

LIVING FOR THE LAND

WES JACKSON COMES TO THE NORTH COUNTRY



In the 1970s, plant geneticist Wes Jackson noticed that the tall-grass prairies of Kansas stayed highly productive year after year without pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, or plowing. In contrast, conventional farm fields of annual crops suffered from soil erosion and loss of fertility. He wondered, What might the land teach us about farming sustainably?

In 1976, Jackson co-founded The Land Institute in Salina, Kansas, to explore this question. Using native prairie as a guide, researchers at the institute today work to transform annual crops such as corn, wheat, sorghum, and sunflowers into perennials. By taking a 10,000-year leap into the pre-agricultural past, Jackson and his colleagues are pioneering a new kind of farming that they hope will replace today's monoculture of annual crops with a polyculture of perennials. Their goal is to feed us all without the vast amounts of chemicals, fossil fuels, and water that today's agriculture requires.

Wes Jackson has become an eloquent visionary for rural people, land, and community. His longtime friend Wendell Berry calls him "an extraordinary man both in the quality of his insight and in his forthright assumption that radical problems call for radical solutions."

Jackson is the author of numerous books, including *New Roots for Agriculture* and *Becoming Native to This Place*. He and Bill Vittek of Clarkson University have edited two collections of essays, most recently *The Virtues of Ignorance* (2008).

In 2000, the Swedish parliament presented Jackson with its Right Livelihood Award. *Life* magazine has called him one of "the most important Americans of the 20th Century," and *Smithsonian* magazine included him among its list of "35 Who Made a Difference."

It is GardenShare's great pleasure to welcome Wes Jackson as the featured speaker at our annual dinner on Thursday, November 13.

I think one of the most important things is, wherever you are, dig in and claim your place and your communities with the affection that attends digging in – by not being so mobile. Then there's the opportunity for affection to work on people, and then they can become defenders of their place....

People need to be proud of where they are. And they need to make the best of where they are. Instead of shopping malls and Little League being what you live for until you move to the next place, live for your people, your land, and your community as one thing. When people, land, and community are regarded as one, then all members prosper.

–Wes Jackson



GardenShare
Annual Dinner
November 13, 2008
Details on page 3 . . .

GardenShare Study: CSA in St. Lawrence Co.

Last year GardenShare asked Dr. Heather Sullivan-Catlin, chair of the Sociology Department at SUNY Potsdam, to conduct a study of



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in St. Lawrence County.

CSA is an arrangement by which consumers and a nearby farmer share the risks and bounty of farming. CSA members buy a share of the farm's harvest before the growing season

begins and then receive a box of freshly picked produce each week throughout the season.

The study queried CSA members and farmers as well as the general public to learn how CSA is faring in this area.

Here are some of the findings:

- CSA members show a high level of satisfaction with their experience. All those surveyed describe their experience as either very good (79%) or satisfactory (21%).



- The top reasons members give for joining a CSA include a desire for locally grown produce (96%), a desire to support a local farmer (81%), and a desire for sustainably grown food (75%).

- Most CSA members get a large proportion of their weekly produce through their CSA.

- Participation in a CSA increased both the amount and variety of produce consumed by these CSA members.

GardenShare has been promoting CSA for several years, especially by publicizing the North Country farms that offer a CSA option. (Visit GardenShare.org for a current list.) So it was gratifying to learn from this study that a quarter of the CSA members surveyed had first heard about CSA from GardenShare.

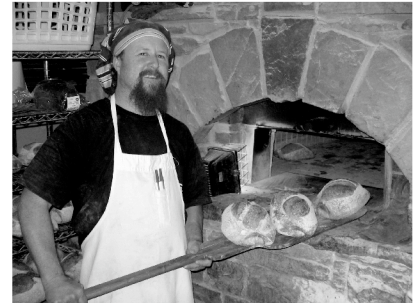
Funding for this study was provided by a Walker Fellowship from SUNY Potsdam's Center for Regional Research and Community Education. Read the complete report online at GardenShare.org.



GardenShare@work

► NORTH COUNTRY • Growing Local Bread

In 1870, farmers in the Champlain Valley grew almost half a million bushels of spring wheat. The area was known as the breadbasket of New England. Today GardenShare would like to help reconnect local farmers and artisan bakers. In July, GardenShare sent two people to tour a farm in the Hudson Valley that supplies flour to a local bakery. This farm-bakery connection was fostered by the Northeast Organic Wheat project, which aims to revive heritage wheat varieties for commercial growers and backyard gardeners. GardenShare is starting an interest group for farmers and backyard gardeners who would like to explore the possibilities of "growing local bread." Contact Phil Harnden at (315) 347-3778.



Chris Affre of Carriage House Bakery, Potsdam.
Locally grown flour for local bakers?

► POTSDAM • CSA Workshop

Thanks to a mini-grant from the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative, GardenShare will host a workshop November 22 on strategies for operating a successful CSA farm. The workshop will be led by Elizabeth Henderson, author of *Sharing the Harvest*, the classic textbook of the Community Supported Agriculture movement. This workshop is part of GardenShare's ongoing efforts to strengthen and expand CSA in our region. Both current and prospective CSA farmers in St. Lawrence County are invited to attend. More information at GardenShare.org.

► CANTON • Farmers' Market

GardenShare's booth at the Canton Farmers' Market enabled shoppers there to spend over \$1,200 in EBT/Food Stamp benefits on locally grown food this summer. As an added bonus, shoppers who spent at least \$5 in EBT benefits received a New York Fresh Check worth an additional \$5 at the market. GardenShare distributed over 150 of these Fresh Checks. Altogether, GardenShare helped make about \$2,000 worth of local food available to limited-income households.



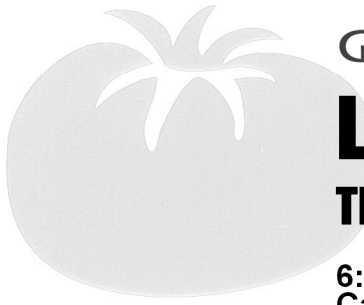
Noel Delamotte (right) uses Fresh Check to buy vegetables from Kara McLuckie of Birdsfoot Farm.

► CANTON • Holidays Gifts to Help GardenShare

Asian World Imports will give a percentage of its profits from holiday sales to GardenShare this year. The shop, located at 1168 State Highway 68 near Canton, offers a range of handcrafts made by indigenous people and imported according to the Fair Trade principles of just wages and environmental sustainability. Co-owner Robin Rhodes-Crowell is a GardenShare board member. For information on store hours and special events, call (315) 714-2119 or visit asianworldimports.com.

► LISBON • Award to GardenShare

The Clements Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) has presented GardenShare with its annual Quality of Life Award. The award is presented annually to an individual or organization that "has made an outstanding contribution to the Earth and its creatures through education, legislation, communication, and recognition of the importance of maintaining and improving the quality of the soils, the waters, and the environment." The award was presented on September 14 during CARI's tenth anniversary celebration at Iroquois Farm in Lisbon.



GardenShare's Annual Benefit

Local Harvest Dinner

Thursday, November 13, 2008

6:00 p.m.
Canton Central School Cafeteria
99 State Street, Canton

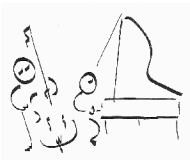
»» **Everyone Welcome**
A dinner to benefit GardenShare projects.
\$10 per adult – \$5 per child. Payment at the door.

i **Please reserve your place** by calling Paula Schechter at (315) 265-2660 or emailing pyoumell@gmail.com



»» **Local Harvest Meal**
A menu of simplicity, to savor the season and celebrate the vision of GardenShare.
Catered by Jenny and Brian Walker of 1844 House:

White bean and vegetable chili
Yankee cornbread
Field greens with maple-balsamic vinaigrette
Autumn apple crisp with fresh whipped cream



»» **Music**
Music provided by "A Fine Line," the jazz duo of Bill Vitek on piano and Dan Gagliardi on bass playing their special takes on jazz favorites and their own originals.



»» **Growing Community Award**
Presentation of GardenShare's annual award for service. This year's award goes to North Country Public Radio, now celebrating its fortieth anniversary with creative programming that explores food and farming across our region.



»» **Fund-Raising Raffle**
Baskets full of gifts and certificates from area businesses and restaurants, plus door prizes. Tickets \$1 each or six for \$5.

i **To buy raffle tickets**, use the enclosed ticket sheet or call Marissa Maurer at (315) 212-7745. Make check payable to "GardenShare" and mail to Marissa Maurer, 36 Main Street, Potsdam NY 13676.



»» **Featured Speaker**
Wes Jackson of The Land Institute, Salina, Kansas. A pioneer of sustainable agriculture, called "an extraordinary man" by Wendell Berry.

Dr. Jackson's appearance is supported by a grant from the speakers fund of the Northeast Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (NESARE).

Response Form

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____



Check all that apply:

- ☐ Please send me the free Local Food bumper sticker shown above.
- ☐ Please send me a free subscription to this newsletter.
- ☐ Please send me the free *Local Food Guide* for St. Lawrence County.
- ☐ This is a change of address (I am enclosing the label from below).
- ☐ I wish to make a tax-deductible donation to GardenShare: \$ _____
- ☐ The name above is a friend—please introduce them to GardenShare.

Mail to: GardenShare
860 Maple Ridge Road
Richville NY 13681

GardenShare

The GardenShare Newsletter is published four times a year, one issue being the *Local Food Guide*. Subscriptions are free.

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GardenShare works to build a North Country where all of us have enough to eat and enough to share—where our food choices are healthy for us, for our communities, and for the environment.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

- Award to North Country Public Radio
- Wes Jackson Featured Speaker
- Thursday, November 13, in Canton

GardenShare Annual Dinner:

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