



PEI ADAPT Council Agri-Newsletter



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Nominate your Local Food Hero

PEI ADAPT Council 2007 'Taste Our Island Award'

This award is a tribute to those who promote and use locally grown foods in creative and innovative ways. Prince Edward Island's restaurateurs and chefs who are on the front lines showcasing Island made foods.

Please provide Nominee's name, organization, contact information, your name and contact information along with a description of the nominee's accomplishments:

- The initiative(s) for which the nominee has been responsible in promoting a local and sustainable food system,
- Ways in which the work is innovative and any unique strategies used (i.e. samples of menus, promotional materials, advertisements, etc.)
- Challenges being faced that have been overcome in promoting local foods.
- The results achieved.

Nominations must be postmarked or e-mailed no later than September 30, 2007.

Send nominations to: PEI ADAPT Council 'Taste Our Island Awards'
c/o The Farm Centre
420 University Avenue, Suite 103
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island C1A7Z5.

For additional information, please contact: Phil Ferraro, Executive Director, PEI ADAPT Council; 902-368-2005 or e-mail: adapt@pei.aibn.com

Local Food Networks Reflect Progress and Potential

By Darcy Maulsby

At the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture's 20th anniversary celebration, discussion swirls around supporting the blossoming connections between local consumers and local farmers.

Farm-to-institution network facilitator Kamyar Enshayan of the University of Northern Iowa, one of the presenters at the Leopold Center's 20th anniversary celebration this summer, is a long-time sustainable food system advocate. He addressed this gathering at the revered Aldo Leopold Shack site in Baraboo, Wisconsin, in 2004.

A quiet revolution has redefined Iowa's food culture, connecting farmers and consumers like never before. Yet the local-food movement is just beginning to flex its collective muscles to tackle the next set of challenges to become a sustainable and consistent part of the food system.

"In the last 10 to 20 years, the focus of local foods has been on consumers, and we need to celebrate these successes," said Kamyar Enshayan, coordinator of the University of Northern Iowa's (UNI) Local Food Project. Enshayan addressed attendees at a regional foods workshop during the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture's 20th anniversary celebration recently in Ames, Iowa. "Now we need to help farmers capitalize on their market power."

The successes are many, agreed fellow panelist Neil Hamilton, director of the Drake University Agricultural Law Center in Des Moines. One of the most visible changes in Iowa agriculture spearheaded by the Leopold Center includes the local-food movement, which began to take hold in Iowa in the 1990s. "When the Leopold Center celebrated its 10th anniversary, one of the most memorable events was the meal of locally grown food," Hamilton said. "This was the first time the Scheman Center at Iowa State University had been asked to serve local food. The farmers who raised the food were introduced, and the whole event was moving and powerful."

For the complete story go to:

<http://www.newfarm.org/features/2007/0807/localiowa/maulsby.shtml>

Food Train: Connecting People to Local Food

Food Train is working to create sustainable local alternatives to the current food system in ways that improve human health, environmental quality and animal welfare, stimulate enterprise and create community.

They do this by running practical projects like Wolverton Farmers Market and The Urb Farm, by creating information and learning exchanges and by engaging with and influencing relevant local, regional and national policy.

Food Train's new report makes a brave call for a return to the original garden city vision, enhancing established areas and creating new productive landscapes such as allotments, community orchards and market gardens. It highlights the opportunities these landscapes create to cut carbon emissions, create jobs and improve quality of life for all. It also suggests ways that local authorities can help communities support farming by improving the way locally produced food is retailed in local shops and markets.

For more information See: <http://www.foodtrain.org.uk/page.php>

ACORN to Form a Maritime Organic Grains Network

July 25, 2007. Sackville, NB It's often only thought of in Prairie landscapes, but grain is grown and milled right here in Atlantic Canada—and that includes certified organic grain.

Nevertheless, over 80% of organic grain for animal feed and human consumption is imported from outside the region, because there isn't enough local supply.

“There's quite a bit of interest from organic farmers who want to grow grain and oilseeds,” said Andy Hammermeister of the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC). “But most production and research information available is Prairie-based, so it's not entirely relevant to growing in the Maritimes.”

“Interest from processors is also very high,” said Beth McMahon, Executive Director of the Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network (ACORN). “Speerville Flour Mill in New Brunswick tries to use local organic grain for its flours and cereals, but it must still buy from outside the Maritimes. There are also some processors that would love to make local organic oils.”

“Atlantic Canada doesn't even have its own organic feed mill, which has been prohibitive for developing organic livestock production and dairy,” said McMahon.

This production shortage may soon be coming to an end.

ACORN will receive up to \$90,000 over the next three years to work with the OACC to establish a Maritime Organic Grains Network. The funding comes from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's ACAAF funding program, which is administered by three Maritime councils.

“This is great news for the entire agricultural community,” said McMahon. “The Network will help identify the missing information that farmers need to increase organic grain and oilseed production. Atlantic Canadians will also benefit because of the increased supply of local organic grain, dairy products and meat.”

The Maritime Organic Grains Network has planned several projects for the next several years, including field trials to provide critical research and production information. There will also be seasonal field tours, educational workshops, networking events, and market analysis conducted.

“We'd like to include conventional and organic farmers, researchers, processors, and anyone else who is interested in grains and oilseeds in this initiative,” asserts McMahon. “We'll be sending out quarterly newsletters with market and production research, as well as regular technical bulletins. This information is all free to receive, so there's no reason not to get involved in the Network.”

If you would like to learn more about the Maritime Organic Grains Network, please contact Beth McMahon at ACORN by phone (1-866-322-2676) or email (admin@acornorganic.org).

Official Launch of Select Nova Scotia

Natalie Webster, NS Department of Agriculture; webstenj@gov.ns.ca

Selecting Nova Scotia first is the theme of an exciting, new marketing campaign aimed at promoting locally grown and produced food.

The government's buy-local campaign, Select Nova Scotia, was announced by Brooke Taylor, Minister of Agriculture, today, July 5. The event featured a logo unveiling, website introduction, details of upcoming promotional activities and the announcement of a Minister's Advisory Committee on Buy Local.

"Nova Scotia produces delicious, high-quality food and this logo will help consumers identify local produce and select it as their purchase," said Mr. Taylor at the historic outdoor courtyard at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the site of Halifax's City Market in 1750. "Through our purchases of local products we invest in our provincial economy and show support our agriculture industry."

The logo represents three elements of agriculture: green for the colour of crops, blue for the province's clean, crisp water; and a yellow sun representing energy, hope and vitality.

To help promote awareness, increase consumer knowledge and encourage consumption of Nova Scotia agri-food products, a Minister's Advisory Committee on Buy Local has been created to review buy-local efforts and co-ordinate initiatives across the province.

"We have been actively pursuing buy-local initiatives for some time and this advisory committee enhances our efforts and heightens the importance we place on getting locally produced food to Nova Scotia consumers," said Mr. Taylor.

The Select Nova Scotia website, www.selectnovascotia.ca, will continue to develop and, over the next several weeks, offer information on events and where to find local products. The logo is available for industry and marketplace participants to download.

The department continues to work on a number of buy-local initiatives including needs assessments, government/industry partnerships, and promotional materials and events.

The government has made changes in the past year to support local-product purchases in provincial health care and justice institutes. All dairy products; 90 per cent of processed dairy, such as butter and yogurt; 60 per cent of fresh produce and up to 80 per cent of fresh produce from storage; and 60 per cent of beef, chicken and pork purchased are produced locally.

Soil Association Mulls Ban on Organics by Air

By Jess Halliday

The UK's Soil Association is to publish a consultation document this week that suggests a ban on labelling produce flown into the country as organic - a move that could compound the existing shortage of organic supplies.

The Soil Association, which oversees food with organic credentials in the UK, is seeking approaches to reduce carbon emissions caused by organic produce being flown into the UK - a rather embarrassing side effect of the organic cause, which is largely driven by green interests.

A large proportion of organic food sold in UK supermarkets is imported (over 30 per cent according to some estimates), since there is a shortfall in organic produce being grown in the country.

On Friday, Organic Monitor analyst Amarjit Sahota told FoodNavigator.com that

shortage of organic produce could curb development of the market in general, especially given the growing demand. Organic Monitor estimates that the UK organic food & drink market grew by an impressive 25 per cent last year to be worth £1.97bn (c €2.9bn).

The shortage has already caused problems for retailers, as well as food manufacturers seeking to develop products to meet demand. For instance, the first Whole Foods Market superstore is finally opening next week after nine months of delays caused by supply issues.

Sainsbury's has resorted to selling 'transitional organic' milk, as it cannot source enough organic milk from the UK. Tesco and Asda have sought to get around the problem by sourcing dairy from mainland Europe, according to Sahota.

An outright ban on air-freighted organics is not the only course of action being considered by the Soil Association. It is also looking at the possibility of labelling organic food products with the number of air miles they have travelled, or a programme whereby the carbon produced by flying is off-set.

The consultation document follows comments made by Patrick Holden, director of the Soil Association director, at its annual conference in January.

"We believe there is an urgent and pressing need to make every contribution to curbing climate change that we can," he said. "This is a complex issue though: especially for producers in developing countries where it involves equity and ethical trading issues, and that's why we shall actively engage a wide-range of stakeholders to ensure we get it right."

The association will be speaking with registered organic producers in the UK and overseas, supermarkets and other stakeholders about the proposals.

In particular there are concerns that if a ban on flow-in organic food were to be put in place, it would have a serious effect on the livelihoods of farmers in developing countries. In the absence of infrastructure, air-freighting is instrumental in helping them get their produce to market.