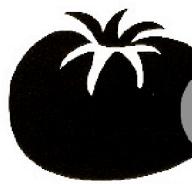


GardenShare@work  
Farmers' market booth,  
CSA Farm Express, more  
... page 2



Why Not Potlucks?  
We miss 'em, but  
what's to be done?  
... page 2

For Locavores...  
No 100-mile limit on  
Justice, please  
... page 3



# GardenShare

HEALTHY FOOD. HEALTHY FARMS. EVERYBODY EATS.

# Newsletter!

[gardenshare.org](http://gardenshare.org)

**EACH YEAR SINCE 2003**, GardenShare has presented its Growing Community Awards to recognize organizations and individuals whose efforts strengthen community food security in the North Country. Past recipients have included farmers, food service staff, food banks, community groups, and others.

At GardenShare's annual dinner on October 13, this year's awards went to Julie Holbrook for Keene Central School's gardening and composting project and to Cindy Harnas for South Jefferson Central School's farm-to-school project.

"Both of this year's awardees are school-based programs—which may be surprising to some because school cafeterias are often depicted as reheat-and-serve operations," said GardenShare board member Sarah



## 2009 Growing Community Awards

Connecting students with their food

Bentley-Garfinkel when presenting the awards. "But experiences with real food, from planting to eating, abound in the school programs being honored tonight."

In Jefferson County, **South Jefferson Central School** brings healthy food to students and supports local farms through a project developed over the past seven years by food service director Cindy Harnas. In a typical year, Cindy now purchases over 6,000 pounds of fruits, vegetables, honey, and apple cider from seven local farms. She is also an enthusiastic advocate of farm-to-school, frequently speaking to other schools about how to bring local food into their cafeterias.

Located in the heart of the High Peaks region, **Keene Central School** integrates composting and gardening with its educational curriculum to teach K-12 students about agriculture and healthy eating. Under the leadership of cafeteria manager Julie Holbrook and with the encouragement of superintendent Cynthia Ford-Johnson, the school's organic vegetable garden contributes food to cafeteria lunches. Then after each meal, students, faculty, and staff sort their tray waste for a composting operation that feeds the garden.

GardenShare salutes both award winners for their efforts to strengthen food security and encourage food competency among young people in northern New York. ☺



Photo L to R: Cindy Harnas, Julie Holbrook, Cynthia Ford-Johnson.  
Top photos: South Jefferson Central School. Bottom: Keene Central School.

# GardenShare@work

## ►► CANTON • Farmers' Market

Led by project coordinator Katherine Lang and scheduler Anne Marsh, fifteen community volunteers contributed 234



hours staffing the GardenShare booth at the Canton Farmers' Market this summer.

Their work enabled shoppers there to use EBT/SNAP (food stamp) benefits to purchase locally grown and produced food.

Using GardenShare's hand-held, wireless terminal, these staffers processed \$3,800 in EBT transactions this year—more than the previous three years combined.

## ►► ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY • CSA Farm Express

Fifteen limited-income households enjoyed the benefits of Community Supported Agriculture this year, thanks to GardenShare's CSA Farm Express.

Participating households in this pilot project received a box of local vegetables each week for 18 weeks.

GardenShare shared the cost of these CSA memberships to

make them available at an affordable price.

GardenShare staff is now reviewing the project to determine how best to continue it next year.

## ►► NORTH COUNTRY • School Garden Workshop

Next spring GardenShare will cosponsor a workshop for teachers, school staff, and others interested in schoolyard gardening. The workshop will be held March 30, 2010, at St. Lawrence University. Contact Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel (315-261-4760 x25 or [sarah@gethealthyslc.org](mailto:sarah@gethealthyslc.org)) to receive an announcement when details are finalized.

## ►► POTSDAM • Local Food T-Shirts

GardenShare's 100 percent cotton T-shirts are now on sale at the Potsdam Food Co-op, 24 Elm Street. Our "free-range" shirt is appropriate attire wherever you care to roam. Great holiday gift idea for your free-ranging friends. ◉



**More about GardenShare  
[GardenShare.org](http://GardenShare.org)**

# Why Not Potlucks?

In 2006 and 2007, GardenShare's annual dinners were potlucks. Some of our supporters miss those delicious home-cooked meals and wonder why GardenShare no longer holds potlucks.

As our annual dinners grew to over two hundred people, potlucks presented some limitations. We struggled each year to find a venue large enough, accessible to all, and with adequate kitchen and childcare facilities. Although potlucks have a warm charm for those of us who know each other, the informality made some newcomers feel like outsiders at a family reunion. And some working people told us that rushing home to prepare food in time to get to our potlucks was difficult; they would gladly pay to have a relaxing evening being fed and served. Yes, potlucks have an air of old-fashioned community sharing. But some of the shine came off one year when we actually ran short of food.

More troubling was when, after another potluck, we found someone in the restroom terribly sick. The cause, it turned out, wasn't food poisoning. But

the experience did give us pause. Imagine the fallout if people were sickened at an event showcasing local food.

So we were not entirely surprised when the NYS Department of Health informed us that our potlucks had to stop. At private potlucks—for churches, clubs, family reunions—the members assume responsibility for themselves. But at affairs such as ours, which we advertise widely and invite the public to attend, GardenShare must assume a special responsibility to the diners.

We realized then that the safeguards we have all rightly come to expect at restaurants were absent at our potlucks. We had no way of keeping the hot food hot and the cold food cold while it sat out on the serving tables for three hours. Nor could we keep fingers and sneezes away from a thirty-foot-long buffet or ensure that the hundred or so cooks who prepared the food shared a common understanding of hygiene. That's why we began last year to have our dinners prepared and served by experienced chefs and their staffs.

But have GardenShare's annual dinners

become too expensive? Of this year's \$20 ticket price, \$12 went to PACES Dining Services for preparing the meal and to the fourteen local producers from whom PACES purchased the food. The remaining \$8 went to benefit GardenShare programs. In other words, the ticket price went to (1) a nonprofit that promotes local agriculture, (2) a dining service that has pioneered local food, and (3) local farmers themselves.

We recognize that not everyone can afford to spend \$20 in this way. And we're grateful for our supporters who contribute in other ways, by volunteering their time and energy. But for those who can afford it and who favor local food and fair pay for farmers, it seemed appropriate for a benefit dinner.

Nevertheless, we'd like to do better. We'd like our events to create community, be enjoyable for everyone, and celebrate GardenShare's vision. But we need your help. Please send us your comments and suggestions.

Email [ideas@gardenshare.org](mailto:ideas@gardenshare.org) or write GardenShare, 860 Maple Ridge Road, Richville NY 13681. ◉

**ORGANIC AGRICULTURE** has been good for Kenya.

It opened lucrative markets in the United Kingdom for hundreds of small-scale Kenyan farmers. For many of them, exporting organic green beans to the British Isles was their ticket out of poverty, and they had worked hard for it. It sometimes took these farmers five years to qualify for organic accreditation from the Soil Association, the British organization that certifies organic farms. And unlike many farmers in America and the European Union, Kenyan organic farm-

making no contribution to mitigating climate change.”

**THIS YEAR**, the Italian city of Lucca passed a law outlawing the opening of new fast-food restaurants within the ancient walls of its historical center.

“We simply want to preserve our cultural and historical identity,” said Lucca city council member Filippo Candelise.

Luca Zaia, Italy’s minister of agriculture, welcomed the law. He encouraged restaurants to use Italian ingredients exclusively and to “stop importing con-

phobic potentials were not lost on the Northern League, a center-right group noted for its campaigns to restrict immigration. The league, which also opposes the building of mosques in Italian cities and counts the minister of agriculture among its members, embraced the legislation enthusiastically. With championing by the Northern League, similar “anti-kabob” laws have since been adopted in other Italian regions.

**SURELY NONE OF US** in the organic or local food movements set about to throw

## For Locavores: No 100-mile limit on justice, please

ers receive no government subsidies.

So it came as a terrible blow in 2007 when they learned that the Soil Association was considering withdrawing their organic certifications over the issue of “food miles.” Shipping fruits and vegetables to Britain all the way from the African continent was environmentally unsound, went the argument, and therefore contrary to organic philosophy and practice.

To Kenyan farmers like Charles Kimani, the news was devastating. The profits he made growing fruits and vegetables on his seven acres of land had enabled him to send his children to school. “A ban on our export market will be death for us,” he told a British newspaper.

And he was not alone. Some estimates suggested that 2,500 workers in Kenya and Ghana would lose their jobs as a result of the decertification, impacting 15,000 dependents.

“Organic certification has been hugely successful in reducing poverty for thousands of African farming families,” said Alexander Kasterine of the International Trade Centre, an agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. “A ban on air-freighted products could be catastrophic for them, while



tainer loads of meat and fish from who knows where.”

The law was not entirely surprising, given the Tuscany region’s devotion to its own cuisine. One is reminded of the Slow Food movement, which began when Carlo Petrini and friends worried that the arrival of a McDonald’s in one of Rome’s most famous piazzas would destroy the slow pace and pleasure of traditional Italian cuisine.

Ah, another victory for the local food movement.

But wait. There’s more. The law also outlawed new ethnic restaurants from Lucca’s center city. To some critics of the new law, this seemed to be its real purpose—a veiled attack on the growing number of eateries owned by immigrants and serving their popular donor kebab sandwiches stuffed with spicy beef and veal. (The four kebab shops already in place were allowed to stay but only, said one council member, because the city had not realized what they were in time to keep them out in the first place.)

Whatever its intent, the law’s xeno-

Kenyan farmers back into poverty or to discriminate against immigrants. I’m glad the Soil Association eventually decided to let Kenyan farmers keep their organic certification, and I hope the Italian people will reject xenophobia.

But we dare not ignore the fact that sometimes our best efforts can have unforeseen and unintended consequences. Perhaps the news from Kenya and Italy can be for us a cautionary tale.

Our world is marred by a great disparity of wealth. Some of us are rich; many of us are poor. In such a world, *justice* cannot be for *just us*.

If we want a planet where food is wholesome and plentiful, our vision must embrace the whole world and address its disparities. If we want a food system that is fair and sustainable, our solutions must reach beyond our own dinner table, beyond our local farmers’ market. Let’s not let “local food” provide cover for distant exploitation.

Please, locavores, no 100-mile limit on justice.

—Phil Harnden