

Whatcom Locavore

Information and resources for eating only food locally produced in Whatcom County

Food Writers Attend Co-op Barbecue

Posted on 18-09-2011 | By: **Nancy**

(Photo by Laura Steiger)—Four local food writers were featured at a community barbecue sponsored by the Community Food Co-op (Cordata and Westerly, Bellingham) last Saturday to talk about their cookbooks, blogs—and newspaper columns! Samples of their recipes were available for tasting, too.



We were celebrating Eat Local Month inspired by Sustainable Connections, an organization of local businesses supporting sustainable practices, a healthy environment, and community wellbeing. Their Food and Farming program publishes the annual Whatcom Food & Farm Finder, a booklet describing local farms and what they produce. I frequently encourage people to pick up a copy of the booklet to find CSAs, certified organic farms, and various kinds of farm products available in Whatcom County. Besides events like the current Eat Local Month, Sustainable Connections offers educational programs such as Food to Bank On, which arranges business and agricultural mentorships for beginning farmers). SC is a remarkable organization which is nationally recognized as a model for effectiveness and innovation. Over 650 local, independently owned businesses are members. For more about the Sustainable Connections, see their website at www.sustainableconnections.org or call them at (360) 647-7093.

Despite dismal forecasts, the Saturday weather stayed dry, and a crowd came to enjoy grilled kabobs, greens, salad, and corn on the cob. Lively, old-time music was provided by local duo Pretty Little Feet.

Food authors attending included:

- **Tom Malterre**, co-author of **The Whole Life Nutrition Cookbook** (available at the Co-op), served samples of a cucumber, tomato, and basil salad. Tom (a nutritionist) and his wife Alissa Segersten (a whole foods chef) are experts in creating delicious gluten-free, egg-free, and dairy-free recipes emphasizing local ingredients. Their nutritional counseling service helps people dealing with headaches, colic in infants, autism and ADD/ADHD, chronic fatigue, weight control, and more. It was fascinating talking with Tom about food sensitivities in children, a frequent source of behavior and health problems that often is

overlooked because people—even doctors—aren't aware of the signals. Find more information about whole food nutrition, recipes, and their services at [Tom and Ali's website](#).

- **Melissa Elkins** writes the entertaining [Sassy Sampler blog](#) for the Community Food Co-op. She has worked at the Co-op since 1996 and is now an Administrative Assistant. On Fridays, if you visit the Co-op's Cordata store (corner of Cordata and Westerly in Bellingham), you'll probably get to sample a recipe prepared by Melissa. "I love talking about food with people, and offering tips and suggestions," Melissa says. At last Saturday's barbecue, she was serving up juicy slices of fresh local produce available at the Co-op.
- **Debra Daniels-Zeller** lives in Edmonds, WA, and is author of [The Northwest Vegetarian Cookbook](#). She was serving samples of her favorite Garlicky Greens. Debra also writes a lively [food blog](#), sharing recipes, nutrition information, food-related experiences, and relevant misadventures of her Cooking Assistant (her bassett hound). Besides mouth-watering recipes, Debra's book includes information and tips on a wide range of subjects, from bees to conservation easements to how to wash fresh produce or use an ice cream maker.
- Finally, **yours truly** was also at the Co-op barbecue, handing out samples of my [Rustic Apple Tart](#) with cheesy crust. I always enjoy talking with people about local foods and the farms growing them. It's encouraging when people recognize the name Whatcom Locavore, and it's also rewarding to introduce new people to the "locavore" concept of eating only foods grown in Whatcom County.

Many thanks to Laura Steiger of the Community Food Co-op who did an amazing job organizing the barbecue. Thanks also to Sara Southerland and Sustainable Connections for sponsoring and promoting Eat Local Month. Finally, special thanks to everyone who came out to taste local food, and talk to those of us who write about it.