farm in Dover agrees that heirlooms generally have much better flavor. This is just one reason why heirlooms are in such great consumer demand. New Roots Farm in Newmarket has been successful in growing the Jimmy Nardello Sweet Italian Frying Pepper. "The Nardellos look like fire-y hot chili peppers, so people shy away," says New Roots farmer Jeff Cantara. "But they're so sweet. Once people try them, they always come back for more."

Andy Gagnon of Andy's Greens grew Trophy Tomatoes, one of the more rare, older heirloom tomatoes. He participated in the program because he likes keeping old traditions and because diversity

## FARMS

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**Back River Farm**, Dover, NH  
603.753.3454

**Heron Pond Farm**, South Hampton, NH  
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\*Heirloom Harvest Week

is good for crops. Gagnon states, "Different pests like different crops. Relying on one crop is risky. The more variety, the less you risk for losing crops."

Evan Hennessey, executive chef at Strawberry Banke's Dunaway Restaurant in Portsmouth wants to convey the distinctiveness of the food itself and not overdo it. The Dunaway features the heirlooms as daily specials. "We like to have conversations with people and tell them about the unique characteristics of the vegetable and the farm," says Hennessey. "More and more people are taking pride in where their food comes from."

Old varieties of edible plants have real cultural significance and grace our tables with something irreplaceable. Once the genetic package of heirlooms is gone, they're gone forever. Look for heirloom products at farmers' markets and restaurants throughout New Hampshire. The program is not just to grow out seeds, "You've got eat it to save it," says Slow Food's Watson. *eWM*

*Tracey Osborne Miller is a holistic health counselor and wellness educator. She lives and eats along the seacoast of New Hampshire. You can find her at [tosbornemiller@yahoo.com](mailto:tosbornemiller@yahoo.com).*

### RAFT: Renewing America's Food Traditions

<http://chefscollaborative.org/> • <http://www.slowfoodusa.org/>



**Narrow, crimson Jimmy Nardello peppers add both color and sweetness to a basket of other heirloom varieties.** *Credit: Jeff Cantara*

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**The Dunaway Restaurant**, Portsmouth  
**The One Hundred Club**, Portsmouth

**Never too young: 18 month-old Caleb Cantara checks on the field of Boston Marrow Squash for his parents Renee & Jeff Cantara, owners of New Roots Farm.** *Credit: Jeff Cantara*





# EDIBLE HERITAGE HEIRLOOM SQUASH

BY SUSAN NYE

When it comes to interest in heirloom vegetables, winter squash are no exception. For many, it is the nostalgia of the pumpkins they found in their grandfather's garden or the squash at their aunt's Thanksgiving celebration. For others, trying a taste of the past is culinary adventure. Modern, mass agriculture focuses on quantity and durability for transport versus variety and flavor. Original plant varieties hold delicious and unique tastes for our twenty-first century tables.

**What makes an heirloom an heirloom?** Unlike many modern hybrids, heirloom plants have been developed in nature not in a lab. They are loved and enjoyed not as a short-term food fad, but for generations. To be labeled as heirlooms, plants must be around for at least fifty years; many are centuries old. Birds, bees and the wind pollinate heirlooms with special care taken to avoid cross-pollination.

**Bert Southwick**, now in his mid-80's, has been growing heirloom squash and pumpkins on his Northfield farm for more than fifty years. Checking his crops mid-summer, he warned that this might not be a great year for squash, "They like the heat. The plants are hurting with all the wet weather, wet ground and cool temperatures." To make sure you don't miss out on great, local squash, get to the market, or Bert's back door, early.

**Whole squash store well and should be kept in a cool, dry place.** They can be boiled or steamed, but roast them for the best results and an amazing, rich taste. Add some chopped onion, toss with a little olive oil and balsamic vinegar, season with thyme, sage, salt and pepper for a simple and simply delicious treat. You can use squash throughout the winter in hearty soups and stews, pastas and risottos. Or sweeten it up for delicious pies, custards and cakes. An

oven filled with squash will warm the kitchen and it smells wonderful on a cold day.

**Here are a few old favorites and maybe a new treat for you to discover on your next trip to the farm or farmers' market:**

Perfect for pies, the **Algonquian squash** is native to New England and was grown by the Abenaki people of Maine, New Hampshire and Western Massachusetts. The oblong-shaped squash is harvested green and turns orange in storage. It is meaty with a nutty, sweet taste.

The **Blue Hubbard** squash probably originated in South America and was brought to Marblehead, Massachusetts by seafarers in the 1700's. Heirloom Hubbards are huge, often weighing up to thirty pounds with a blue-green skin and fine-grained, yellow-orange flesh. With their massive size, Hubbards have fallen from favor with many home cooks. Look for it at busy farmers markets and farm stands, where you can generally buy pieces by the pound. Or buy one whole, steam or roast it, then puree and freeze it in batches. You'll be all set for the winter.

The **Boston Marrow** showed up in Salem, Massachusetts in the 1830's, most likely from Chile, and quickly became a New England favorite. It is prized for its rich, fine textured, orange flesh and is primarily used for pies.

**Butternut squash** is an all time favorite and can be found on almost every New England Thanksgiving Day table. Its exact origin is not clear but it was cultivated by the Incas in the fifteenth century and has been around for at least 5,000 years. Creamy tan with rich golden-orange flesh, the bottle shaped fruit averages three to five pounds.

## SPICY ROASTED WINTER SQUASH SOUP

Serves 8 to 12

- 2 1/2 – 3 pounds Hubbard or butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into chunks
- 1 large potato, about 8 ounces, cut into chunks
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 4 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon dried chipotle chili flakes or to taste
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2-3 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 8-10 cups chicken stock
- 3/4 cup sour cream

Preheat oven to 350°F. Put the vegetables, spices, salt, pepper olive oil and lime juice in a large roasting pan; toss to coat. Roast for 45 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.

Cool the vegetables about 15 minutes. Working in batches, puree the vegetables with a little chicken stock in a blender or food processor until smooth.

Put the vegetable puree in a large soup pot. Add any remaining chicken stock. Reheat slowly on the stovetop and simmer for on low for 15 minutes. Add the sour cream and reheat until steaming. Adjust the seasoning.

Serve immediately with optional garnish:  
1/2 cup toasted Pumpkin Seeds  
Fresh chopped Cilantro

While the unusual **Spaghetti Squash** traces its roots to the Americas, North, South or Central is not clear. Spaghetti squash are oval-shaped, pale yellow and usually weigh two to three pounds. The cooked flesh has a mild, fresh taste and resembles spaghetti so serve it with your favorite Bolognese or Marinara sauce.

The long oblong-shaped **Delicata Squash** has a cream colored, green striped outer skin and a golden fine-textured inner flesh. While it's an old heirloom, it disappeared for decades and is now making a comeback. The skin is edible and with an average weight of one to two pounds, delicatas are easy to prepare and cook up quickly.

The **Table Queen** or **Acorn** heirloom was first introduced in 1913 and is still a favorite today. This acorn shaped squash has dark green skin with sweet, yellow flesh. About five inches long, they can be cut in half and simply roasted or stuffed with rice or grains, vegetables and cheese.

The **Turk's Turban** heirloom dates back to the 1700's and depending on your frame of mind, they are either gorgeous or grotesque. They have beautiful red, orange and yellow markings, range from five to eight pounds and are better for decoration than eating.

Whether you wrestle a giant Hubbard, roast up your grandmother's favorite Table Queen or trade in pasta for a spaghetti squash, enjoy the autumn sunshine and lots of cozy dinners with heirloom squash. eWM

*Susan Nye lives, writes and cooks in New Hampshire. You can find more of her work and many of her favorite recipes on her blog at [www.susannye.blogspot.com](http://www.susannye.blogspot.com) and on-line at [www.susannye.com](http://www.susannye.com).*

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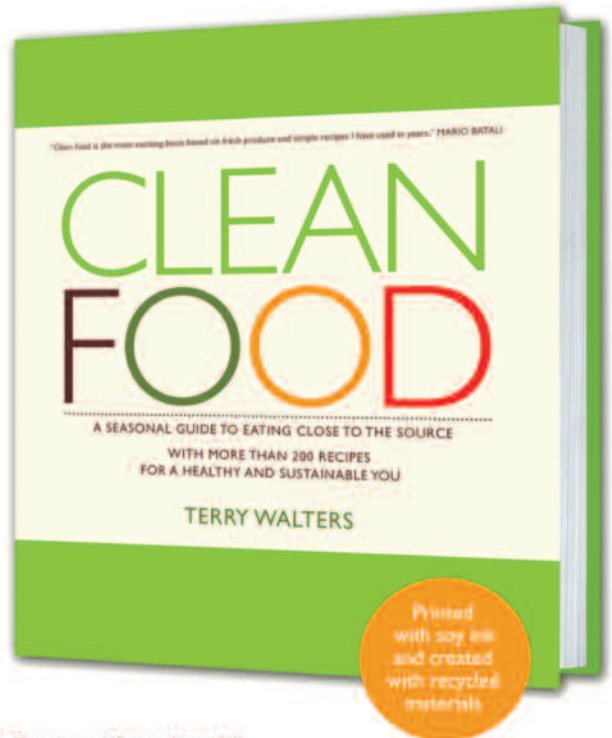
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# “APPLES? NEW HAMPSHIRE HAS THEM...” \*

BY LISA GARCIA  
PHOTOS BY CAROLE TOPALIAN

The appeal of the apple starts even before the taste. The bright green and red colors pull me in from yards away. The solid heft of the apple in my hand. The snap of the skin as it is pierced. The hiss as the rich juice meets the air. Depending on the variety, my tongue either dances to the refreshing tart taste or waltzes to the sweet, sunshine packed into a perfect fruit.

On almost any week of the year it's easy to find several varieties of apples in most supermarkets. Yes, apples are grown all over the world. Many have traveled from huge storage depots in New York. Others have journeyed from west coast states. Still others travel from South America while some travel the 9,000 miles from New Zealand to New Hampshire. So why are the 35 million pounds of local apples produced each year in New Hampshire so special?

Each orchard preserves acres of critical green space in our state. They provide homes for an abundance of wildlife – some welcome by farmers and some not. Apple blossoms feed many of the bees upon which local honey producers rely. The orchards also preserve the rural beauty of our state and provide many people with perhaps their only direct contact with a farmer.

\* From Robert Frost's *New Hampshire* poem, published 1923.

## “...With no suspicion in stern end or blossom end,” \*

According to the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, these orchards produce one million bushels of apples annually resulting in \$11 million in revenue. How that revenue is produced, however, is now different according to Steve Surowiec, president of the NH Fruit Growers Association. “Historically the apple production had been wholesale, but that’s been changing during the last 10 to 15 years,” explains Surowiec. With increasing competition from national and international apple producers, wholesale crops brought in only pennies on the pound. Weather has also been a challenge: Rain at the wrong time, or a hailstorm cause serious damage.

Economic survival has meant diversification. While some orchards still sell wholesale, many have expanded their retail sales by adding farm stands, ‘pick your own’ opportunities to appeal to families, and added additional types of fruit to attract people to the orchards during the summer months. Some have added apple varieties to supply cider producers for both alcoholic and non-alcoholic versions of the age-old beverage. There’s even vodka produced from New Hampshire apples.

Other orchards have gone into agritourism or agri-entertainment by creating events to draw people to their orchard. Diversification has brought income as well as smaller orchards. “I’m hearing from growers that it’s starting to be fun again,” says Surowiec. “Instead of growing 100 acres and earning pennies per pound, owners can grow and manage 20 acres and make a living.”

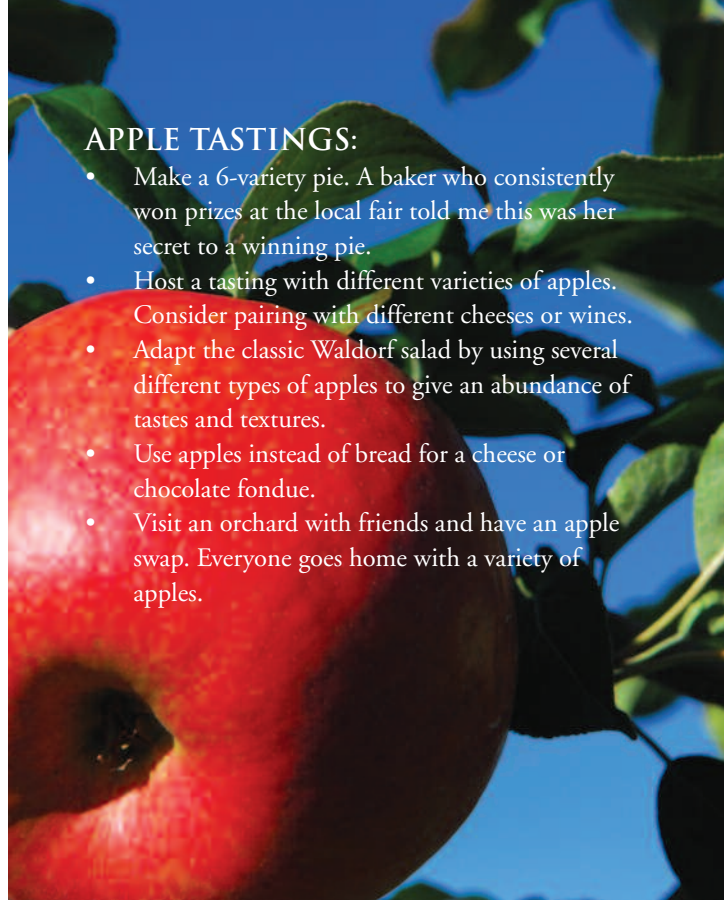
New as well as old tastes have appeared in orchards as a result of the diversification. Wholesale markets had historically wanted the classic Cortland and Macintosh varieties of apples. Yet New Hampshire orchards have so much more to offer: When was the last time you saw “Bramley Seedling”, “Hubbardston Nonesuch”, “Maiden’s Blush”, or “Tomkins County King” in the fruit section of the megamart in your town?

If you’re organized and scientific, you may visit an orchard with a specific purpose for your apples. If you’re like me, however, you head to an orchard with an idea and get inspired by what you find in the orchard or at the farm stand. Either way, enjoy the experience and try apples you’ve never tasted. At many orchards, you’ll be able to sample different types of apples. If you ask what the ‘best’ apple is, expect a moment of hesitation. This is similar to asking a parent which is their favorite child.

Dessert or eating apples are midway between tart and sweet when they are eaten in their intended form – raw. Cooking apples are exactly what the name implies. Although tart when eaten raw, their flavor mellows and matures when they are cooked. Most also maintain a firmer texture when cooked instead of dissolving into a “sauce” as dessert apples tend to do.

### APPLE TASTINGS:

- Make a 6-variety pie. A baker who consistently won prizes at the local fair told me this was her secret to a winning pie.
- Host a tasting with different varieties of apples. Consider pairing with different cheeses or wines.
- Adapt the classic Waldorf salad by using several different types of apples to give an abundance of tastes and textures.
- Use apples instead of bread for a cheese or chocolate fondue.
- Visit an orchard with friends and have an apple swap. Everyone goes home with a variety of apples.



The range of apples available from New Hampshire orchards is surprising. Some of the varieties are centuries old while others have been around for are barely 25 years. Perhaps the oldest type of apple found in the state is Calville Blanc de hiver. This aromatic, spicy and sweet apple originated in the 1500’s in Europe. This, and other heirloom apples, had generally disappeared from many orchards because they had a quality – often storage, size or color related – that made them undesirable for the wholesale market. With the return to direct sales to consumers, many orchards are now producing types of apples that previously didn’t make economic sense.

Besides heirlooms, there are new varieties with excellent qualities too. Go out exploring and discover the tastes and qualities of Yakatas, Honey Crisps, Mollie’s Delicious, and Jonamacs. Pay homage to the classics too by enjoying the Ida Reds, Macoun, and Northern Spy varieties. If you’re overwhelmed by the choices, bring home a selection of different apples. Savor the differences and enjoy the abundance of flavors that local food brings. *eWM*

### Find orchards for your apple adventure:

[www.nhfruitgrowers.org](http://www.nhfruitgrowers.org)

[www.allaboutapples.com/orchard/nh01.htm](http://www.allaboutapples.com/orchard/nh01.htm)

[www.pickyourown.org](http://www.pickyourown.org)

*Lisa Garcia is a food writer and an adventurous eater. She enjoys tasting and cooking with new foods or different varieties of fruits and vegetables. She lives in the Lakes Region, but travels throughout the state for “just about anything related to food.” She can be reached at [lgarcianh@yahoo.com](mailto:lgarcianh@yahoo.com)*

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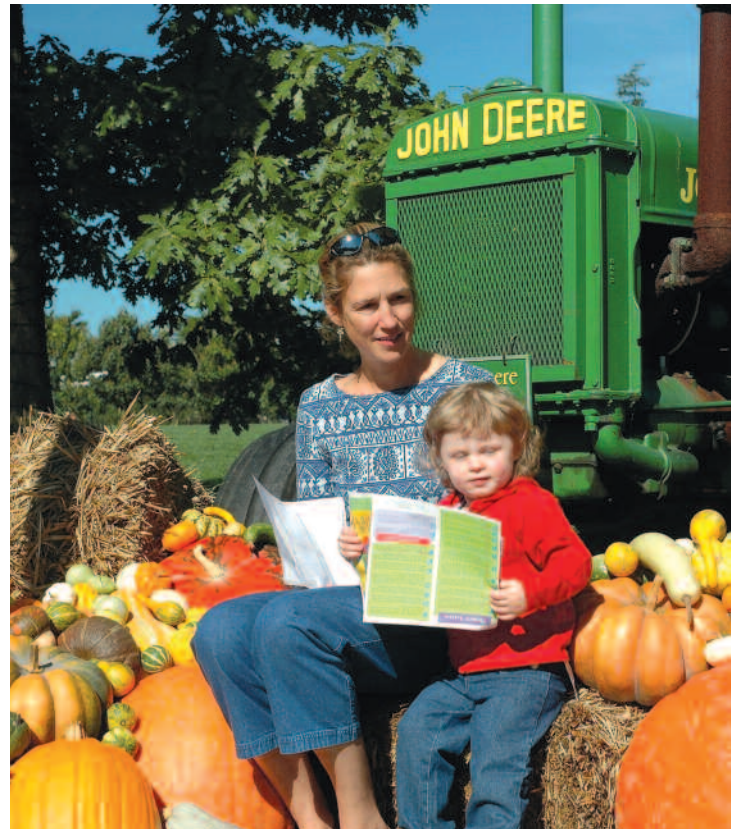
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# FIXING WHAT'S NOT BROKEN?

## CONGRESSIONAL FOOD SAFETY EFFORTS WILL PUT SMALL PRODUCERS OUT OF BUSINESS

BY ADAM PRIZIO

Clearly industrial methods of food production and distribution have failed to safeguard consumers against pathogens, which cause serious illness and death. Since 2003, there have been at least 14 major outbreaks of food-borne illnesses in the United States; over 20,000 citizens have become ill as a result of these outbreaks.\*

In response to significant public outcry, the U.S. Congress has investigated these failures. Dr. Andrew Eschenbach, former Director of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), admitted to Congress that the FDA was not up to the task of safeguarding the food supply, and would require more funding and stronger regulatory powers if it was to be successful at preventing food-borne illness in this country. In light of these facts, Congress is considering serious reforms of U.S. food regulation and oversight.

It is of no surprise that the reforms Congress is proposing will impose high costs on small food producers who have not been the cause of major food outbreaks. In fact, a simple way to limit the scope of future outbreaks is to *increase* the number of small producers in the food system. To some extent, Congress' "solution" to the failure of industrial food production is to make it more difficult for non-industrial producers to conduct their business.

Congress is considering two pieces of legislation to reform the U.S. food supply: H.R. 2475, the Food Safety Enhancement Act (FSEA), and H.R. 875, the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). Both of these laws greatly increase the regulatory burden on all food producers, and neither law distinguishes large producers from small ones.



**The author prepares for a mozzarella pulling demonstration at Butter's in Concord.**

*Credit: Barry Wright*

### THE FOOD SAFETY ENHANCEMENT ACT

The FSEA imposes a number of new requirements on the owners and operators of "facilities." Under U.S. food law, a "facility" is "any factory, warehouse, or establishment ... that manufactures, processes, packs, or holds food." The statute specifically exempts farms, restaurants, and retail establishments, but the term "farm" has been defined narrowly. According to FDA regulations, a farm may manufacture, process, pack, or hold food, but only if *all food used in those activities* is grown, raised, or consumed on that farm. The Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund interprets this language to mean that a farm on which pies are made to be consumed off-site is a facility unless all of the raw ingredients going into the pies are grown or raised on the farm. The definition of "facility" therefore captures a lot of small food producers and farms.

The FSEA requires facilities to register annually along with a \$1000.00 registration fee (allowed to change every year to track inflation and the vast expenses of the FDA).<sup>\*</sup> FSEA also requires owners and operators of facilities to conduct a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) management plan for food safety principles. This is an extensive and expensive decision-making framework for controlling quality of operations and production of food goods. HACCP has some clear benefits for both consumers and producers. Nevertheless, implementation of a HACCP plan requires an investment of three resources that are often in scarce supply for small producers: time, attention, and money.<sup>\*</sup>

**Both of these laws greatly increase the regulatory burden on all food producers, and neither law distinguishes large producers from small ones.**

# In fact, a simple way to limit the scope of future outbreaks is to increase the number of small producers in the food system.

In addition to these requirements, the FSEA gives the Secretary of Health and Human Services the power to quarantine any geographic area in the country, and to “issue science-based performance standards” for foods. These requirements will impose significant burdens on small producers and farms.

## THE FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT

The FSMA consolidates federal regulatory power in a new agency, the Food Safety Administration (FSA). This agency would assume the roles and powers now held by the food half of the FDA, the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, and the Center for Veterinary Medicine. (The FDA would be re-named the Federal Drug and Device Administration.)

The FSMA divides the FSA’s regulatory power over two broad classes of entities. “Food Establishments” are most broadly defined as any establishment that stores, holds, or transports food prior to sale, not including restaurants, and retail establishments. “Food Production Facilities” are farms, ranches, orchards, vineyards, aquaculture facilities, or confined animal feeding operations. The scope of the FSA’s power is therefore of great interest to small food producers, which will certainly qualify as Food Production Facilities, and many of which will qualify as “Food Establishments”.

The new FSA would exist, among other things, in order to “lead an integrated, systems-wide approach to food safety and to make more effective and efficient use of resources to prevent foodborne illness.” This integrated, systems-wide approach would include regular, unannounced inspection of food establishments.

The FSMA calls for the new FSA to establish a national system for tracing food. While the legislation does not call specifically for the creation of a mandatory National Animal Identification System (NAIS), it is clear from other sections of the act that such a system is intended. Farmers would be required to keep records enabling the FSA to track “the history, use, and location of an item of food” and to make those records available to the FSA on demand. Farms selling directly to the public may have to make their customers’ names and addresses available to federal inspectors.

Like the FSEA, the FSMA will require each food production facility to produce a written food safety plan. The FSMA therefore imposes many of the same HACCP burdens as the FSEA.

## FIXING WHAT ISN’T BROKEN

These “reforms” of food safety legislation come in response to the well-publicized foodborne illness outbreaks of the past several years. Congress

does not seem to have noticed that it is the industrial food production system that has failed to safeguard consumer safety, rather than the local food economies, which will bear the burden of these reforms.

The failure of the industrial food system has a lot to do with the structure of industrial food production: inputs—ingredients—come from many sources into a single factory; they are processed together, chopped and combined and cooked and portioned into a product that is shipped out for further handling and storage with more hands. If bacteria have contaminated a single input, all of that mixing and processing can spread that contamination to thousands of pounds of food across the nation. As the last several years have shown, when industrial processors fail, they put millions of consumers at risk.

By contrast, small producers often do not need to assemble ingredients from many unknown sources. Small producers, and their suppliers, often have reputations that can be much more easily destroyed than industrial food companies. By definition, small producers serve local or limited markets: they are much less likely to cause the sorts of nationwide illness outbreaks that have inspired such consternation in Congress.

The legislation examined in this article will impose disproportionate burdens on small producers, relative to the risks they present. By imposing high regulatory fixed costs, Congress is seeing to it that the U.S. food market will be served by those producers that are large enough to make a profit after they have met these burdens. These laws represent the further entrenchment of industrial food production at precisely the moment when that system has failed, and just as consumers are looking to local food as an alternative. *eWM*

**Late-breaking update:** the House passed the FSEA on July 30, 2009. By the time this article goes to press, the Senate may already have voted on the act. For up-to-date information about this and other legislation and its impact on small farms, contact the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund. [www.ftclfd.org](http://www.ftclfd.org) (703) 208-FARM (3276)

**\*For more information, please see the addendum to this article at [www.ediblewhitemountains.com](http://www.ediblewhitemountains.com)**

*Adam Prizio is an attorney in the Food & Hospitality Practice Group at Nelson, Kinder, Mosseau, & Saturley. Prior to becoming an attorney, he worked as a cheesemonger at Neal’s Yard Dairy in London, and a charcuterie specialist at Zingerman’s Deli in Ann Arbor. The views expressed in this article are his own. Adam grew up on a small farm in New Hampshire.*

# NH APPLE ORCHARDS!

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PHOTO BY CAROLE TOPALIAN

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Farmington, 335.4705

**Canney Brook Farm**  
Dover, 742.8612

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Merrimack, 881.8864

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**Deerview Orchard**  
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Henniker, 428.3000

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Contoocook, 746.3811

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Center Conway, 447.5687

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**Hillcrest Farm**  
Laconia, 524.1464

**Hollow Hill Farm**  
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**Lavoie's Farm**  
Hollis, 882.0072

**Mack's Apples**  
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225.2625

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432.9652

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Sanbornton, 286.4069

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**Windy Ridge Orchard**  
North Haverill, 787.6377

**Woodmont Orchard – Hollis**  
465.7713

**Woodmont Orchard –  
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Compiled with assistance from NH Dept of Agriculture




# Fall Farm Report

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-Red Tomato

[www.NortheastFamilyFarms.com](http://www.NortheastFamilyFarms.com)





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