

SAVOUR

SERVE UP THE JEWELS OF ONTARIO'S FARMLAND
 IN THIS ISSUE: A TIME TO REAP • BIG + SMALL JOIN HANDS •
 A FARM OFF GRID • LOCAL HERO'S LOCAL DINNERS •

Partners Big & Small

At first blush, a mass distributor like Gordon Food Service is the antithesis of local food. They have over 6000 customers in Ontario. We think of them as dealing in commodities, but they've been selling local foods for some time, and they want to carry more and now they will.

Gordon has partnered with 100 Mile Market, a new food distributor, proving that when the big guys team up with the little guys, there's tremendous mutual value that can keep them both independently strong.

In Tillsonburg, Albert Knab planted the seed for 100 Mile Market and brought in two simpatico individuals with synergistic expertise. He is a second-generation farmer who now leases his 100 acres. He takes on occasional international agriculture projects, like establishing organic farming programs in Zambia and Sri Lanka. He is also associate professor of international business at Fanshawe College.

Knab got to know Chris McKittrick on a construction equipment project. McKittrick has a background in both industrial and consumer products, launching them, guiding them through roll out and into commercial stability.

Paul Knechtel, whom Knab has known for 13 years, was brought in for his background in retail distribution. Knechtel's family ran a grocery franchise that grew out of a wholesale business begun by his grandfather from a 20-square-foot box on the back of his truck. In 1991, Knechtel sold the family company to Oshawa Group.

An element of personal mission drives 100 Mile Market. Knab wants to see farmers make a living. He's seen families ruined when farming doesn't pay. Says Knab: "Agricultural sustainability has to mean profitability for the farmer or else what's the point?"

McKittrick says farmers are trapped by the dictated price at the food terminal. "We're going to de-

couple these farmers from the vagaries of this trap and help them set their own prices," McKittrick says.

Knechtel wants to handle packaging, marketing and distributions, because it's not really what farmers do. "I want to be able to tell them that we can make them competitive with the chains because of our help and to pay them a fair price for their value-added product, something foreign to the commodity-driven marketplace."

The trio executed a pilot test in 2008 with local-advocate Jonathan Gushue, Executive Chef of Langdon Hall. He was paying a steep administrative cost dealing with so many individual suppliers, their lists of unique products, and individual invoicing and cheques. "We solved that problem right off the bat," says McKittrick, "with one product list, invoice and cheque."

Ontario lamb, naturally inconsistent in size, is a big problem for chefs. Says Knab: "We found producers with shared genetics and identical feeding programs." Problem solved.

Lisa MacNeil is excited about the pilot year of this partnership. Gordon Food Service's Director of Marketing for Ontario sees this move as an important part of the company's local program. "We already have 400 local products," says MacNeil, "and selling local food is already part of our day-to-day business. All of our dairy has been local for some time."

Packaging, coding, traceability and safety protocols are all issues that 100 Mile Market will tackle for the farmers, working closely with Gordon. "We want to make sure we can deliver on the just-in-time model," declares MacNeil, with Monday ordering and Tuesday pick up for Thursday delivery.

As the big guy to 100 Mile Market's little guy, Gordon proves to be a worthy partner. The company's 2008 greening initiatives are impressive. Through efficient routing, Gordon reduced the number of truck loads per week (seven per cent), increased the number of items carried per truck (15 per cent) and increased the number of items shipped per kilometer (nine per cent). This is the kind of big guy to do business with.

100milemarket.com
gfscanada.com

"Agricultural sustainability has to mean profitability for the farmer or else what's the point?"





Organic and Off the Grid

Andrew Miller found his farm manager position at Cherryvale Organic Farm through a Picton's real estate agent. She recommended him to the farm's new owners, a small, anonymous group of investors. "Don't call us investors," says their spokesman, Mr. X, "because we don't want to flip it in a few years for a profit."

Cherryvale is what Mr. X calls a collaboration of farming, energy and architecture. "We want to set a benchmark for sustainable living, a low carbon-impact lifestyle and high quality gourmet food," he explains.

"It was a pretty interesting first meeting," recounts Miller. "They said, 'We're not just some people from Toronto, swooping in and out. We want to do this right.'"

The farm is off the grid, liberated from fossil fuels; electricity is solar or wind powered. Miller harvests

rainwater, uses drip irrigation and practices green-manure soil building with buckwheat, clover and rye. "You can't put a cost on it," contends Miller, "because if we didn't do it, we wouldn't have healthy soil."

Cherryvale's 145 acres is worked by

"They said, 'We're not just some people from Toronto, swooping in and out. We want to do this right.'"

a local staff of 14, ranging in age from 16 to 65 and with a diverse range of skills – everything from gourmet food to tractor mechanics.

Once Miller and his crew established the first planting in year one, he threw his energy toward finding out what local chefs and their clientele want and what they're prepared to buy.

"I was out of my safe zone," confesses Miller, who comes from a

growing culture that produces four-inch beets and the largest heads of lettuce possible. "Today, it's about flavour," he adds, "and there's also a new way of looking at waste." Until recently, beet greens were composted. Today, they're a valued part of the dish.

For Cherryvale's third year, the focus is on having a great harvest and good root storage that will keep vegetables until spring. He counts Prince Edward County's culinary Who's Who as customers, and it looks like a chain could become a customer.

Among the specialty vegetables with the Cherryvale brand are mesclun, baby beets, baby carrots and fingerlings, and Miller's Little Gem lettuces are in demand.

Part of the long view is to diversify. Chicken will be the first animal products to try out. "Not all products coming off the farm are going to be raw," he hints, pointing to value-added products like tomato sauce.

When Miller and his employers discuss the long view, they talk about combining accommodation, food production, retail, wholesale and a foundation for education, harkening back to Mr. X's vision. As lofty as it is down-to-earth, this is the vision our culture is crying out for.

cherryvale.ca
theaccidentalfarmer.ca
wendysmobilemarket.com



Picnic at the Brick Works

A Feast for Chefs, Farmers, Foodies

The world is coming to the Picnic at the Brick Works, because Central America, Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, India, Pakistan and the Far East have come to Ontario.

To celebrate our cultural diversity, chefs and producers team will up to serve global flavours made from local products. Celebrating its third year, the Picnic is a collaboration between Slow Food Toronto and Evergreen, the sustainability organization.

Sunday, October 4
Noon to 4pm
evergreen.ca/picnic

Left: beef tenderloin with season garlic
Below: Fitzgerald



observes Fitzgerald. "Peaches, melons, musk melons, plums and cherries, and the organic greens are available until the end of November." He buys Berkshire pork whole from the local Amish community. All natural perch, trout and pickerel come from Northshore fishery in Leamington. For honey, Fitzgerald looks to the roof, where he's keeping bees. "We'll be ready to harvest in September," he says.

In the community, Fitzgerald teaches elementary students to grow plants ("They are blown away by how easy it is to grow food") and then teaches the kids how to cook them. At the local college, he speaks to the next crop of culinarians about the importance of local food. He worked with Valerie Clark of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to organize the city's first local food conference, where he met a number of producers he's currently working with. "You might say that working with farmers helps them," contends Pehilj, "but really, they're helping us. The public has to recognize this."

garlicsoflondon.com

When Local is Exotic

Through the Woods, Down the Trail

Wade Fitzgerald loves to cook simple rustic food. He grew up in a rural, Cape Breton community (pop. 1000), where his family grew all their own food, fished trout in the river and got eggs from their own hens. "At our house, food was something you made a lot of, because you had to feed a big family," explains Fitzgerald, Garlic's of London's Executive Chef.

Through the woods and at the end of a trail live the Fitzgeralds' closest neighbours, Cynthia and Grant Drinnan. Growing food was Cynthia's favourite pastime. She grew Swiss chard, parsnip, turnips, rutabagas, spinach, bok choy, "most of it exotic to me at the time," remembers Fitzgerald, "because we were a meat and potatoes family." From the age of 14 and for the next five years, Fitzgerald helped Cynthia on her 15-acre field, without realizing until later that his culinary education had begun.

It was in the Drinnan kitchen that Fitzgerald's spark was lit. "Cynthia cooked with passion and great imagination," he recounts, "using spices, chile, garlic. She made curries

and marinades for ribs, ethnic twists I didn't grow up with. It made me want to cook."

Fitzgerald trained at Holland College, cooked his way throughout the Maritimes and did a stint in Lake Louise. Coming to Ontario and working with John Taylor, chef-owner of Domus restaurant in Ottawa, Fitzgerald returned to his passion for rustic food. He saw local, free-range and naturally raised foods used daily. "John is an amazing guy, an idol," proclaims Fitzgerald.

Garlic's owner Edin Pehilj saw quickly that Fitzgerald's philosophy made him a perfect hire. The restaurant is a labour of love for Pehilj, who started as a bus boy and then bought the place 10 years later with a specific vision. "I wanted to take the food back in history, to what my grandmother used to cook, guided by nature and the seasons," declares Pehilj. "Serving local gives you the best the earth has to offer. No wonder it tastes better."

"People don't realize what we can get here in Southwestern Ontario,"



Local Dinners

Celebrating Our Terroir

For two decades, Jamie Kennedy has been a passionate advocate connecting us to the source of our food. From his many à la carte venues over the years to the flourishing catering operation that keeps him busy today, Kennedy has always practiced terroir.

In February, Kennedy launched the weekly Local Food Movement Dinners, hosted at the Gilead Café, as a creative collaboration with an artisanal producer and a winemaker, who also attend.

Breaking bread with people at the source of one's meal is a rare offering for a restaurateur, and the dinners are ideal for this. The room is set with a communal table, creating a private dinner-party atmosphere. Guests engage with likeminded guests, as well as the farmer who grew the meal's vegetables, for example, and the winemaker with an intimate understanding of what makes the evening's wines unique.

The dinners draw a steady stream of industry people who come to build their gastronomic knowledge, and the lion's share of attendees is loyal, repeat clientele. They tell Kennedy they're surprised, pleased and impressed with the quality of food and wine in this local context. From a restaurateur's point of view, the dinners provide opportunity, as it did for Kennedy, for new revenue, press, and food blogs writing about the dinners in great detail, keeping the buzz alive.

Q: When were you first struck by the importance of the local food movement?

JK: It crystallized for me in 1989 when Michael Stadlander and I started Knives and Forks, an alliance of organic growers and cooks joined by the common goal of local food procurement.

Q: The dinners appear to be very important personally for you. How would you describe the experience?

JK: It's the high point of my work-week. It's an exploration of terroir-based gastronomy. It represents the purest expression of my work as a cook, because



Photo: Margaret Mulligan

I'm passionate about food culture in Southern Ontario. What we hope to achieve is a unique food culture born of a place and delivered through the work of the people of that place. It's also a creative endeavour in core values that generates more revenue.

Q: You once called yourself a "terroir-iste." How tough has the battle been and how much further do we need to go?

JK: We're at a turning point and education is key, but there's been great progress, and the movement is gaining momentum. The proliferation of farmers markets in Toronto is just one example. The new guard of chefs and restaurateurs has fully embraced using local food, which has spawned a new era of opportunity on the supply side. We now have a burgeoning artisan-based industry of small-scale farmers, producers and distributors thriving outside the status quo.

Q: How telling is it that, among young cooks, we're in a phase of cooking styles

that has artisanal and molecular cuisine thriving at the same time?

JK: I'm trying to create Ontario tradition. In Europe, where so much tradition already exists, people like Ferran Adria feel constrained and need to force the boundaries, which make practices like molecular gastronomy flourish.

Q: What's your view about why charcuterie has become so popular?

JK: Charcuterie ties in with rediscovering lost subsets in the trade of cook. It symbolizes a movement away from the industrial production of food. It represents traditions in food culture that have depended on the noble pig for their survival. Charcuterie honours the whole animal. As the new guard of cooks evolves in our community, it's no surprise that charcuterie figures strongly on the menus today.

jamiekennedy.ca or **647-288-0680**
for more information



Savour Ontario

The Savour Ontario Dining program was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism, and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, and is part of the Pick Ontario Freshness initiative. The program is designed to promote fresh, high-quality Ontario foods and to make them the preferred choice of consumers, retailers and restaurants. Contact us at Savour@Ontario.ca

SAVOUR AUTUMN HARVEST

Fall's Food Riches: The articles in this insert reflect Savour Ontario's marketing plan for Fall 2009, which focuses on Harvest Fruits and Vegetables for September, Pork for October, and Cheese for November.



SEPTEMBER:

Chefs Preserve Ontario's Harvest

Putting Them Up, Putting Them Down

At the Art Gallery of Ontario, Executive Sous Chef Jeff Dueck is right in the thick of it. "It's a regular routine around here," he says, currently putting up pickles, cornichons and sour cherries. Having just finished peach halves in lavender syrup, the kitchen has started on baby beets and is waiting for the Italian plums.

*"There they are,
gleaming
with possibilities."*

For his colleague Executive Chef Anne Yarymowich, it's time to make her signature rose petal preserves, using her own cultivated roses and made following her mother's Ukrainian cookbook. She's still undecided how she'll use them, but in the meantime, "there they are," she says, "yellow and pink in their little jars, gleaming with possibilities."

For Chef Anthony Rose at The Drake Hotel, harvest begins in the spring and runs right through the summer and into the fall, and so do his preserves, both savoury and sweet. Rose starts with ramps, rhubarb and

radishes, then all the berries, then spicy pickles with wild dill ("They're going to be so delicious"), green beans, chilis ("my favourite"), cherry tomatoes, eggplant and, finally, watermelon.

For Lorenzo Loseto, Executive Chef of George, harvest means sauterne berry preserve flavoured with coriander seed, basil, chili and ginger. "I love these for Ontario bison, boar and elk," he says. When crab apples start coming in, George Pastry Chef Elysia Staszczyszyn makes crab apple jelly for cheese plates. For duck and the fall's abundant apples, Loseto makes a brown-butter apple puree with vanilla, lightly buzzed to emulsify and finished with Dijon.

At Splendido, Executive Chef and Co-owner Victor Barry puts up bing cherries in brandy for foie gras, and wax beans for charcuterie plates. His standout preserve is apricot mostarda, from a recipe brought back by a chef friend who learned the technique in an Italian Michelin-starred restaurant.

ago.net/dining-at-ago
thedrakehotel.ca/dining
georgeonqueen.com
splendido.ca

Preserves at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Photos: Anne Yarymowich

Splendido's Apricot Mostarda

Core the apricots, toss them in sugar to draw their liquid out. Let them sit overnight. Strain off the liquid, reduce, let it cool, and pour it back over the apricots. Repeat eight times. On the last round, take the strained liquid and reduce to a caramel and pour it back over the apricots.

Separately, put one cup of mustard seeds and two cups of water into a pressure cooker, with a few sprigs of thyme and a bay leaf. Cook for an hour. The scent is very potent. "When it's time to lift the pressure valve," says Barry, "we put it outside and forget about it until it's cooled right down."

Jar the apricots, fill with apricot liquid and add 14 drops of the mustard liquid to each and preserve.



What's in Season

	sept	oct	nov
apples	x	x	x
Asian vegetables	x	x	x
beans	x	x	
beets	x	x	x
blueberries	x		
broccoli	x	x	
brussels sprouts	x	x	x
cabbage	x	x	x
carrots	x	x	x
cauliflower	x	x	x
celery	x	x	
corn	x	x	
crabapples	x	x	x
cranberries		x	
cucumbers – field	x	x	
– greenhouse	x	x	x
eggplant	x	x	
garlic	x	x	x
grapes	x		
leeks	x	x	x
lettuce – assorted	x	x	
– greenhouse	x	x	x
muskmelon	x		
mushrooms	x	x	x
nectarines	x		
onions	x	x	x
parsnips	x	x	x
peaches	x		
pears	x	x	x
peas, snow	x		
peppers – field	x	x	
– greenhouse	x	x	x
plums	x	x	
potatoes	x	x	x
radishes	x	x	x
rapini	x	x	
raspberries	x		
rutabaga	x	x	x
spinach	x	x	
sprouts	x	x	x
squash	x	x	x
sweet potatoes	x	x	x
tomatoes – field	x	x	
– greenhouse	x	x	x
zucchini	x	x	

Source: Foodland Ontario



Did You Know?

Of Ontario's 30 cheese-makers, 13 are considered artisanal, using cow's, goat's and sheep's milk.

Source: Gurth Pretty www.cheeseofcanada.ca

OCTOBER:

Tamworth Pork

Ontario's Rare Breeds

Like Berkshire pork, its gastronomic predecessor, Tamworth pork is pasture-raised naturally, has more marbling, darker meat and a fulsome flavour, growing a following with chefs and gastronomes.

In May, Slow Food Ontario celebrated the Tamworth with a pork roast at the Ancaster Old Mill. "To save this pig," wrote Shaun Smith in the *Globe and Mail*, "people must eat it," and they will, thanks to producers like Fred de Martines and his son Mark of Perth Pork Producers in Seabring, near Stratford, and their herd of 25 sows.

Also on the rise—but still not ready for market—is the Large Black pig, currently being raised by Stephen and Carolyn Draper at Picton's Sengdroma Farm. "I let them eat as much pasture as they want," says Carolyn, "including scraps from restaurants with a reputation for local food." For now, the Drapers only sell whole animals by word of mouth.

Tamworth Distributors:
ontarioharvest.ca
lafermeblackriver.ca
locallogicalfood@rogers.com

Photo: Jo Dickens



NOVEMBER:

Terroir-Devoted Cheeses

Margaret Morris of Glengarry Cheesemaking in Lancaster, near Ottawa, makes unique artisanal cheeses from single-sourced cow's milk from her family's dairy farm. She runs a thriving 15-year-old cheesemaking supply company, and although she's been making cheese for family and friends since the early '90s, she debuted her own cheeses at market in 2008.

Devoted to terroir ...

Lancaaster is named for her family's Dutch heritage and her provenance, with a nutty, sweet and buttery flavour, and modeled on gouda.

Celtic Blue honours the French, Scottish and Irish who settled the region, with sweet and subtle blue notes and a yellowish tint from the cows' diet of hay and grass.

For whimsy and romance ...

Figaro is named for the French newspaper Morris grew to love while learning affinage [the art of aging cheese] in France. It's light, fresh, perfumey and mushroomy, modeled after Chource, a fresh limited-supply cheese rarely brought into Canada.

glengarrycheesemaking.on.ca

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ontariocheese.org

Libations for Heritage Pork

When epicure and wine agent Glenn Barley thinks about unconventional wine pairings for pork, he thinks cider, specifically Waupoos, which is made in Prince Edward County. "It's slightly fruity, not too sweet and has a dry finish," explains Barley.

A little farther out there in left field, consider whisky. Ontario makes some of the country's best. Picture the Tamworth's English roots, heavy wool sweaters on a crisp fall day, the pig roasting on an open spit. The whisky's vanilla and toasted oak flavour is a great compliment to the pork.

In *Good Food Revelation*, published online by foodie-media maverick Malcolm Jolley, sommelier John Szabo recommends wines by cuts of meat.

waupooswinery.com
countycider.com
goodfoodrev.com