Tomato time
Simple recipes & how to sun dry

Fairs & Festivals
Food, farms & fun in NW counties

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Deadline for advertisements and submissions: Aug. 22
EDITOR’S NOTE

A family grows

"Any glimpse into the life of an animal quickens our own and makes it so much the larger and better in every way." – John Muir

Grow. The word applies to nearly everything in life – our families, our gardens and fields, our animals, our work, our minds, even our stuff. We grow together, we have children and grandchildren, we forge relationships and make connections, we learn and spend years growing in body and spirit. The more you grow, the more you know, right?

Shortly before our planned press time with this issue of the magazine, our beloved dog Molly passed away. She lived a great 14 years and was an amazing companion and canine family member. Before becoming the incredible family dog she was, Molly had been my constant companion. We trekked cross country, swam in countless lakes and rivers, hiked many more trails, slept near each other. She even came to the offices of most publications I had worked for, making herself a nice cozy spot under my desk. When Brent and I started our own company, she became part of the office support staff, and provided plenty of cuddles and walks over the years. No matter the day, she was always there, ready to play and be loved, and did so in return.

When Brent and I had our first child, Harrison, five years ago, Molly quickly became that wonderful family dog. She slept near him as a baby, and later next to his baby sister Ruby. She watched them as they crawled around, walked around, ran around, and grew. They in turn, loved being with her. We grew into parents, our babies grew into small children, and our Molly grew old, but still had plenty of her spunk.

A few nights before her health suddenly declined and she lost the use of her back legs, Molly climbed the stairs and slept in the kids’ room. I went to take a photo the next morning when I discovered them still sleeping that way, but the camera’s battery was dead. I did not know at the time what the coming days would bring. I just thought it was a heck of a tender moment between them – she was clearly getting old (and had been for some time), and hadn’t climbed the stairs and slept that way in a while.

Since Molly has passed, we have talked a lot about our growth as a family, and how much we miss her, being together. She is a piece of the family, and now she is gone.

Our son misses her so much he has taken to hugging one of the hens throughout the day, never wanting to put her down. Thankfully, she doesn’t mind. They sit on the porch together, hanging out in the rocking chair, the hen at his side, looking out into the yard as if he’s pondering about life, just thinking. It was from this porch that Molly would often lay and watch the kids play. Maybe he’s thinking about her.

We have talked a lot with the kids about Molly no longer being with us. They sure miss her, miss taking care of her, miss cuddling with her. The love of animals, and growing with them, understanding them and their needs, is strong. At some point, we’ll get another dog, and other animals will grace our family, but for now, the hens and the recently adopted cats are giving the kids some more smiles and cuddles during this tough time. Harrison’s fifth birthday is later this month. Ask him what he wants for the big day and he says the same things: a BIG tractor, a cow (thank you Farmers Allison and Erik at Legacy Herefords for letting the kids visit), an owl, and a chocolate cake in the shape of a truck. And to hug Molly, he says. He’d really like to do that.

I am thankful for the garden at home, for the animals, for the hens, and slugs. Ruby loves to water the plants, and we use of her back legs, Molly climbed the stairs and slept in the kids’ room. I went to take a photo the next morning when I discovered them still sleeping that way, but the camera’s battery was dead. I did not know at the time what the coming days would bring. I just thought it was a heck of a tender moment between them – she was clearly getting old (and had been for some time), and hadn’t climbed the stairs and slept that way in a while.

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I am thankful for the garden at home, for the animals, for the hens, and slugs. Ruby loves to water the plants, and we enjoy the garden, every day. Harrison loves to ride his bike through the gate and wide rows (carefully!), help assess the growth, and pull the weeds, or just dig in the kids’ part of the garden and show us worms and slugs. Ruby loves to water the plants, and only wants help when carrying the bucket. “Too heavy,” she says. Then, “I do it,” when the watering starts. The rest she can do herself. She is a natural.

Before signing off, we’d like to say thank you and good luck to our Dirty Mama columnist, and friend, Shona Hilton. Shona and her family are off on a new adventure to eastern Washington and we wish them all the best. This issue marks their final column, and we will most definitely miss her humor and wit. Shona, thank you for sharing all those great stories from your family’s farm, and may they continue and grow, just from the east side.

Happy growing, Becca
editor@grownorthwest.com

Grow NW wants to know about you!

We are compiling information about local food sources – farms, organizations, blogs, advocates, markets, restaurants and more. If you do something related to food and farming here in northwest Washington, we want to know about you! We are publishing interactive county maps, resources and other information on our website. Please e-mail your information to editor@grownorthwest.com or send to: Grow Northwest, PO Box 30373 Bellingham, WA 98228. Thank you!
IN THE MAIL

Wheat is what’s happening

Kudos on the great wheat feature in the May/June issue. It is exciting to see the interest among local farmers small and large, and all the research that is going into grains. I grow grains for personal use, but would love to see more affordable grain options from local or state producers in some grocery stores, and the general knowledge and acceptance of local grains. I believe it is doable, affordable, and the growers can make a living.

How fitting to see the kneading workshop coming to Skagit County and the researchers, growers and bakers who will be here. Skagit and neighboring counties are showing the way in local, more self-reliant living and I am happy to support it and practice it myself.

–Laura Bergman, Mount Vernon

Love this local magazine

I just discovered you in Snohomish County and am absolutely delighted to have found you. I love you! You’re like a local version of Mother Earth News, Grit and Country Living and local guidebook in one. I want your next issue, now!

–Sarah Bucholz, Snohomish

Milking goats

The article about milking goats covered a lot of basics. Goats are popular with people because of their milk quality, smaller stature and personality.

I saw the photo of the young child helping to milk the goat, and I’d like to point out that some goat breeds are not overly friendly. Any young child that is going to take part in the milking process should be assisted by an adult, always. A goat is much smaller than a cow, but an unfriendly goat or one that is not handled properly can still hurt a child. We have dealt with this issue.

A good tip for kids is that you don’t want to squeeze and travel your fingers to the end of the teats when milking. Goats will be happy and the kids will be happy.

–Holly VanDyken, Whatcom

Bottled water plant in Anacortes

Defending Water in the Skagit River Basin will present a tour of a one million gallon-per-day bottled water plant based on factual accounts of the largest bottled water plants built and operated in the U.S. today. The tour provides a comparison to Anacortes’ contract with Tethys Enterprises for a five million gallon-per-day operation – to become the largest bottled water plant in the United States.

Tethys’ transport of inbound raw materials and outbound products will require at least 800 rail cars per day from Anacortes through Burlington and Mount Vernon.

Dr. Ralph Bennett, a retired nuclear engineer, will conduct the tour. As researcher and director at the Idaho National Laboratory, Bennett explored issues related to the siting and permitting of large nuclear facilities. He also worked in process and product engineering at several large manufacturers in the Boston area. The tour will take place at the Anacortes Public Library on Thursday, July 21 at 7 p.m. The library is located at 1220 10th St. in Anacortes. For more information, call 360-982-2105 or email writingconnection@gmail.com.

–Sandra Spargo

Defending Water in the Skagit River Basin, Anacortes
Second season of Skagit Wholesale Market starts July 21
SKAGIT – The Skagit Wholesale Market will begin its second season on Thursday, July 21. The market will meet Thursdays through September 8 from 8:30–10 a.m. at the Skagit Valley Food Co-op (Covered Parking Lot) at 202 South 1st Street in Mount Vernon. This is a time for farmers, cooks, restaurant folks and wholesale buyers to connect. According to the Puget Sound Food Network, 2011 Producers include: Hedlin Farms, Skagit River Ranch, Willowood Farms, Sky Harvest Produce, Cascadia Mushrooms, Golden Glen Creamery, Osprey Hill Farm, San Juan Pasta Company, Asian’s How Organics, Well Fed Farms and others. Anyone interested in receiving email updates about the market should contact info@psfn.org. There is no fee to participate in the Skagit Wholesale Market.

Whatcom in Bloom under way
WHATCOM – The 26th annual Whatcom County in Bloom Friendly Competition is now under way, with entries by residents and businesses accepted through July 29. The program encourages greater and more imaginative use of flowers and other plants, and is a joint project between the Whatcom County Parks Department and Bellingham Herald. There are various categories for residential/homes, businesses, and children. For more information, or how to enter your garden space, call Darla Smith at Whatcom County Parks and Recreation at (360) 733-2900 or visit www.co.whatcom.wa.us/parks/bloom/home.jsp.

Late Season Farm Walk set at Twin Brook Creamery Aug. 29
LYNDEN – Twin Brook Creamery will be featured during the Tilth Producers and WSU Small Farms Program 2011 Late Season Farm Walks slated for Monday, Aug. 29. Five generations of the Stap family have farmed the land that is Twin Brook Dairy. Participants can view the Jersey cow dairy from 12:30-4 p.m. and explore the on-farm glass bottling system and low temperature vat pasteurization that preserves their Jersey milk. Milk from Jersey cows is known to be higher in protein and fat content. The dairy is GMO free and Kosher certified. For information about other regional farm walks, visit tilthproducers.org.

Congressman Larsen visits Scratch and Peck
BELLINGHAM – Congressman Rick Larsen visited the Scratch and Peck facility on Tuesday, July 5. He toured the operation with owners Diana Ambauen-Meade and Dennis Meade, and their son Bryon, and discussed the company’s growth and how it relates to the local economy, local agriculture and food. Larson said he is also interested in helping the company work with the FDA to get camelina oil approved for use in their feeds. The company’s products include feed made from Washington-grown grains for poultry, pigs, goats and sheep. The company recently expanded on site, allowing for a larger mill at 3883 Hammer Drive in Bellingham. PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANA AMBAUEN-MEADE

Registration open for Kneading Conference West in Mount Vernon
MOUNT VERNON – Kneading Conference West, based on the design of the original Kneading Conference held annually in Skowhegan, Maine, will be held Sept. 15-17 in Mount Vernon and features a number of presenters, clinics, tours and information about local grains and strengthening local food systems. The registration fee prior to August 1 is $250. Home bakers, commercial bakers, farmers, millers, food-lovers and others interested in local grains are invited. Attendees can tour Breadfarm, a local artisan bakery in Bow, and the Fairhaven Flour Mill, the state’s only organic flour mill, now located in Arlington. In addition, participants will learn how to incorporate grains in small farms and large gardens, among other information. The keynote presentations on Thursday and Friday evenings will be free and open to the public. Dr. Stephen Jones will address “The Re-Decentralization of Wheat Systems: Kicking the Commodity Habit,” and Jeffrey Hamelman will share “From a Baker’s Point of View: Accomplishments & Challenges.” The full schedule, registration information and other details are available online at kneadingconferencewest.com/.

Benefits scheduled for Common Threads Farm, BUGS
BELLINGHAM – A benefit for Common Threads Farm, a non-profit promoting connections between people, food and community through seed-to-table educational experiences, will be held Saturday, July 23 at Boundary Bay in Bellingham from 5-11 p.m. Common Threads Farm works actively with children, including school gardens and summer camps. The family-friendly Diggin’ the Beats Summer Fundraiser will feature fresh greens, local loaves, soup, a smoothie bike and raffle prizes, as well as live music. The cost is $5 per person or $10 with dinner. For more information, call (360) 927-1590.

Bellingham Urban Garden Syndicate will hold a benefit on Saturday, July 30 at 6 p.m. in the Happy Valley neighborhood of Bellingham. A 4-course meal will be provided with various chefs, brewers and growers participating, as well as live music, a beer and wine garden, and a silent auction raffle and prizes. Tickets are available for $25 per person at the Bellingham Food Co-op or visit bellinghamurbangardens.org. For more information, call (360) 610-3700 or email bellinghamurbangardens@gmail.com.
Limited goods allowed under new cottage foods law

STATE – A new Cottage Food Operations law becomes effective in Washington State this month, allowing a limited number of goods to be made in home kitchens and sold to the public. The new law, effective July 22, states “nonpotentially hazardous baked goods; jams, jellies, preserves, and fruit butters” are permitted to be sold. The final bill differs greatly from the original version, which was based off a law in Michigan that allows residents to create goods in their home kitchens, however state officials from the Washington State Department of Agriculture said a new committee is being formed to decide what will ultimately be on the list of permitted foods. Residents interested in using their home kitchens must acquire a food and beverage service worker’s permit, and have an inspection of their kitchen, a cost of $125, before the initial license is permitted. The law allows a maximum gross sales of $15,000 until Dec. 31, 2012. More information about this new law and the permitted items will be published in the Sept/Oct 2011 issue of Grow Northwest.

Public invited to Snohomish County Food Security meeting July 14

SNOHOMISH – A Snohomish County Food Security Meeting will be held Thursday, July 14 for a public conversation about food in Snohomish County, including availability, cultural relevancy, and affordability. The meeting will take place from 9 a.m. to noon at Legion Hall, 145 Alverson Boulevard in Everett. For more information, contact Christopher Schwarzen at christopher.schwarzen@snoco.org or visit http://tinyurl.com/3ulmklc. Snohomish County Food Summit Partners include City of Everett Office of Neighborhoods, Snohomish County Executive Office, Snohomish Health District, Volunteers of America Western Washington and WSU Snohomish County Extension.

Invasive Plant Council hosts workshop

EVERETT – The Pacific Northwest Invasive Plant Council (PNWIIPC) is hosting a workshop Monday, July 11 in Everett. The agenda includes talks concerning the biology and management of both aquatic and terrestrial invasive plant species. The registration fee is $30 for members and $40 for non-members. The workshop will be held at the Adopt A Stream Foundation’s Northwest Stream Center. For more information on the Everett workshop, contact Lizbeth Seebacher at lizbetha@uw.edu.

WSU Mount Vernon Field Day set

MOUNT VERNON – The WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington Research & Extension Center Field Day and Northwest Agricultural Research Foundation Advisory Meetings will take place Thursday, July 14 at the NWREC, 16650 State Route 536 in Mount Vernon. Learn about current agricultural research at WSU-Mount Vernon NWREC and meet with others in the agricultural community. Field tour and chicken barbecue included. For more information, call (360) 848-6120.

Preparing the bean teepee

DEMING – Finley Bell, of Deming, who just planted his bean teepee. Local Food Works! distributed 470 bean teepee kits to K-2nd graders and other youth in the Mount Baker School District in June. The kits contain seeds, directions for building a pole bean teepee, and a list of garden-related books that kids can read inside their bean teepees. Intended to cultivate young gardeners and readers, this project was funded by the Community Food Co-op’s Farm Fund. PHOTO BY MARGIE BELL
Build an earth oven in your backyard

by Chris Elder

People have been constructing earth ovens for thousands of years. The process for building these ovens, also called hornos, has remained unchanged, except we presently have a few more tools at our disposal.

The most abundant and most commonly used building material on earth is earth. Clay is the key ingredient for that mixture of earth used in constructing cob houses, earth plasters, adobe bricks, and earth ovens. When beginning construction on your earth oven, try to find a patch of clay that is dense and hard when dry and sticky when wet.

To start building your earth oven, you need to choose your site. Where is a convenient spot for cooking? Is it near your kitchen or outdoor eating area? Are there any good areas already offering protection from the elements? Where is the woodpile located? Is the site level?

Once you’ve determined the best site for your oven, it is time to build your base. The economical base could be built from any available rock you have access to. For example, urbanite (chunks of old concrete) is a readily available source of building materials that offers an artistic, environmentally minded, and usually free option. Build your base up to the level that is most comfortable for you, with 36 inches above grade being a recommended level to start. Your foundation needs to protect against moisture from the ground, support the weight of the oven, and keep the structure rigid. A standard oven base width is 48”, and all specifications in this article are based off of this initial measure.

Insulating the sub-floor comes next. There are several options for sub-floor insulation materials. The least expensive option is using empty glass bottles mortared in with a sawdust and clay mixture. Mineral insulators such as pumice and perlite are also good options and available at local landscaping or building supply stores. When building this insulation layer remember to build a containment ring around the insulation material. This containment ring should be as tall as your insulation layer is thick, and can be constructed with a basic mud mixture of one part clay soil, two to four parts sharp sand with straw or sawdust added for extra structural strength.

The next layer before the hearth is known as the heat sink layer. This should be made from a dense material. Sand has traditionally been used, but a mud mixture such as what will be used for the walls of the oven is possibly more dense with fewer air pockets than sand. Construction of this layer would be aided by first building a containment ring around the whole layer. Next add the earth mixture, making sure it is big enough for all hearth bricks to fit on top.

The most abundant and most commonly used building material on earth is earth. Clay is the key ingredient for that mixture of earth used in constructing cob houses, earth plasters, adobe bricks, and earth ovens.

The area between the earth mixture and the containment ring can be filled with more insulation materials. Remember that when finalizing this layer the top should be screwed off to be as level as possible, as the fire bricks will be placed directly on top.

Setting the floor bricks is the next steps. Firebricks are the norm for earth oven construction, but regular house bricks, especially pre-WWII brick, also work well. Also pizza stones or unglazed saltillo tiles can be used. When using bricks remember to place all writing and chips down so as not to create any pockets when ash and grit can hide. Generally a thin layer of sand can be helpful in getting the bricks to come together to create a level surface. Remember not to wiggle a brick once it is set.

Now we get to make the void of the oven. Using a string tied to a pencil draw a circle of the oven in a smooth line all the way to the outside edges of your hearth bricks. Once you begin to build the sand form it is important to allow enough time to cover it with the first layer of oven mud, as a cold joint might invite future cracking. Start piling moist sand out to the mark, keeping the walls near vertical at first. Keep the edge where the sand meets the bricks defined using a mason’s trowel or comparable tool. Typical dome height is 16 inches, as much higher might create cooling eddies and much lower may make it difficult for the fire to burn well. A trick for monitoring height is to insert a 16-inch twig into the center of the form once it is partially built. A finished dome should be solid, well-packed, and even. Add a layer of wet newspaper to help with later removal of the sand.

We have finally made it to the oven mud part of constructing your earth oven. The recipe is one part clay building
soil, two to four parts coarse concrete or sharp sand, and water. Add enough water to make a firm dough. Using a tarp is possibly the easiest and most fun way to make your oven mud mixture. Pour the sand in a circle around the center of the tarp and dump the building soil in the center. Add water as needed. Now jump on the tarp, barefoot or with boots on and mash it up. Pulling on one side of the tarp can help re-center the materials for further mashing. Once the mix is ready, press handfuls around the base of the oven. Remember that this mud is what holds the hearth bricks in place. Press into the mud mix itself as it the form wasn’t there. This layer should be 4 inches thick. Keep going until the whole form is covered.

Cutting out the door comes next. Door height should be 63 percent of the height of the sand form. For a 16-inch form, this would yield a 10-inch tall door. Door width is typically half the oven diameter, or 11.5 inches. The door cut should angle in like cutting the lid off of a jack-o-lantern. Use a spatula or mason’s trowel to carve a rough opening and then dig the rest out with your hands.

Layer two is the insulation layer and is simply a four inch thick shell of sawdust-clay or straw-clay mix on top of the dense oven mud. You can let this layer dry or continue on to the final finish layer. There are many options for the finish layer. A basic plaster recipe consists of one part clay soil, three to four parts sharp sand, just enough water, and one half part fine fiber (chopped straw, manure, cattail. This layer does not have to be very thick, and more serves to seal and beautify your structure.

Now the only lacking is an oven door. An oven door is usually constructed out of wood and should provide a tight fit with your oven body. Cooking with and using your earth oven is another article altogether. Good luck with the mud.

Chris Elder is a farming and food enthusiast and lives in Bellingham with his wife and two daughters. He is one of the founders of the Bellingham Urban Garden Syndicate and continues to grow BUGS into a community asset. He farms in the county and in the city, and is a strong supporter of experimental agriculture.
Harvest against Hunger:
New gleaning group starts

**by Brent Cole**

Currently, one in four people in Skagit County use one of the 13 food banks at some point. Harvest against Hunger, a division of Rotary First Harvest, has set up a new gleaning program in Skagit County with the goal of supplying fresh food to local food banks.

The gleaning program began in November, headed by Emily Nelson, an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer and Cornell University graduate, as part of the Harvest against Hunger organization – a group that has similar gleaning programs across Washington State – each tailored to specific areas. Harvest against Hunger is part of Rotary First Harvest, a non-profit that works to bring large quantities of produce from farms to food banks all across the state. Each of the individual gleaning programs are run by AmeriCorps/Vista volunteers.

“This is the best example of how government resources can go to support programs. This is a partnership with AmeriCorps Vistas. Without these vistas, it would be really hard to make this work,” said David Bobanick, Executive Director of Rotary First Harvest. The Skagit program is one of 10 in the state.

Food banks use a lot of “shelf stable” food, which is highly processed and not as nutritious as fresh fruits and vegetables. “First and foremost, it’s important that people get fed,” stated Nelson, “but, we also want to get them healthy food.”

The program works in three stages. The first step involved an outreach to local farmers, 15 of whom signed up for the program. “We hope to grow larger and larger as time continues,” Nelson said.

Some farmers were hesitant due to past gleaning programs as well as the concern for their liability in the case of an accident, she added. The program addressed the liability issue in several different ways, allaying the fears of those involved. The second phase of the program, which has been in the works since the spring, is to recruit volunteers. So far, 20 have signed up, but the eventual goal is to have 60 volunteers available. The third stage is the actual gleaning, which, due in large part to the weather, hasn’t yet started.

“We can take seconds and thirds,” Nelson said of the produce that is not good enough to sell, but fine to eat. “It’s really great for the growers – they can sell items they normally wouldn’t get to sell. And the food bank gets food. It’s a really great program.”

The tentative goal is 20,000 pounds of fresh food (the amount was based on other programs), but because the program is in its infancy stage, Nelson isn’t sure what to expect.

According to Nelson, they didn’t approach the growers requesting any type of pledge or amount, and they don’t have to promise anything, just to call the organization when a gleaning crew would be allowed. When a grower calls, the gleaners will need to take action quickly, hence the need for so many volunteers.

The program is receiving help from local organizations and businesses, including the Skagit Valley Food Co-Op, which assisted in getting the word out about volunteers, as well as the WSU Skagit Extension and the Skagit Food Share Alliance, which helped get them in touch with farmers and worked on building the necessary relationships and trust.

The plan for the gleaning project is to have a new AmeriCorps/Vista volunteer each year for the first three years, then, hopefully, the program will be somewhat self sustaining. “This is a program that we hope will continue for a very long time,” Nelson said.

For more information, call (360) 416 - 7585 ex 1189 or visit www.skagitcap.org.
Moondance Farm: Family style fresh

by Marnie Jones

When Billy Tate and Nicole Brown moved to Moondance Farm in Wickersham eight years ago, they already understood the value of wholesome food. The husband and wife team had managed to create a vibrant urban garden in downtown Indianapolis before they found their property—to find a way, even in the city, to channel their shared desire to create healthful, fresh from the garden produce. Here, with their daughter Alala at their sides, they’ve gone a good deal further. “The farm seemed to grow itself,” Brown said. “We got excited about the space and what we could grow... we grew more than we could personally use. Then, we grew more than our friends and neighbors could use.”

This sort of overproduction soon found them participating in the Food to Bank On program sponsored by Sustainable Connections (which supports new farmers), making weekly deliveries to the Mt. Baker Foothills Food Bank in Deming, and finding food left over for markets and community kitchens. “We found ourselves,” Brown continued, “becoming farmers.” Four years ago, they took their organic principles a step further by becoming certified. “We farm because we have an opportunity to nourish the land while also feeding our family and our community,” Tate said. “It’s not the kind of job [where] at the end of the week you add up your hours and figure out how much you make. Trust me... that interferes with the motivation for this kind of work, which is driven more by social capital.”

Community is an important part of Moondance Farm, and Tate and Brown appreciate opportunities to share what they grow. “We particularly appreciate work trades when the food is [abundant] and there never seem to be enough hours in the day.”

Exotic and lesser known vegetable varieties have become an important part of the Moondance garden, and black radish, daikon radish, and calabash gourd crops are all enjoyed on the farm—the latter for making kanpyo, a traditional ingredient in Edo style Japanese cuisine. Many of Moondance’s varieties are grown for prepared or fermented recipes, including hot sauce and kimchee.

In addition to sharing their garden produce, Brown and Tate enjoy sharing these traditional recipes through their CSA shares or by teaching friends and community members. Moondance Farm’s produce is available at the Anacortes Farmers Market every Saturday from mid-May to mid-October. They also offer CSA shares, which are still available this year and cost $400 (full) and $250 (half). Doorstep delivery is available in most cases, though alternative arrangements may be made for some county locations.

For more information about CSA shares or work trade opportunities, contact Billy Tate and Nicole Brown at 595-0155 or billyandnicole@moondancefarm.net.
by Ron Caputo

I believe in simple recipes that showcase a main food, accompanied by other great tastes. I believe that a fresh fruit or vegetable should be enjoyed for what it is, and not taken over by other ingredients that hide its true flavor. I believe the tomato, at its freshest and finest, is perhaps the most delicious of locally grown foods, and should be celebrated during the summer months. These beliefs are practiced in my kitchen year-round; the latter being only available fresh in the summer time and early fall.

I am one of those individuals who is incapable of buying tomatoes in the dead of winter at the grocery store, no matter what grocery store it is. The tomatoes in the dead of winter taste like cardboard gelatin; they lack everything that is good about a fresh, beautiful local tomato. Imagine if we had access to fresh tomatoes all year – think free flowing Beefsteak, Brandywines, Italian Heirlooms, Purple Cherokees and more. Would we appreciate them as much? Probably not.

Below are several recipes with minimal ingredients to focus on the fresh flavor of the tomato. There is no denying the delicious combination of tomato, basil and cheese; these combinations are popular and often appear together. Most of these ingredients you can find at your local farmers market.

One more note: Based on its looks, one may think the Tomato Pie will taste far from delicious, but it’s always a huge hit. It’s as if creamy bread met some sort of pizza, all with stunning flavor.

Ron Caputo lives in San Juan County and enjoys feeding dinner guests delicious local food and wine, and watching sunsets.

Grilled Tomatoes

**Ingredients**
- 2 ripe tomatoes
- Olive oil
- Salt
- Black pepper
- 4 basil leaves, thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced (optional)
- Parmesan cheese, sprinkled

**Directions**
Cut the tomatoes in half and squeeze out most of the watery pulp and seeds. Brush with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Set your grill on medium-high and place the tomatoes, cut side down on the grill. Cover and let cook for about 3-4 minutes. Use a metal spatula to lift tomatoes off of the grill. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese, basil and garlic, and drizzle fine amount of olive oil.

Simple Summer Pasta Salad

**Ingredients**
- 1 pound of your favorite pasta (I prefer rotini style)
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil
- 1/2 cup minced parsley
- 1/2 small red onion or 2 tbsp chopped green onions, sliced
- 3 tomatoes, diced
- Salt & pepper, to taste

**Directions**
Combine oil, garlic, salt and pepper in bowl, mixing well. Add basil, parsley, onion and tomatoes. Allow flavors to blend for at least 30 minutes. Cook pasta in boiling water until al dente. Drain well. Toss with mixture. Serve hot or cold.

Tomato-Basil-Mozzarella Sandwich

**Ingredients**
- 1 small ripe tomato
- 2-3 cuts of mozzarella cheese
- Pesto or Olive Oil for spread
- Small French baguette or Italian bread

**Directions**
Slice your tomato, cheese and bread. Place the tomato, cheese, and basil on the bread, and spread pesto or olive oil to your liking. Eat! For those who enjoy warm sandwiches, place in tinfoil or on a rack for 4-5 minutes on 350 and let bread crisp and cheese melt. Serve cubed cheese and cherry tomatoes on side if desired.

Tomato Pie

**Ingredients**
- 9-inch pie crust
- 4 tomatoes, chopped
- 8-9 basil leaves, sliced
- 2 cups of grated Gruyere or Mozzarella cheese
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon (or more) of hot sauce
- salt and black pepper to taste

**Directions**
Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut and chop the tomatoes, squeezing out the seeds and excess juice as much as possible. Chop and slice the basil, cheese and onion. Cook pie shell for 10-15 minutes until lightly golden. Spread onion on bottom of pie crust, topped with tomatoes and basil. In a bowl, mix the grated cheese, mayonnaise, hot sauce, and a little salt and pepper, until gooey. Spread the mixture over the tomatoes. Bake in the oven until browned and bubbly, about 35-40 minutes depending on your oven.

Nana Carmen’s Tomato Sauce

**Ingredients**
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 4-5 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 32 ounces of tomatoes (about 8-10 large tomatoes), cut and crushed (keep juice)
- 1 teaspoon of salt

**Directions**
Chop the tomatoes in a food processor, or if by hand, chop into small pieces. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, and cook about 8-10 minutes until golden brown, being careful not to burn. Stir in the thyme and basil, and cook 5 minutes. Add the salt, tomatoes and juice and bring to a boil. Stir for several minutes, then lower the heat and simmer for 45 minutes until thickened.
Sun-dried tomatoes:
Make them outside, in the oven, or in the car

by Grow Northwest

Sun-dried tomatoes are yummy. Great in a variety of recipes, sun-dried tomatoes can come in different types, colors and flavors. While the process is time intensive (some methods take days), the end result is tasty, more affordable than store-bought products and nutritious. Tomatoes that are sun-dried maintain their nutritional value, including a high amount of lycopene, antioxidants and vitamin C.

The time it takes to sun-dry tomatoes will vary based on which method you use, and how large the pieces are. The thicker the slices, the more time it will take. If you desire a shorter time frame, try the oven method which will take several hours; drying outside or in the car could take days.

When done, the tomatoes will have a leathery texture (think raisins) with deep color, and be somewhat flexible. You will notice the size of the tomatoes will be much smaller than when you started. This is because the sun drying process removes most of the water content; some tomatoes will lose over 90 percent of their initial weight.

So keep in mind a lot of tomatoes will not go a long way – a good-sized batch will likely make a small jar or two of sun-dried tomatoes.

Outside

What you need: 1-2 clean window screens, sunny location, cheesecloth (optional), lots of time.

Instructions: Wash tomatoes, and halve or quarter them, gently squeezing out the seeds. In a bowl, combine tomatoes and sprinkle with salt or desired herbs, such as basil or rosemary. Place the quartered tomatoes (you can also halve the quarters for smaller pieces) on cake racks or screens so they are not touching. Non-stick cookie sheets will work too, but be sure to flip the tomatoes every two hours to ensure both sides are adequately dried. The process will take anywhere from 4-12 hours, depending on size and type of tomato (cherry tomatoes will be on the shorter side).

In the oven

What you need: Non-stick pan, time to check on them for 4-12 hours.

Instructions: Set your oven to 140 degrees. Wash and quarter tomatoes, gently squeezing out the seeds. Sprinkle the tomatoes with salt or desired herbs, such as basil or rosemary. Place the quartered tomatoes (you can also halve the quarters for smaller pieces) on cake racks or screens so they are not touching. Non-stick cookie sheets will work too, but be sure to flip the tomatoes every two hours to ensure both sides are adequately dried. The process will take anywhere from 4-12 hours, depending on size and type of tomato (cherry tomatoes will be on the shorter side).

The size of the sun-dried tomatoes will be much smaller than when you started with those big, fresh tomatoes (as above). The sun drying process removes most of the tomato's water content, reducing the initial weight by as much as 90 percent.

How to store them

Sun-dried tomatoes can be stored in air-tight glass jars or plastic bags (try vacuum sealed, but if not an option get out as much air as possible). They will stay fresh for approximately one year in a cool, dark place (like your kitchen cabinets or canning pantry). Sun-dried tomatoes may also be preserved in olive oil with an infusion of preferred herbs such as basil, rosemary or garlic. When ready to use, soak the tomatoes in water for 1 to 2 hours at room temperature, place in boiling water for roughly 20-30 minutes. When fully rehydrated, add them to your recipe.

Make a tomato powder

If you find that your sun-dried tomatoes are too sun-dried (brittle and/or burned), try making them into tomato flakes or powder. Dry the tomatoes until brittle and crush with a rolling pin to create flakes, or use a food processor to create a fine powder.
Sunchokes: An edible native

by Marnie Jones

Sunchokes, or Jerusalem artichokes, might be viewed by some as the perfect plant. They grow prolifically, they flower beautifully, they attract and feed pollinators, and their edible tubers are flavorful, versatile, and nutritious. Their biggest fault, if the author had to pick one, is that they grow too well. Gardeners, be warned—don’t set these vigorous perennials free next to your herb garden or vegetable plot. They will take over.

Despite being commonly known as the Jerusalem artichoke, elianthus tuberosus is a North American native. While it originated in the eastern half of the continent, as far north as Canada and as far south as Florida and Texas, it is now cultivated in many parts of the world including the Pacific Northwest. This perennial seems particularly suited to our temperate region, and thrives very little maintenance. The quality of the tubers can be improved by digging and replanting yearly, but a neglected patch will grow and thrive unaided. It has very little to do with artichokes and nothing at all to do with the middle east, but its flavor when cooked is similar to a creamy artichoke heart and it’s historic nickname girasole (Italian for sunflower) probably contributed to the misattribution. Like its relative the sunflower, this plant flowers with large, yellow blooms on tall stalks.

The edible tuber of the sunchoke is what really makes them stand out in the garden. There are as many recipes for sunchokes as there are nicknames for the plant, it seems—try them sliced in salads, steamed and mashed with potatoes and parsnips, or pickled with garlic for a crisp snack. What was once a staple food for the natives of eastern North America is now a novelty food for modern gourmets. Its prolific growth makes it ideal for the homestead.

Sunchokes have many culinary and commercial uses, being an ingredient in some German spirits and a good source of animal feed, silage, and even ethanol fuel. Unlike many root vegetables, the sunchoke stores carbohydrates as inulin rather than starch, which makes them of interest for certain industrialists but which can also make them hard to digest. For those new to sunchokes, it’s recommended that one start with a small serving to test their digestibility. On the plus side, the food is very rich in potassium, thiamin, phosphorus, and iron, and can be a great addition to a varied diet.

My advice? Plant your sunchokes where they can’t run wild, in a barrel or planter if you’re wise. You can look forward to a feast come harvest time.


Pickled Sunchokes

Ingredients
4 cups white vinegar or 3 cups white and 1 cup rice vinegar
3 cups water
1 tsp curry powder (optional)
½ cup pickling salt
2 or 3 peeled, whole cloves of garlic
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon dill
2 whole red peppers peeled, chopped sunchokes

Directions
Heat vinegar, water, curry powder and pickling salt to near boiling. Place garlic, black pepper, dill, peppers into each hot, sterilized quart jar and fill to ½ inch headspace with peeled, chopped sunchokes (cut to 1 inch cubes or smaller to retain crispness) and hot brine. Seal and process in a boiling water bath for 15 minutes. Age jars three weeks before eating. If jars seal, they can be stored in the pantry for up to a year. If they do not, they can be stored in the refrigerator for a month or more.

Parsnip and Sunchoke Soup

Ingredients
1 pound parsnip
1 pound sunchoke
1 yellow onion
2 tablespoons butter
1 clove garlic
2 stalks celery
1 quart vegetable or chicken stock
1 sprig thyme
2 tablespoons salt
1 cup whole milk or nut milk

Directions

Mashed Sunchokes

Ingredients
1 pound sunchoke, or 1/2 pound sunchoke and 1/2 pound potatoes
2 tablespoons butter
salt to taste

Directions
Peel and chop sunchoke tubers or sunchokes and potatoes. Steam for 15 minutes. Mash by hand or in a food processor with two tablespoons butter or non-hydrogenated margarine and salt to taste.
Bee swarms, fresh eggs

Q&A

I am new to beekeeping. Why do bees swarm? What should I do? –Amy Morgan, Bellingham

Almost every beekeeper is asked why bees swarm and usually it becomes an exciting topic of discussion when folks spot a swarm clinging to the side of a building or flying in mass through the air. This past summer several swarms of honeybees were sighted in downtown Mount Vernon and the main street was abuzz as pedestrians and shopkeepers were surprised and curious as to what was going on in the middle of their shopping district.

Swarming is a natural occurrence. Honeybees, due to a variety of stresses, choose to leave their hive and create a new one. When the queen and her workers decide to do this it is a sight to behold. My wife and I were sitting on our back deck this past June when the nonchalantly announced that my bees were starting to swarm. No, it couldn’t be I said with just a touch of self-assurance and arrogance (Hey, I’m the beekeeper here!); I knew I had taken the necessary precautions to prevent such an occurrence. But, sure enough, one of my hives was forming a swirling mass that looked like a living tornado. The buzzing sound grew and grew as the bees worked themselves into frenzy moving into a rotating column ever higher and higher into the air. We sat and watched in awe as over 40,000 bees moved in unison. I say we watched in awe, but there was also a feeling of helplessness on my part as I knew I was about to lose my bees and there was (now) nothing I could do about it.

Hive conditions that precede swarming can be a lack of space, poor air circulation and/or overpopulation. When the time comes to move, the queen will exit from the hive and with her goes about half or more of the colony. They fly in a circular motion above the hive attracting more and more bees until it’s a seething mass making a sound like, well, tens of thousands of excited bees! My exiting colony was a column 20 feet high from top to bottom. After about 20-30 minutes the bees landed in a tall evergreen close by and formed a swarm-ball the size of a large watermelon. In the center was the queen, safe and protected by the living walls of her workers. While in this swarm ball, “scout” bees are sent out to find a new home. Upon returning the scouts communicate the location by using a form of a dance. The bees once more take flight making a beeline for their new home and these semi-domesticated bees are on the path to become feral.

The bees that do not leave with the queen, but rather stay in the original hive will wait for a new queen to be developed and hatched while rebuilding their hive using the honey and comb left. It is this colony, the original one now fending for themselves, which have the odds stacked against them for survival. This is due to the fact that workers have left and there isn’t enough time to make the honey needed to survive the upcoming winter months. In addition, a new queen has to be developed (16 days), mated, and at least 21 days before her eggs become working bees. Well over a month is needed for the cycles to be completed and that usually is not enough time for the bees to get back up to full strength. The beekeeper is faced with either trying to purchase and introduce a new queen or allowing the colony to naturally create a queen.

So the question is how do you prevent a hive from swarming? It takes some preplanning and close observation. Keeping additional hive boxes, ready to add to the brood chamber when the bees are ready for it, is one way of allowing for hive growth. Increasing air circulation and adding access holes drilled into the top of the hive boxes will allow additional air to circulate.

There are many reasons bees die. Pesticides, fertilizers, viruses and diseases are the most often cited. But staying ahead of the bee’s needs may avert the loss of a bee colony from the effects of swarming. The good news is that it is possible to catch a swarm. Backyard beekeepers are often very open to being called and alerted to a swarm found in your yard or even those bees that might be shopping for a new home on Main Street. If you locate a swarm of honeybees don’t hesitate to contact a local beekeeper, as they are often keen to capturing it and turning it into one of their own.

Bruce Vilders is a WSU certified beekeeper and the owner of BV’s Bees, a garden and backyard fruit tree pollination service. He can be contacted at Vilders@frontier.com

A neighbor keeps giving me her extra eggs. How can I tell if they are still fresh? –Mike, Everett

If for whatever reason you are unsure if the eggs are still fresh or not, there are two easy things you can do.

First, fill a bowl with water and place the egg in the bowl. If it goes to the bottom and lays on its side, or even on a slight angle, it is still fresh. If it floats, it’s bad, get rid of it.

Second, when you crack it open, the yolk should be circular and rising, not flat and all over the place. If it’s flat, it’s bad, get rid of it.

Most of my hens free range, and sometimes they don’t lay in their coops. So when I come across a bunch of eggs elsewhere, I use these methods to test them.

Tom Cooper has a homestead with his family in northwest Washington. Eggs are collected every day.

Have a question? Send it to info@grownorthwest.com.
LOCAL LIFE

An old bar near Nugents Corner. PHOTO BY VICTORIYA KNAPP-SUSHCH

Camas blooming. PHOTO BY KATE JOHNSON KIEFER

Containers of flowers and peppers blooming on the porch. PHOTO BY BECCA SCHWARZ COLE

Rhubarb ready for pie baking. PHOTO BY KATE JOHNSON KIEFER

Freshly picked beans. PHOTO BY CYNTHIA ST. CLAIR

Doe Bay off of Orcas Island. PHOTO BY BECCA SCHWARZ COLE

Mother-son duo Ellen and Les Gehling work on their hives in Maple Falls. They combined two weak hives and used a copy of Grow Northwest, giving it a "second life." PHOTO BY LES GEHLING
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Your photo may be included here in our next issue. Seasonal content only please: food, farms, cooking, gardening, DIY, crafts, adventures, events, landscapes and more. Be sure to include name of photographer and brief description of material.

Baskets at Snow Goose Produce in Skagit County. PHOTO BY KATE JOHNSON KIEFER

B.G., a Saanen doe, greets her newborn triplet kids Burzum, Bowdoin, and Briony Bluebell. PHOTO BY MARNIE JONES

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July/August 2011  grow NORTHWEST 17
It’s officially summer, but judging by the thermometer and how the season’s production is behind by a few weeks, it’s evident summer is struggling. So too may be your garden. But it’s not too late to give your produce a boost this summer, especially for plants that like acidic elements and seek the heat.

Here are some simple ideas for increasing your garden’s production with the help of some items readily available in your Northwest household. (You can also add these items to your compost pile at any time.) Between sunshine, warmer temperatures, and these easy tricks, a produce boost is on the way.

### Urine

**Urine? Human urine?** Yes, human urine. **Are you sure?** Yes.

To be perfectly frank, human urine going down the toilet is a complete waste. Full of nitrogen, potassium, and phosphate, urine contains key fertilizer ingredients that plants absolutely love and thrive on. Plus, urine is totally free, and you save on all that water being wasted to wash away your small amounts of urine! Some toilets use five to seven gallons of water per flush, just to wash away your ounces of urine each time you go.

If you’re shy about collecting urine, try to recognize the benefits and realize that before indoor plumbing came to be the norm 50 years ago, many people had been doing this for years. (Today, people in other countries, and those of us with homesteading knowledge, continue to do this.) It is so beneficial that once you try it and see the physical growth results, you will likely think twice about flushing the toilet again.

I find the easiest method of using urine is to water it down. Try mixing one part urine with seven parts water, and apply to the base of the plant. (I have heard people who use half and half, others who recommend one part urine to 20 parts water.)

I know people who pee in collection containers off the back porch or inside their bathrooms, while others have actual containment units in an outhouse next to the garden for easy access. For my own personal use, I collect my urine contributions via a gallon jug, and mix it with water in a watering can for my evening watering in the garden. I usually apply urine to each plant on a weekly or biweekly basis. (As soil temperatures rise, be sure not to overdo it. You do not want to end up with nitrogen-rich, monstrous plants that do not produce well.)

For anyone who needs a more “discreet” style of collection means before they will attempt using this valuable resource, know there are plenty of companies selling units that resemble a mix of a chamber pot/watering container. Go ahead and google it. And don’t worry about the smell. If you collect and use urine correctly, smell will not be an issue.

Urine is sterile and therefore bacteria free, so it is healthy to use on plants. Liquid fertilizer is also far more fast-acting that any kind of solid fertilizer.

However, note that if you are suffering from an infection of some sort, such as a urinary tract infection, then skip the collection process until your body is healed.

One of the best times to use this liquid fertilizer is when your plants are loading up and ready to bare fruit (and veg), such as when peppers and tomatoes are full of green blossoms, pumpkins and zucchini are starting to show fruit, corn is in full silk, etc. During the late season, use it for plant rejuvenation. Or, use it continuously throughout the growing season.

### Coffee grounds & tea bags

You are a Northwest resident, so chances are you drink tea or coffee, and therefore have coffee grounds and used tea bags readily available, probably every day. Like urine, grounds contain a high amount of nitrogen. You can always put these (and the filters) directly into your compost pile, but an easy boost for your plants is to collect the grounds, and place a thin layer around the base of the plant each week.
and allow to soak in during daily watering. Plants that like acidity, such as tomatoes, blueberries and roses, will do well. Worms also feed on grounds, so they too will assist and fertilize your garden’s soil.

**Egg shells**
 Crushed egg shells add valuable nutrients to soil, including calcium, which is essential for cell growth, especially in plants like tomatoes. Calcium is particularly helpful with fast-growing plants which quickly use the soil’s present calcium, and also helps to prevent blossom end rot.

Collect your egg shells and crush them up as fine as you can. Egg shells not crushed or left in large pieces will break down very slowly. Allow your egg shells to dry out; you can assist this process by placing the shells on a pan or in a bowl and leaving in the sunshine, or bake the shells in the oven for a few minutes for a faster approach.

Egg shells can be added directly to the soil, or circled around the base of the plant on the surface of the soil. They can also be used at the bottom of plant pots in place of stones or newspaper.

Known as a deterrent against slugs and some worms, shells placed on the soil surface can also help with tomatoes, peppers, broccoli and other plants.

**Sea scraps**
Another available resource in the Northwest is the sea, particularly local fish scraps, oyster shells and kelp. Before you throw them out, know these items contain good amounts of nitrogen and calcium and have great benefits when used carefully.

Did you have fish for dinner and have scraps left over? Collect the scraps, bones and all, and puree in a blender or food processor. Take two cups of the puree and combine with water and one cup of milk (or not) to create a liquid fertilizer.

On a compost-related note, I recommend burying the matter for several weeks and allowing it to break down, then digging it up for use. Do not place directly on top of your compost heap, as it may attract unwanted rodents.

Kelp contains nitrogen and potassium, and increases he soil’s organic matter. I have known gardeners who bury it directly into their soil and swear by it.

Crushed oyster shells are another natural deterrent against slugs, and also increase a soil’s Ph. To use them best, simply dry the shells and crush them with a hammer to create small pieces. They will be sharp, so protect your eyes during the crush process.

These are just a few ideas for boosting your garden’s growth using items from your household during the summer months. A visit to a neighbor who has a never-ending amount of gardening wisdom is always helpful too (bring some of your garden’s produce or preserves as a thank you), or speak with the experts at your local gardening center. The Northwest is full of local resources.

Tom Cooper lives with his family on a small homestead in northwest Washington. He enjoys simpler living and growing and raising food on every available square foot.

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For those of us wanting to make a deeper commitment to self-reliance and practical living, the prospect of determining where and how to integrate changes, and where and how to learn new skills, can be challenging. Skills that were necessary generations ago, such as canning and soap making, can often seem out of reach in our modern lives, but the folks behind the Whatcom Folk School aim to make it accessible, affordable and local. The Folk School, which just launched its first quarter, offers community access to skills and knowledge that promote greater sustainability and resilience.

The course catalog covers a vast spectrum of information with practical subjects such as woodworking, vegetable gardening and, yes, canning and soap making, all offered alongside courses that are decidedly more whimsical — tap dancing and Appalachian Mountain Dulcimer, for example. Courses in personal development abound, as do those in spiritual and health-focused topics.

Of the courses offered so far, Cindi Landreth, a Whatcom Folk School founding member, noted the most popular courses have been those focused on urban gardening and farming, ethnobotany, permaculture, and all-grain brewing.

Landreth added she is particularly excited about the Living Democracy classes and workshops. “WFS is offering a sort of introduction to what Living Democracy is, and there is an opportunity to take a workshop called ‘The Living Democracy School,’” Landreth says. “Becoming empowered as a citizen is critical to creating communities that are protected and governed by the people living in them.”

The idea of a folk school is not new to our area, nor is it to the world outside of Whatcom County. Folk Schools were first championed by N.F.S. Gruntvig, a Danish writer, philosopher and pastor. During the Industrial Revolution, a time when farmers were leaving small villages for factories and cities, “a few people saw this change as a serious problem for humanity,” Landreth explained. “Young people [were] not being taught how to actively participate in their own governance as citizens, not understanding the concept of living in democracies, not understanding social and community values and skills and the very basics of what it means to care for oneself and one’s family.” Folk schools arose in this era to provide popular education, and to promote personal development and enlightenment.

Northwest Freedom University, which operated in Whatcom County between 1968 and 2003, helped to set the groundwork for Whatcom Folk School, but the Transition Town movement has been the inspiration. “One of the goals embedded within the Transition Town movement...
is to re-skill people in the community with practical skills for living off the land, many of which are being lost with the passing of our elder generation,” Landreth said.

Re-skilling and honoring elders are two of the five major principals the school has been founded on; inclusivity is another (as well as awareness and networking), as Landreth said, “Everyone in the community holds a part of the story and a part of the solution.”

With inclusivity in mind, future courses are open for instruction by anyone with a skill to share. The Folk School asks that each subject submitted as a possible course develop students’ ability to live more sustainably. Potential instructors can peruse an extensive list of subjects on the Whatcom Folk School website, or apply with an alternate subject.

“We encourage everyone to consider doing their part in sharing skills, telling stories [and to] consider all the ways we are alike rather than focusing on ways we may be a bit different,” Landreth said.

Equally inclusive are the courses themselves. Applications are open to all, costs are remarkably affordable, and many courses are offered at staggered times to accommodate a variety of schedules.

The School’s founding members are Cindi Landreth, Jodi Tranter, Terry Garrett, Ann Gunderson, David Marshak, Patrick Egan, and Aron Standly.

For more information about teaching or enrolling in Whatcom Folk School courses, visit whatcomfolkschool.org. For more information on the Whatcom County Transition Town movement, visit transitionwhatcom.ning.org.
Fairs & Festivals

A summer celebration of local agriculture, food and community in our northwest corner

by Grow Northwest

A number of local fairs and festivals will be held in July and August, with a mixed focus on local food, agriculture, community, arts and heritage. Following are some of the events taking place in our northwest corner.

Northwest Raspberry Festival
This annual Lynden-based festival takes place Friday, July 15 and Saturday, July 16 in Lynden. Known for its Curt Maberry Memorial Classic 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament, you’ll find massive amounts of raspberries, raspberry dessert contest, music and more. Additional information is available at lynden.org.

Red Rooster Route Days Road Rally
Head down to Arlington the weekend of July 16-17 for the Red Rooster Route Days Road Rally held at various farms from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The weekend celebration of local food and agriculture is now in its second year and features Garden Treasures Nursery & Organic Farm, Foster’s Produce & Corn Maze, Biringer Farm and Bryant Blueberry Farm & Nursery. Garden Treasures Nursery & Organic Farm will be lit up with perennial and summer flowers. Foster’s Produce & Corn Maze will have a spread of local berries and other produce, and animal farm and hay maze for the kids. Biringer Farm at Arlington brings out its jolly trolley ride to the raspberry fields for families to enjoy U-pick or raspberry shortcake with whipped cream. At Bryant Blueberry Farm & Nursery kids will love picking the plump, juicy berries, romping on the playground and feeding the farm’s goats and ducks. Pick up a balloon character from their balloon artist and jump on for a wagon ride. Bring a picnic lunch to have at their picnic area.

For more information, visitredroosterroute.com.

Loganberry Festival
Approximately 40 vendors with farm related local arts and crafts, food, kids activities, and more will be at the Loganberry Festival at Whidbey Island’s Greenbank Farm on Saturday and Sunday, July 23-24. The event also features pie eating contests, live entertainment, and demonstrations and activities that relate to farming. The Farm boasts three art galleries, a cafe, a gourmet cheese shop and a wine shop. Greenbank Farm is certified organic and serves as a training center for organic farming. Festival hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information, contact Virginia Bloom at (360) 678-7710.

Bite of Skagit
Want a taste of the Skagit Valley? The annual Bite of Skagit takes place Saturday, July 30, from noon to 4 p.m. in downtown Mount Vernon. This year’s event will be held in conjunction with the Mount Vernon Downtown Merchant Association’s Annual Sidewalk Sale and the Farmers Market. Featuring food from local restaurants, a beer and wine garden, live music, and a presentation by Graham Kerr, the event benefits Skagit Food Share Alliance, which pays local farmers to grow produce for the Food Distribution Center. The Center is managed by the Skagit County Community Action Agency, for the benefit of the 13 food banks and 5 hot meal programs in Skagit County.

Admission is free to the Bite of Skagit, however tickets for food and beverage sales are $1 per ticket, and the average “bite” is between 2-5 tickets each. Participants can vote for their favorite “bite” in the Best Bite of 2011 Contest and be eligible to win a prize.

Donations of non-perishable food at the event are appreciated. For more information, check out biteofskagit.org.
Antique Tractor Show & Threshing Bee 2011

The Puget Sound Antique Tractor & Machinery Association (PSAT&MA), located in Lynden, has held an annual threshing bee and tractor show at Berthusen Park for 40 years. The 2011 show, slated for August 3-6, will feature Ford tractors and other farm equipment. Events include threshing, sawmill demonstrations, gas engines, tractor pulling, antique vehicles, bookstore, corn grinding, steam engines, and blacksmithing. Kids’ events include pedal tractor pull, candy scramble, watermelon eating, and youth driver safety class. Admission is $3 to $7 per person. For more information, call (360) 380-2317.

Island Eco-Fest and Solar Science Fair

Orcas Island’s The Funhouse is launching a new event this summer featuring information about local farming and living to energy awareness and renewable technologies. A place for children and families, The Funhouse will hold this event on Saturday, August 6, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Indoor table space for kids and amateur adults is free with pre-registration. Professionals and businesses can reserve tables and outdoor booth space for a $50 entry fee. There will be prizes for science fair presentations, displays, and hands-on demonstrations, with separate categories for kids, adults and commercial entries. The subjects of building, recycling, “Homebrew” solar science experiments, DIY technology, water use and locally produced and value-added products will also be featured.

For more information, or to reserve a table, contact the Funhouse at (360) 376-7177 or ericyoungren@gmail.com.

Skagit County Fair

The Skagit County Fair will be held Wednesday, August 10 through Saturday, August 13, featuring entertainment, carnival, farm animals, local food, displays, kids events and more. Fair organizers are seeking local growers to participate in a Local Growers Forum, as well as organizations or individuals who might be interested in presenting an educational component at the Fair (seminar or workshop) that would compliment the local foods area.

Wednesday admission is only $3 until 3 p.m. Entrance cost is $7 for adults and $6 for seniors and students. A parade through downtown Mount Vernon is also slated. The Skagit County Fairgrounds are located at 1410 Virginia Street, Mount Vernon. For more information, call (360) 336-9414 or visit skagitcountyfair.com/fair.

Legacy Herefords’ summer picnic

Legacy Herefords is holding a summer picnic at their Bellingham farm on Saturday, Aug. 13 from 3-8 p.m. Meet some Legacy cows and calves, and enjoy the Northwest bounty with local farmers. Any local fruit/ veggie growers, bakers, or cheese makers interested in participating should contact Allison at legacyherefords@gmail.com or (360) 510-7180. To attend, contact for more info and directions.

San Juan County Fair

The San Juan County Fair takes place Wednesday, August 17 through Saturday, August 20. Gates open 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Fun, food and community at the San Juan County Fairgrounds. Admission varies. For more information, visit www.sanjuancoountyfair.org/.

Island County Fair

Fun, food, agriculture and more are the focus of the Island County Fair on Thursday, August 18 through Sunday, August 21. Ticket prices vary. Visit islandcountyfair.com.

Northwest Herbal Faire

Returning after a five-year hiatus, the Northwest Herbal Faire will take place Friday, August 19 through Sunday, August 21 at Fire Mountain Scout Camp, near Mount Vernon. Over 100 workshops are scheduled, including 70 herbalists, healers, wildcrafters and health practitioners, as well as an Herbal Marketplace with over 50 vendors, entertainment, musicians, camping and more. Admission varies, children 12 and under free. For more information, visit nwheralfair.com/.

Bite of Bellingham

The 6th annual Bite of Bellingham will be held on Saturday, August 20 from noon to 4 p.m. on the 1300 block of Cornwall Avenue (corner of Cornwall and Holly) in Bellingham. The event features a number of Bellingham-area restaurants in an all ages format with free admission. Musical entertainment will be provided by Kit Nelson, Emily Leopold and other local talent. Bite tickets can be purchased on site for $1 a piece. Bites range in prices from 1-3 tickets and entrees are 4-7. Attendees can vote for their favorite bites. An onsite Beer Garden will be available for the 21+ crowd, serving Boundary Bay brews.

Klesick Family Farm Festival

The Klesick Family Farm Festival takes place Saturday, August 20, starting at 10 a.m. at 24101 Miller Road in Stanwood. Face painting, wagon rides, produce, old-fashioned games, farm tours and more will be available.

Slow Food Roots Music Festival

In its first year, the Slow Food Roots Festival will take place at the Stanwood Camano Community Fairgrounds the weekend of August 27-28. Featuring local, organic and wholesome food vendors, as well as a farmer’s market, chef demonstrations and Slow Food related authors, the festival will also showcase a variety of musical performers and art. Admission varies. Tickets on sale at Snow goose Bookstore, Blackbird Bakery Cafe Bistro & Wine Bar, and Brown Paper Tickets. For more information, visit slowrootsfestival.com.
EATING OUT

Taylor Shellfish: Barbecue at the beach

by Jessamyn Tuttle

One of the real perks of living near Puget Sound is being able to eat really fresh shellfish. I grew up eating crab and clams (not to mention the inevitable backyard summer salmon grills), but for some reason have only recently discovered the incredible world of oysters. Once converted, I was wildly excited to discover a place where I can buy them fresh and local year round – the Taylor Shellfish farm store off of Chuckanut Drive, on Samish Bay.

Taylor Shellfish, a family-run operation, has many growing and harvesting locations all over the Sound, a shop down in Shelton as well as the one in Skagit County, and is opening another this month in Seattle’s Melrose Market. Each shop features seafood from all of Taylor’s farms, not just that location, so even if they aren’t harvesting the plump Samish Bay oysters when you visit, they are likely to have oysters from Willapa Bay, Skookum Inlet, Eld Inlet, Oakland Bay or Totten Inlet, as well as fresh clams, mussels, geoducks, and live Dungeness crab, all harvested from the Puget Sound/Salish Sea region.

To get to the Samish Bay store, get onto Chuckanut Drive, either heading south from Bellingham or north from Bow. Right at the hairpin turn at Oyster Creek, turn into the Oyster Creek Inn parking lot (an especially tricky maneuver when coming from the north), and holding your breath, start down the one-lane driveway that plummets down the hillside. There is a turnout partway down, so if you meet another car one of you will have somewhere to go to allow the other to pass. Follow the road down to the bottom of the hill and along the railroad tracks, then (cautiously) go across them – these are active tracks! When you get to the piles of bins, fishing nets, a large crab tank and the shucking shed perched above the tideline, you’re there. Find a place to park, take a deep breath of seaweed and oyster shells (depending on the tide it may be particularly fragrant), and head for the shop.

Inside is a bit dark and damp, as with many fish markets, but full of the clean smell of fresh seafood. An assortment of literature on shellfish farming is available next to a tank of live Dungeness crab, several bins of ice topped with bags of enormous Pacific oysters, smaller buckets full of clams, mussels and specialty oysters like Shigokus and the tiny native Olympias, and a large deli case. Here you can find smoked fish and oysters (from Leo’s Gourmet in Elma and Ekone Oyster Co. in Willapa Bay, respectively), pickled herring, and all of the possible condiments for shellfish eating that you could want.

Most people come here for takeaway, whether it be a crab or two for that night’s dinner, frozen scallops, halibut, prawns or abalone, or several pounds of live clams packed in ice for transport. But if you can’t resist the lure of a dozen fresh oysters, you can buy them along with a few condiments and a new oyster knife, then take them straight out to the beach and eat them raw, flinging the shells back into the bay. Or have an impromptu barbecue at one of the prepared picnic areas on the beach: the store sells garlic butter and cocktail sauce from the Rhododendron Café in Bow, as well as charcoal, breadcrumbs, crackers, lemons, and Tabasco, so all you need to provide are drinks and side dishes if you so desire. The picnic areas are not currently available to reserve, but we can usually find a space free, especially on weekdays. The view across Samish Bay towards Anacortes and the San Juan Islands is fantastic, even on a cloudy day, and there are frequently bald eagles gliding overhead and herons out on the tide flats. We came here for our anniversary last summer, eating oysters in the sun at high tide. It was perfect.

Taylor is open for business seven days a week, barring only a few holidays. Its big moment of glory is the Bivalve Bash, an annual event scheduled around a particularly low tide, to allow for the Oyster Sculpture contest and the Mud Run. Live music, competitive oyster shucking, and vast quantities of shellfish are involved, all in the name of promoting clean water and sustainable shellfish farming. If you want to experience the bounty of Puget Sound, this is a great way to do it; the next Bivalve Bash is on Saturday, July 16.

Taylor Shellfish Farms is located at 2182 Chuckanut Drive in Bow and can be reached at (360) 766-6002. For more information, visit taylorshellfishfarms.com.

Jessamyn Tuttle lives in Mount Vernon, and thinks about food far too much. You can find more of her writing and photography at www.foodonthebrain.net.

Purchase your seafood and condiments inside (above) and then head out to the barbecue area at the beach (top) to cook. PHOTOS BY JESSAMYN TUTTLE
Books & Media

Pacific Feast: A guide to foraging coastal edibles

by Jessica Harbert

If one was to wander into their back yard and expect to find ingredients to whip up a delicious dinner, would it be possible? With recipes incorporating anything from dandelion root to sea kelp to rose petals, Pacific Feast: a Cook’s Guide to West Coast Foraging and Cuisine showcases local ingredients that can be foraged throughout the coastal Northwest and used in delicious and simple meals. Author Jennifer Hahn is a professor at Western Washington University as well as a writer, illustrator and wilderness guide who partnered with ethnobotanist Mac Smith to bring this plethora of knowledge to print.

The cookbook offers a wealth of information about foraging and identifying edible plants and also includes essays highlighting Hahn’s adventures foraging along the West Coast. The book is filled with more than 60 recipes to guide readers through preparing tasty dishes post-forage, many from famous Pacific Northwest chefs including David Tanis and Tom Douglas. The simple-to-follow recipes are also great inspiration for adaptations and spur of the moment ingredient additions that are sure to mix up the satiating flavors.

But the learning doesn’t stop there as Hahn leads local workshops about foraging and cooking. These classes lead on foot or by sea kayak, help educate the participants on what is edible, proper harvesting methods and what flavors can be used to concoct some delicious flavors.

As for current favorites on the foraging front, Hahn said oyster mushrooms are currently a good pick.

“Oyster mushrooms are blooming on the dead alder trees like crazy right now,” Hahn said. “The wet spring and the warming weather has brought the flush on. Oyster mushrooms are easy to identify. They are floppy, whitish to tan to grey and yellow with age. They lack an obvious mushroom stem. But you should never pick and eat them unless you are 110 percent sure!”

Recently, Hahn taught a foraging class at the Washington Northwest Stream Center in Everett. On a rainy afternoon in June, 13 locals got together to trek through the trails on a search for edible foliage. The feast created after the expedition was absolutely mouthwatering. Nettle hazelnut pesto, Nootka Rose petal salad, fresh salmon in sorrel sauce (the salmon was one of few non-foraged ingredients) and roasted dandelion root ice cream to name a few. The satisfied students were able to proudly enjoy their meal which they were involved in the making of from the beginning to the end.

First experiencing the joy of wild-foraged foods, Hahn spent her childhood touring the country on food adventures, reeling trout for breakfast in Yellowstone, picking blue berries in Maine and digging razor clams in Washington.

“Throughout my childhood summers, my wanderlust, windowed father, a welding teacher at a Technical College, packed us four kids into a VW camper and headed for the wildest country he could find,” Hahn said.

Since that time, her passion for the proverbial plant hunt has continued, to say the least.

For more information visit www.pacificfeast.com/

Reviews

Each issue, we’ll bring you some of the books, publications, sites and articles that have our attention.

The Good Life: Helen and Scott Nearing’s Sixty Years of Self-Sufficient Living: Each summer I find myself re-reading The Good Life, which spans the six decades of Helen and Scott Nearing’s Self-Sufficient Living (as the title indicates). Any time I feel like homesteading is too difficult, I open to any page and glean some words of wisdom and inspiration. Homesteading is not for everyone, but there are certainly qualities and bits of information that any reader at any age in any place will enjoy and appreciate.

—Tom Cooper

Plants are the Strangest People: This fellow blogs from Iowa, and his sense of humor and plant observations makes a nice mix. He lists plants he wants and plants he’s tried to grow inside, and has some great photos of them along the way.

—Tom Cooper

Dirt: This is a movie about dirt. It may not sound appealing to some people, but this film is fantastic. Regardless of how you view climate change and politics, this film documents our changed relationship with dirt and connection to it, and how it is a source of fertility. Hopefully there will be more showings of this film. Check out dirtthemovie.org.

—Sascha Greene

Four-Season Harvest: Author Elliot Coleman takes you through four seasons of gardening and growing, and says it can be done no matter where you live. Don’t stop gardening in the fall when the weather begins to turn, as winter time can yield greens and other produce. Basically an instruction manual for cooler climates, and Northwest gardeners/growers can definitely use some of these tips.

—Tom Cooper

Regretsy: The World’s Oddest, Most Ridiculous, and Most Disturbing Crafts: Author April Winchell presents some of the most outrageous handmade crafts and ideas. Some would say this is a handbook of craft projects gone wrong, and view this as making fun of DIY crafters, but the book tackles the truth that sometimes our craft projects don’t work out how we expect them to, and sometimes we end up saying, “What the heck was I/he/she thinking?” Above all else, keep a sense of humor, as it does inspire other crafting ideas and materials. Wo knows if that’s a good or bad thing.

Want to share what you’re reading? E-mail editor@grownorthwest.com.
My internal compass has always been set North by Northwest. In fact I have always assumed we would end up in Alaska. So you can imagine my surprise when the Fates decided to pull a fast one and send us East over the Cascades to live in Okanogan County near Tonasket.

Yup, the Hiltons are on the move this summer. While we're looking forward to learning a whole new way of living/farming in a really quite remote area with a four-season climate, the reality of upping and moving from this most wonderful part of the planet is sinking in, and with it feelings of sadness and tiredness about The Big Move are creeping in too.

Obviously first and foremost we have a real sense of loss at leaving good friends, family and the community we have settled into. But it goes deeper than that – we'll miss sword ferns and hemlock trees, moss and rain – wait, did I just say rain? Scratch the last one.

Another of the big things we will miss are the mountains around here. We have spent so many hours trail running and mountain biking in them it's like leaving more good friends – Goodbye Galbraith, Mount Baker Wilderness, the Chuckanuts and Blanchard (FYI if you are ever tempted to take the trail Max's Shortcut on Blanchard do not be misled – it does not live up to its name, you will be gone for hours, possibly days, it is the Bermuda Triangle of shortcuts), and we will especially miss the hills up behind our house which feel just like an extension to our property.

Ah, and then there is our property. We bought our little place off Craigslist six weeks after arriving here. The cabin was a shack with a hand dug well in the basement into which mice regularly fell – I'm pretty sure we are immune to most disease as a result of drinking the water. It had no doors, windows, safe electricity, heating – you name it, it didn't have it. Over the past few years we have literally put our blood, sweat, tears and cash into restoring and extending the cabin, clearing and fencing the pastures and developing the veggie patch. And in the past year we have really started to work in a rhythm with the seasons and cycle of life that comes along with raising your own meat and vegetables, and we have almost got to the point of just fine tuning things rather than starting big projects.

Walking away from it all is one of the hardest things I have had to do. There is also the sense of anxiety about not providing our own food this year, although we may just be able to squeeze in a batch of meat birds at our new place (20 acres, a barn and even a house for us people), it will be unlikely we will grow any veg there this year and I'm glad we can buy a cut and wrapped pig from friends who treat their animals well.

No doubt good things are just over the mountains too – sunshine and snow, ponderosa pines, sage brush and ten billion ground squirrels (my count from the last time we were there) await us and we will learn new skills and take delight in discovering this part of the world. Life's suppose to be an adventure, isn't it?

This will be my last column for Grow Northwest and I wish Brent, Becca and the kids all the very best - to them personally and for the future of the magazine, which as you know, rocks.

So goodbye local folks. May your gardens grow, your goats not jump their fences and your chickens always lay their eggs where you can find them.

Shona Hilton contends with mud, rain, dogs, small children, pigs and poultry and all the other things which make country life worth living. She can be contacted at upthecabin@gmail.com.
Smith & Vallee Woodworks renovate 1880s barn, create Tombstone Project

by Brent Cole

Smith and Vallee Woodworks have gained a reputation as being among the top woodworkers in the area. Owners Andrew Vallee and Wesley Smith, along with their team of six employees, use sustainably harvested and reclaimed wood to create beautiful furniture and artistic cabinetry. The team recently completed the renovation of a nearly 130-year-old barn in Edison, transforming it into their new woodworking space while using some of the old materials to create unique furniture. In conjunction with the grand opening of their new location on July 9, Smith & Vallee are featuring these pieces in a showing called The Tombstone Project through July.

In business for over 10 years – most of that time based out of a workshop in Deming – Smith and Vallee saw their business growing outside of Whatcom County and felt the need to move. When the 1880s barn (believed to be a livery stable – a public town barn back in the day) came on the market, the team purchased the property with the idea of creating a new, upgraded workshop and art studio space on the inside while maintaining the general structure of the barn; essentially a building inside of the building.

“It was completely a shell,” Andrew Vallee said. “There was no power, nothing.” He added, “Anybody in their right mind would’ve probably just knocked down the building.”

Smith and Vallee saw the building as “part of the town’s character” and wanted to maintain its appearance. Along with a handful of friends and skilled technicians, they spent a year and a half remodeling the barn. “We hired some people with construction skills to help us – but we generally contracted it ourselves.”

They increased the size by approximately one-third, built a second floor (rented out to one of their main artists, Todd Horton) and upgraded to three-phase power. “We upgraded everything. It’s a much more modern facility than our old one. We were able to think about it a lot more. Having the benefit of 10 years of experience we thought ‘Okay, let’s try and set it up right this time,” Vallee said.

During the remodeling process, Smith and Vallee decided to get creative with the old materials coming out of the barn. “We had a ton of material that came out of this remodeling process,” Vallee said. “We thought wouldn’t it be cool to do something like the tree project - it was sort of a play on that idea.” Back in 2002, Smith and Vallee created a series of furniture using a sustainably harvested tree they had cut down, and used every single piece of the tree in the process.

As the windows, flooring and other materials were pulled from the barn, they were stored outside, under cover and able to dry out. Approximately three months ago, with the building now in full swing, they tackled the artistic portion of using the old materials, which wasn’t inherently easy, Vallee said. “Prepping the material is a little more labor intensive – pull the nails out, dry it, mill it, sand it. Sometimes we left the paint on there. On other ones we sanded it down,” he said about the pieces.

The end result is 15 pieces, ranging from a chest and jewelry display cabinet to conference table. Vallee is proud of all the pieces, but there are two that stand out as his favorites. “I really liked the glass jewelry display cabinet we made,” he said with pride,” adding “and the conference table.”

The pieces are on display in their art gallery in the nearby school house, a turn of the century building the team renovated five years ago that became the art gallery space as well as a home for Vallee, his wife and two kids. The gallery space features exhibitions every four to six weeks of revolving artists from around the Northwest.

The Smith & Vallee Gallery is located at 5742 Gilkey Avenue in Edison and is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit smithandvallee.com or call (360) 766-6230.
Submit event information to info@grownorthwest.com. Find more calendar updates posted online at www.grownorthwest.com.

**JULY**

**Free Rain Garden Workshop:** Tuesday, July 12, 6-8 p.m. at Bloedel Donovan Park, Multi Purpose Room, Bellingham. Learn how to build your own rain garden. Free. RSVP to Alex at (206) 292-9875 or ak@stewardshippartners.org.

**Preserving the Harvest:** Tuesday, July 12, 6-8 p.m. at the Sustainable Living Center, Bellingham. Suggested donation $20, registration is not required. Join expert Celt Schira for a course in traditional preservation techniques, including drying, root cellaring, lactofermentation, preserving in vinegar, alcohol, sugar and salt, and smoking. Email hannahc@re-sources.org or call (360) 733-8307.

**Sustainable Outdoor Cooking: An Evening with the Phoenix:** Wednesday, July 13. Join wildernes educator Tim Flores in a class combining delicious food, fire-crafting, and storytelling. $25 members, $29 non-members. 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the downtown Co-op, Bellingham.

**Snohomish County Food Security Meeting:** Thursday, July 14. All welcome for a conversation about food in Snohomish County, including availability, cultural relevancy, and affordability. 9 a.m. to noon at Legion Hall, 145 Alverson Blvd., Everett. For more information, contact Christopher Schwarzen at Christopher.schwarzen@snoco.org or visit http://tinyurl.com/3ulmkic.

**Northwest Raspberry Festival:** Friday, July 15 and Saturday, July 16. Lynden. Curt Maberry of Snodgrass Farm, 33 Hawthorne Lane and downtown on Court Street, Friday Harbor, San Juan Island.

**Crow Valley Pottery’s Annual Potters Fest:** Friday, July 15 and Saturday, July 16. The event includes over 40 potters, Raku firing demonstrations and more. The show’s opening reception will have live music and treats. Free admission. Call (360) 376-4260.

**Summer Arts Fair & Lavender Festival:** Saturday, July 16 and Sunday, July 17. A variety of cultivating, cooking and essential oil distillation demos, craft workshops, tours, music and picnics in the blooming fields and more! Free admission. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call (360) 378-5240. The Summer Arts Fair features local and regional artists, music, Kid’s Creative Center, “Chalk It Up” Sidewalk Art Contest, demonstrations, and food court. Pelindaba Lavender Farm, 33 Hawthorne Lane and downtown on Court Street, Friday Harbor, San Juan Island.

**Skagit Artists Together 2011 Tour:** Saturday, July 16 and Sunday, July 17. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Visit various artists and their spaces/workshops. For more information, visit skagitartiststogether.com.

**Berry Growers Field Day:** Wednesday, July 20.

**3rd Annual Samish Bay Bivalve Bash and Low Tide Mud Run:** Saturday, July 16, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Benefiting Community Clean Water Aware programs. $5 entrance fee (kids 6 and under free), activities for all ages. Oyster shell sculptures and contest, Mud Run, Kid’s Beach, food, beer garden, local bands, dancing, contests and games. Taylor Shellfish Farm, Bow. For more information, visit www.bivalvebash.com.

**Drought Tolerant Plants:** Saturday, July 16 at 2 p.m. at Bakerview Nursery, Bellingham. Discover trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals that beat the heat and require very little water once established. Free. Call (360) 676-0400.

**Farm Tour:** Saturday, July 16. Sno-Isle Food Co-op presents this tour from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Stop to Garden Treasures in Arlington and Pasek Cellars Wine in Mount Vernon. Pre-register by July 18. Email Vanessa at vanessa@snoislefoods.coop.

**To Market! SELLING LOCAL FOOD IN TODAY’S COMPETITIVE MARKETPLACE:** Friday, July 22. Workshop in Mount Vernon. www.brownpapertickets.com/event/184894

**Diggin’ the Beats Summer Fundraiser:** Saturday, July 23 at Boundary Bay in Bellingham from 5-11 p.m. Benefit for Common Threads Farm, a non-profit promoting connections between people, food and community through seed-to-table educational experiences. The family-friendly will feature fresh greens, local loaves, soup, a smoothie bike, raffle prizes, and live music. The cost is $5 per person or $10 with dinner. Call (360) 927-1590.

**Loganberry Festival:** Saturday, July 24. Vendors with farm related theme, hand produced local arts and crafts, food, kids activities, pie eating contests, live entertainment, and demonstrations that relate to farming. Greenbank Farm, Whidbey Island. For more information, contact Virginia Bloom at (360) 678-7710.

**Bellingham Urban Garden Syndicate Benefit:** Saturday, July 30 at 6 p.m. in the Happy Valley neighborhood of Bellingham. A 4-course meal will be provided with various chefs, brewers and growers participating, as well as live music from The Lumpkins, a beer and wine garden, and a silent auction raffle and prizes. Tickets are available for $75 per person at the Bellingham Food Co-op or visit bellinghamurbanbargardens.org. For more information, call (360) 610-3700 or email bellinghamurbanbargardens@gmail.com.

**Co-op Annual Community Celebration:** Sunday, July 31 at Boulevard Park, Bellingham. Noon to 5 p.m. Meet Kevin Gillespie, finalist from Top Chef season 6 and Slow Food enthusiast. The Co-op and party will be included in a video series in production for 2012 International Year of Co-operatives. Entertainment, kids activities, live music, food and more. Burritos, Mallard Ice Cream, Little Shovel’s popsicles, and Juice Peddler’s smoothies will be available for purchase.

**Gardeners’ Exchange/Swap Meet:** Sunday, July 31. Bring healthy plants, bulbs, cuttings, seeds, vegetables, and fruit, along with gently used or barely old garden tools, books, gloves, hats, aprons, garden art, windchimes, birdfeeders/houses, etc. to exchange with your neighbors. Potluck of light snacks. 1 p.m. Hummingbird Farm Nursery and Gardens, 2319 Zylstra Road, Oak Harbor.

**AUGUST**

**Gathering for Gardening:** Tuesday, August 2. Forum is followed by a “hands-on” workshop with a garden project demonstration. 10 a.m. $10 fee. Hummingbird Farm Nursery and Gardens, 2319 Zylstra Road, Oak Harbor.

**Puget Sound Antique Tractor Show & thresh-**
Crafts, children's activities, live entertainment.


Urban farming/Permaculture: August 5, 6 p.m. Sno-Isle Food Co-op, 2804 Grand Avenue, Everett. Call (425) 259-3798.

50th annual Anacortes Arts Festival: Friday, August 5 through Sunday, August 7. Approximately 250 artists, food, music, beer garden, youth area and more. Visit www.anacortesartsfestival.com.


Island Country Fair: August 20. Local food, wine and beer. Noon to 4 p.m. on the 1300 block of Cornwall Avenue (corner of Cornwall and Holly). All ages are welcome, admission is free. Musical entertainment, beer garden and more. For more information, visit www.down-townbellingham.com/bite/.

Klesick Family Farm Festival: Saturday, Aug. 20. Starting at 10 a.m. Klesick Family Farm, 24101 Miller Road, Stanwood. Face painting, wagon rides, produce, old-fashioned games, tour the farm, and more.

6th Annual Bite of Bellingham: Saturday, August 20. Local food, wine and beer. Noon to 4 p.m. on the 1300 block of Cornwall Avenue (corner of Cornwall and Holly). All ages are welcome, admission is free. Musical entertainment, beer garden and more. For more information, visit www.down-townbellingham.com/bite/.

Using Tunnels and Hoop houses for Productive Gardening Workshop: Saturday, Aug. 20. Use of high tunnels and hoop houses can bring you success in crops that often fail out in the open. Discuss hoop house construction, planting, pruning and training, and management issues. 10:30 a.m. to noon. Free. Cloud Mountain Farm, 6906 Goodwin Road, Everson. Call (360) 966-5859.

Preserving the Harvest: Saturday, August 20. Discus canning, drying and freezing of differen-t fruit and vegetable crops. 1:30 to 3 p.m. Free. Cloud Mountain Farm, 6906 Goodwin Road, Everson. Call (360) 966-5859.

Reforesting Your Wetland: Sunday, August 21. Learn right tree, right planting and right mainte-nance, with WSU Whatcom County Master Gar-dener Bob Barker. 2 p.m. Hovander Homestead Park, near vegetable garden, Ferndale. Free.

Northwest Washington Fair: August 15-20, at the Fairgrounds at 1775 Front Street, Lynden. Live music performances, agriculture, displays, food, fun, carnival, demo derby, and more. Tickets available online at nwwafair.com/.

San Juan County Fair: Wednesday, August 17 through Saturday, August 20. Gates open 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Fun, food and community. San Juan County Fairgrounds. Admission varies. For more information, visit www.sanjuancountyfair.org/.

7th annual Lynden PRCA Rodeo: August 25-27. Advance general admission tickets are $12, the day of the event $14. The Rodeo is general grand-stand seating (no reserved seats). Children under 3 do not require a ticket. For more information, visit www.lyndenrodeo.com or call (360) 354-7777.

Gardener's Exchange/Swap Meet: Saturday, August 28. Bring healthy plants, bulbs, cuttings, seeds, vegetables, and fruit, along with gently used or barely old garden tools, books, gloves, hats, aprons, garden art, windchimes, birdfeed-ers/houses, etc. to exchange with your neighbors. Potluck of light snacks. 1 p.m. Hummingbird Farm Nursery and Gardens, 2319 Zylstra Road, Oak Har-bor.

WSU/Tilth Farm Walk at Twin Brooks Creamery: Monday, August 29. Twin Brook Creamery will be featured during the Tilth Producers and WSU Small Farms Program 2011 Late Season Farm Walks. Participants can view the Jersey cow dairy from 12:30-4 p.m. and explore the on-farm glass bottling system and low temperature vat pas-teurization that preserves their Jersey milk. For information about other regional farm walks, visit tilthproducers.org.

FARMERS MARKETS

Anacortes: Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Depot Arts Center, 7th & R Avenue. For more information, contact Market Manager Keri Knapp at (360) 293-7922 or visit www.anacortesfarmersmarket.org.

Arlington: Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Legion Park, 114 N Olympic Ave. For more information, contact Mark Lovejoy at (360) 435-9272 or arlingtonfarmersmarket@gmail.com.

Bellingham/Fairhaven: Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Depot Market Center, Railroad & Chestnut, through December, and Wednesdays from noon to 5 p.m. at the Village Green through September. For more information, visit bellinghamfarmers.org.

Birch Bay Farmers Market: Thursdays at 4-7 p.m. through September. Food, crafts, and more. Next to C-Shop at 4825 Alders Road, Birch Bay.

Blaine Gardener’s Market: 2nd and 4th Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at H Street Plaza. The market runs through October. For more information, call (360) 332-6484.

Bow Little Market: Thursdays starting July 7 through Oct. 6. 1 to 6 p.m. at Berkshire Feed Store, Old Highway 99 at Bow Hill Road. Call (360) 724-3333 or email bowlittlemarket@yahoo.com.

Concrete: Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Concrete Senior Center. Every Saturday through Sept. 10. The market is held at the Concrete Senior Cen-ter, just off Highway 20 at milepost 89. For more information, contact concretesaturadaymarket@gmail.com.

Coupville: Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Al-exander & 8th St., Coupville. Call (360) 678-4288.

Darrington: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through September, Seeman Street, Darrington. Call (360) 436-2167.

Everett: Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. through September, at the Marina, Port Gardner Landing, West Marine View Drive, Everett. Call (425) 258-3356.

Ferndale: Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Riv-erwalk Park along the Nooksack River. Open every Saturday through early October. For more infor-mation, contact Tracey Bisconers at manager@ ferndalepublicmarket.org.

Granite Falls: Market on Getchell, Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. through September, 8416 SR 92, corner of Hwy 92 and Getchell (84th St NE). Con-tact hope@marketongetchell.com.

Lake Stevens: Thursdays from 5 p.m. to dusk at North Cove Park. Call (425) 425-334-1805.

Lopez Island: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. through Sept. 10, Lopez Village. For more information, visit lopezfarmersmarket.com or contact Lopez Island Farmers Market Association, P.O. Box 841, Lopez Island, WA 98261.

Lummi Island: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 2106 South Nugent Road. Located next to the Islanders store and within walking distance of the ferry.

Lynden: Hosted by Five Loaves Farm, Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through October at Third Christian Reformed Church, in the north parking lot at 6th and Edson. For more information, contact Dave Timmer at (360) 961-4061 or dave.timmeraroacha.org.

Oak Harbor: Every Thursday from 4-7 p.m. Fresh produce, handmade goods and food. 32630 State Route 20, Oak Harbor. Call (360) 675-0472.

Ocres Island: Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Eastsound Village Green. Approximately 35 vendors bring their produce, foods, crafts and more. For more information, visit www.orcasislandfarmersmarket.org.

Point Roberts: Each Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. through Sept. 3 at the Point Roberts Community Center, 1487 Gulf Road. For more information, contact Laura at SaturdayMorningMar-ket@gmail.com.

San Juan: Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at San Juan County Courthouse parking lot. Approximately 40 vendors, music and activities for kids. For more information, visit www.sjfarmersmarket.com.


Skagit Wholesale Market: Thursdays from 8:30-10 a.m., starting July 21 through September 8 at the Skagit Valley Food Co-op (covered parking lot), 202 South 1st Street, Mount Vernon. This is a time for farmers, cooks, restaurant folks and wholesale buyers to connect. For more information, email info@psfn.org.

South Whidbey: Saturdays from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. through October, at 2812 Thompson Road, off State Route 525 (look for the scarecrow).
family owned/operated biz at scott@hammerhead-coffee.com or visit us at Greene’s Corner, 5305 NW Drive, North Bellingham. Roasting fair-trade, organic coffee six days a week.

**Gardening/Nursery**

**Bakerview Nursery: Green gardener? Let us help you choose.** We are local gardeners and farmers. Locally owned for 39 years. Open Monday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 945 E. Bakerview Road, Bellingham, WA. (360) 676-0400 / bakerviewnursery.com

**Mountainside Gardens** is a gallery/shop featuring locally created fine art, handcrafted gifts for all ages and occasions, specialty food items and natural personal care products. During the planting season, we have a large selection of locally grown veggie starts, annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees. Foot paths meander through the display gardens for you to enjoy. We are located 1 mile east of Kendall on the Mt. Baker Hwy (milepost 24). Call 599-2890 or visit www.mountainsidegardens.com.

**Farmers Markets**

**Bellingham Farmers Market:** Saturdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., April through Christmas at the Depot Market Square. Farmers, crafters, food vendors, artists and more. Wednesday afternoons at the Fairhaven Green starting in June. bellinghamfarmers.org/

**Fruits & Vegetables**

**Field of Greens:** A cooperative farm market offering fresh organic produce. Open Wednesday through Friday 2-6 and weekend 12-4. Corner of Kale and Everson Road in Everson.

**Half Acre Farm:** U-PICK VEGGIES. Experience the harvest first hand! Come play in the dirt and leave with the freshest “no-spray” veggies & herbs you’ll ever purchase. For more information, visit www.myhalfacrefarm.com or call (360) 389-2306.

**Hopewell Farm:** Order your organic raspberries and blueberries today. We pick to order! We are a Salmon Safe certified organic vegetable and berry farm. We offer all of our produce at our farm stand Thurs-Saturday from 11am - 6pm. Come visit us at the farm! Hopewell Farm 3072 Massey Rd, Everson WA. 360-927-8433. Find us on Facebook!

**Osprey Hill Farm:** A wide assortment of rare and heirloom berries, fruit, herbs, produce and more. See you at the Bellingham Farmer’s Market through December. 595-9134 / ospreyhillfarm@yahoo.com.

**Sunseed Farm:** Whatcom and Skagit County’s only complete line of organic garden starts since 1997. Available at the Skagit Food Co-op, Bellingham Co-ops, Terra Organica, farmers’ markets, Christianson’s Nursery and other garden centers in whatcom and skagit counties. Visit sunseedfarm.com for info on what’s new in 2011 and growing tips.

**Treehouse Produce:** To provide you with the most economical local produce, our stand is self-help. Berries, vegetables and flowers all grown on farm. 18130 Mclean Road, Mount Vernon. 9am-6pm, 7 days a week, through November 1. (360) 661-0821.

**Grocers**

**Community Food Co-op:** With two convenient locations, Downtown and Cordata, the Co-op offers Bellingham full-service natural grocery stores. Certified Organic produce departments, deli café, bakery, wine shop, bulk foods, flower and garden shop, health and wellness, plus meat and seafood markets. Established in 1970, the Co-op provides ongoing support for local farmers and community organizations. Open seven days a week. Downtown: 1220 N. Forest at Holly St., open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Cordata: 315 Westerly Rd. at Cordata Pkwy, open 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. 360-734-8158, www.communityfood coop

**Crossroads Grocery & Video:** Locally owned and operated. We carry your basic staples, bulk foods, frozen foods and produce as well as organic products and produce. Located at the crossroads of Mt. Baker Highway and Silver Lake Road, Maple Falls. Open seven days/week from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (360) 599-9675 / www.crossroadsgrocery.com

**Skagit Valley Co-op:** Your community natural foods market. Open Monday through Saturday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday 9 a.m. to 8 a.m. 202 South First Street, Mount Vernon. (360) 336-9777 / skagitfoodcoop.com

**Ice Cream**

**Mallard Ice Cream:** Our ice cream is created from as many fresh, local, and organic ingredients as possible because that’s what tastes good. Open 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. seven days a week. (360) 734-3884 / 1323 Railroad Avenue, Bellingham / www.mallardicecream.com

**Organizations**

**Bellingham Urban Garden Syndicate:** A support coalition of urban agriculturalists in the greater Bellingham area. Our mission is to promote, sustain, and advocate for urban agriculture in Bellingham through education, garden support, community action, and making local healthy food accessible. Visit bellinghamurbangardens.org/

**Restaurants & Eateries**

**Doe Bay Resort and Retreat on Orcas Island, WA:** (360) 376-2291. On-site gourmet cafe supported by the one acre on-site organic garden plus local farmers. Organic garden is part of WWOOF program and hosts short term volunteers. Great place for spring and fall gardening club and gourmet cooking club retreats, amongst others. Come out to Doe Bay for the food... stay for the peace of mind.

**StrEat Food:** The StrEat Food mobile kitchen offers fresh and seasonal ingredients. Regularly parked in the Ferndale area. Contact (360)927-0011, e-mail strreatfood@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook or their blog with daily updates at http://streatfood.me/category/blog-2/

**The Table:** Featuring fresh pasta made by the Bellingham Pasta Company, using local ingredients. The Table is located at 100 N. Commercial St., Bellingham. Fresh pasta available at the Bellingham Farmers Market, Whatcom County Community Co-op and Haggen locations, Terra Organica and area restaurants. bellinghampasta.com

**Services**

**Go Green Now:** Earth friendly alternatives. Green products and gifts. Christine Wecking, owner. 7036 Birch Bay Drive, Blaine. Contact (360) 933-1388 or visit www.gogreen-now.net

**Oyster Creek Canvas Company:** Full service canvas and industrial sewing shop specializing in marine canvas. We are also a source for marine, outdoor and recreational fabrics and related hardware. Recreational and outdoor fabrics, patterns, foam, webbing, hardware, industrial sewing, repairs. Monday-Friday 10am - 6pm and Saturday 10am-3pm. (360) 734.8199, 946 N. State St. Bellingham. www.oystercreekcanvas.com

**Tea**

**Jen’s House of Chai:** Voted best cup of Chai by my mom! (360) 201-1274 / jenshouseofchai.com

**Sip-T Tea Company:** Passionately delicious! Bellingham crafted artisan tea. Free delivery in Bellingham. Wholesale available. Contact (360) 220-8100 / www.sip-t.com
13 Farms!

Whatcom County Farm Tour

10am-5pm September 10th
Explore Whatcom County through this FREE, family-friendly self-guided Farm Tour, with fun, inspiring and delicious experiences for all!
Details at www.sustainableconnections.org

Slow Food Roots Music Festival

Saturday & Sunday
August 27
August 28
Stanwood Camano Community Fairgrounds

A fresh new locally grown festival...
Exceptional music AND exceptional organic food
Tickets on sale: June 1, 2011
www.slowrootsfestival.com

Subdued Stringband Jamboree!

AUGUST 12 & 13, 2011
Bellingham, WA
www.stringbandjamboree.com
Food cooperatives are owned and democratically governed by the people who use their goods and services. Driven by seven international principles, co-ops are responsive businesses respected for their dedication to authentic relationships from farm to fork.

Farmers Jeff and Danielle
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Real food.
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Shop your local, independent co-op.

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