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Whatcom Locavore: Authors celebrate Eat Local Month, share recipes

NANCY GING - FOR THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Four local food writers were featured at a community barbecue sponsored by the Community Food Co-op in the Cordata area last Saturday, Sept. 17, 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 well-being.



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.

Sustainable Connections is a remarkable organization nationally recognized as a model for effectiveness and innovation. More than 650 local, independently owned businesses are members. For more about Sustainable Connections, see their website, 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 a local duo, Pretty Little Feet.

Food authors who attended were:

• **Tom Malterre**, co-author of "The Whole Life Nutrition Cookbook," 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 wholelifenuitrition.net

• **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, 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 Saturday's barbecue, she served juicy slices of fresh local produce available at the co-op. Her Sassy Sampler blog is at communityfoodcoop.wordpress.com

• **Debra Daniels-Zeller** lives in Edmonds and is the author of "The Northwest Vegetarian Cookbook." She served 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 basset 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. Read Debra's blog at foodconnections.blogspot.com

• **Finally, yours truly** was also at the barbecue, handing out samples of my Rustic Apple Tart with cheesy crust (see recipe below). 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 rewarding to introduce new people to the "locavore" concept of eating only foods grown in the county.

Laura Steiger of the Community Food Co-op 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.

Note: Books mentioned above are available at the Community Food Co-op.

Producers are listed after each ingredient in the recipe.

RUSTIC APPLE TART

Ingredients for cheesy crust

1 tablespoon honey (Guilmette's Busy Bees, Bellingham)

1/2 cup ice water

2 1/4 cups flour (Fairhaven Organic Flour Mill, Bellingham)

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup aged gouda cheese, finely grated (Pleasant Valley Dairy, Ferndale)

3/4 cup butter, chilled (Breckinridge Farm, Everson)

1 egg yolk, lightly beaten (Misty Meadows Farm, Everson)

Ingredients or filling

1 pound Gravenstein apples, chopped (BelleWood Acres, Lynden)

1 tablespoon honey, plus more to drizzle (Guilmette's Busy Bees, Bellingham)

2 teaspoons rosemary leaves, finely chopped (various herb growers, Bellingham)

2 tablespoons butter, chilled (Breckinridge Farm, Everson)

Directions for cheesy crust

Add honey to ice water and stir vigorously until dissolved. Set aside.

Combine the flour, salt and gouda cheese and stir until well mixed.

Dice cold butter into 1/4 inch cubes, and combine into flour mixture until crumbly. Mix in egg yolk. Then slowly add the honey water until the crust begins to come together, being careful not to add too much water.

Gather the dough together in a ball and put in a covered container. Refrigerate for half an hour.

Directions for filling and tart assembly

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Peel, core and chop the apples. In a mixing bowl, combine apples, honey, and rosemary.

On a lightly floured board, roll pie dough out to an 11-inch circle. The dough should be a little thicker than for a pie. Place onto a parchment-lined baking sheet or into a lightly

buttered 8- or 9-inch cast iron skillet. The edges of the dough can be left roughly shaped to enhance the rustic look.

Spoon the filling into the center of the pie shell, piling as high in the center as possible. Leave several inches of pie dough uncovered around the edges if you are working on a baking sheet.

Fold the edges of the shell toward the center around the fruit to hold it in place while cooking.

Dot the apple filling with bits of chilled butter and drizzle with honey. Brush the outside of the crust with a beaten egg wash or melted butter.

Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until golden.

Serve warm, sprinkled with grated or shaved cheese, if desired. Serves 8.

LOCAL RETAIL FOOD RESOURCES

Appel Farms Cheese Shoppe, 6605 Northwest Road, Ferndale; open Mondays-Saturdays 9 a.m.-6 p.m.;

Artisan Wine Gallery, 2072 Granger Way, Lummi Island; open for tastings Thursday and Fridays 4-7 p.m., Saturdays 1-5 p.m.;

Bellingham Farmers Market, Railroad at Chestnut, Saturdays 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; also at Fairhaven Village Green, 10th Street. and Mill Avenue Wednesdays noon to 5 p.m.;

Boxx Berry Farm Store and U-pick, 6211 Northwest Road, Ferndale; open Mondays-Saturdays 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. and Sundays 10 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.;

Cloud Mountain Farm Nursery, 6906 Goodwin Road, Everson;

Community Food Coop, 1220 N. Forest St. or 315 Westerly Road, Bellingham;

Everybody's Store, 5465 Potter Road, Deming;

Ferndale Public Market, Centennial Riverwalk in downtown Ferndale, Saturdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m.;

Field of Greens, corner of Kale and Everson roads, Everson; open Wednesdays-Fridays 2-6 p.m., Saturdays-Sundays noon-4 p.m.;

Grace Harbor Farms, 2347 Birch Bay Lynden Road, Custer; open Mondays-Saturdays 9 a.m.-6 p.m.;

Green Barn, 8858 Guide Meridian Road, Lynden; open Mondays-Saturdays 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.;

Half Acre Farm U-pick, 6211 Northwest Road, Ferndale (behind Boxx Berry Farm Store); weekly u-pick open Saturdays;

Hopewell Farm, 3072 Massey Road, Everson; open Thursday-Saturday 11 a.m.-6 p.m.;

Lummi Island Farmers Market, across from the ferry dock, Saturdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.;

Lynden Farmers Market, grounds of Third Christian Reformed Church in downtown Lynden, Saturdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.;

Pleasant Valley Dairy, 6804 Kickerville Road, Ferndale; open Tuesdays through Saturdays 10 a.m.-6 p.m.;

Red Barn Lavender Farm (eggs), 3106 Thornton Road, Ferndale; Saturday at the Bellingham Farmers Market; or call for availability during the week, 360-393-7057;

The Islander, 2106 S. Nugent Road, Lummi Island;

The Market at Birch Bay, 8135 Birch Bay Square St., Blaine; open daily 7 a.m.-10 p.m.;

The Market at Fairhaven, 3125 Old Fairhaven Parkway, Bellingham; open daily 6 a.m.-11 p.m.;

The Market at Lakeway, 1030 Lakeway, Bellingham; open daily 6 a.m.-midnight;

Terra Organica, 1530 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham.

Reach NANCY GING at 360-758-2529 or nancy@whatcomlocavore.com. For complete weekly locavore menus, recipes, and more resources, read her blog at whatcomlocavore.com

Read more: <http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2011/09/20/2191900/authors-food-and-much-more-during.html#ixzz1YW0t9ncM>