

Foothills Gazette

Annual farm tour in September

August 26, 2010 by [Becca Schwarz](#)

COUNTY – On Sept. 11, 11 Whatcom County farms will open their doors to the public for the 3rd Annual Whatcom County Farm Tour, a festive day of fresh flavors and local food explorations, sponsored by Sustainable Connections.

Participants can view the bounty of Whatcom County on this free, family-friendly and self-guided tour. Tour goers can ride in a horse drawn wagon through apple orchards and use their own pedal power to create an apple cider slushy at Bellewood Acres, go on a hayride with the kids at Mama's Garden, nosh on super sweet corn or berry sundaes at Boxx Berry Farm, sample locally made lotions and creams at Grace Harbor Farms, sip on fine wines at Dakota Creek Winery, or get to know a cow, goat, bison, sheep, chicken, goose or lamb at many of the tour stops.

Farms will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 11, offering a variety of tours, tastes and activities. A Farm Tour Guide will be available at the Community Food Co-op, the Bellingham Tourism Office, the Re-Store and other local businesses.

The following farms are participating in the tour: Bellewood Acres, Bellingham Country Gardens, Bellingham Farmers Market, Boxx Berry Farm, Cloud Mountain Farm, Dakota Creek Winery, Edelweiss Dairy, Grace Harbor Farms, Heritage Lane Farm, Mamas Garden, Silver Springs Creamery and Twisted S Ranch.

In addition, Sustainable Connections presents a series of Chef Farm Tours this summer to help connect chefs and buyers from local restaurants, grocers and institutions with local farmers and food producers. On Sept. 9, local chefs and buyers will tour four farms and one eatery in Skagit and Whatcom Counties to see and taste fresh produce, meet the folks who grow the bounty of food that flourishes in our fertile region and hear their story.

The "Up-Close on Organic, Grass-fed and Sustainable Producers" Chef Tour is the second of three tours and will feature premium organic and grass-fed beef, pork and cheese, a green-powered mushroom farm and a family-owned winery. Speakers will focus on understanding the quality and value of these certifications and standards, including the emerging need for local and on-farm meat processing, and a kitchen-view of the considerations when purchasing sustainable ingredients.

Special guest speaker, Fred Berman, WSDA Small Farm Program Coordinator will offer his expertise in organic production and meat processing, as well as his perspective as a restaurant owner. Lucy Norris of Puget Sound Food Network will also bring a Slow Food perspective to sourcing wholesale local ingredients. Stops on the tour include: Skagit River Ranch, Samish Bay Cheese, Pastázza, Vartanyan Estate Winery and Cascadia Mushrooms.