



GardenShare

HEALTHY FOOD. HEALTHY FARMS. EVERYBODY EATS.

Newsletter

gardenshare.org

Bringing Good Food Back To School

A SCHOOLYARD GARDEN IN **KEENE VALLEY** is supplying veggies to the school cafeteria and teaching students the importance of healthy eating.

To the west, in Jefferson County, ten schools have begun their own schoolyard gardens.

And up north in Potsdam, an energetic food service staff is winning over their student diners with tasty entrées and homemade soups.

"This food is awesome!" said one teenager going through the lunch line.

Across the North Country and the Adirondacks, good food is coming back to school, brought there by food service staffs, parents, school administrators, and by the students themselves.

And where's this good food coming from?

"We have increased our purchasing of local foods by 70 percent over the past six years," says Cindy Harnas, food service director at South Jefferson Central School, Adams. "Everything on the salad bar and for vegetables in the serving line is purchased from six local farmers."

NATIONWIDE, OVER 2,000 SCHOOL DISTRICTS now serve farm-fresh food in their cafeterias, compared with only a handful of districts in 1997. Advocates say the classroom must be connected to the cafeteria for kids to learn about nutrition.

"When schools tout the advantages of eating produce but don't offer it in meals, their students are being taught one thing but shown another," says the National Farm to School Network. "Schools need to give students a consistent message, reinforced through hands-on experiences such as growing food in a school garden, visiting a farmers' market, tasting new products, and developing cooking skills that will serve them their whole lives."

That's why many schools these days use ag education, school gardens, and farm tours to teach children how and where their food is grown.

MEANWHILE, OTHER NORTH COUNTRY ORGANIZATIONS are helping schools move from "thaw-and-serve" meals to real food from a farm. The Health Quest MOVE program of the St. Lawrence Health Initiative has sponsored "knife skills" workshops to teach safe and efficient ways for cafeteria staff to prepare fresh fruits and vegetables. This program,

(continued on next page)



Bringing Good Food

Back To School

Continued from previous page:

in collaboration with GardenShare and others, hopes to offer a school garden workshop for area teachers this fall. Watch for more info at GardenShare.org.

You, too, can be part of this movement to bring good food back to our schools.

How You Can Help:

- Join your school district's Wellness Committee to help set districtwide nutrition policy. Every school district has this committee, and community members are encouraged to join. Call your school district office to find out how.

- Help your school celebrate wholesome, local food during "New York Harvest for New York Kids Week," October 5–9, 2009. Visit PrideofNY.com and click on "Farm-to-School" to learn ways to involve your school.

- The Child Nutrition Act, which governs the National School Lunch Program, is up for reauthorization by Congress now. Slow Food USA has begun lobbying for improvements. Sign a petition and get more info at http://www.slowfoodusa.org/index.php/campaign/time_for_lunch/about/.

- Regard food service staff as your ally, not your adversary. Remember that school meal programs are not funded by the school budget and so must be self-supporting. Educate yourself about the issues with the *Rethinking School Lunch Guide* at <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/programs/rsl-guide.html>.

- Encourage your school to use healthy alternatives to candy sale fundraisers. Fedco Seeds, for example, offers a "school seed store" alternative. Email seedquality@fedcoseeds.com for info. For other suggestions, visit <http://www.nyfarms.info/fundraising.html>. ☺

GardenShare@work

» GARDENSHARE • New Developments

GardenShare is delighted to welcome Jeff Walton to our staff as our first Development Director. Jeff brings with him skills honed on the development team of the Adirondack chapter of The Nature Conservancy in Keene Valley. His work will focus on donor development, grant writing, and other fund-raising efforts to help GardenShare expand services in the North Country.

This new position is part of a capacity-building initiative made possible by generous grants from the Fresh Sound Foundation, the Sweetgrass Foundation, and by major donations from several individual GardenShare supporters. In addition, the Environmental Studies Department of St. Lawrence University has graciously provided office space for GardenShare.

A special thank-you to all these special friends!



» ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY • CSA Farm Express

Fifteen limited-income households are enjoying the benefits of Community Supported Agriculture this year, thanks to grants from the Stewart's Foundation, the Potsdam Elks Lodge #2074, Helping Hands of Potsdam, and the St. Lawrence Health Initiative's Eat Well Play Hard Community Project. These grants, along with many contributions from individual supporters, help sponsor shared-cost memberships in GardenShare's CSA Farm Express project. Participating households receive a box of local vegetables each week for 18 weeks at an affordable price.



» CANTON • Interns & Volunteers

Two St. Lawrence University students have contributed their skills, energy, and enthusiasm as GardenShare interns this summer. Alle Wingerter and Laura Dobbs have worked alongside fifteen community volunteers to staff GardenShare's booth at the Canton Farmers' Market. Katherine Lang is coordinating the activities, which include EBT/food stamp transactions and CSA Farm Express pickups. Our thanks to all these hard workers—and to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton for a generous contribution to our work at the farmers' market!

» ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY • Local Food Guide

Thirty-five thousand copies of GardenShare's 2009 *Local Food Guide* have been distributed this summer. This year's guide lists 68 farms, as well as farmers' markets, stores, and restaurants where food lovers can find the incredible edibles born and raised in St. Lawrence County. ☺

Applause!

GardenShare salutes the good work being done by others to build food security in our region ~ **Rich Douglass** of Hermon, for launching a mentoring project that partners experienced gardeners with novices ~ **Birdsfoot Farm** of Canton, for being named to the "Register of Very Special Places" by Traditional Arts in Upstate New York ~ **Lettuce Turnip the Beet**, a student group at St. Lawrence University, for raising campus awareness of food and farm issues ~ **The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program**, for benefiting 114,000 low-income senior households and 250,000 Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) families across the state last year, while also bringing over \$5.6 million in sales to New York farmers' markets. ☺

GardenShare Jam

Saturday Evening, September 19

Save the Date ~ Time TBA

La Casbah Restaurant
6 Elm Street, Potsdam

Boogie with the bands at this special benefit night for GardenShare.

Local Favorite Band:

Your Logo Here

National Touring Band from Los Angeles:

Looner

Tickets at the door. . .

Benefit Dinner

Tuesday Evening, October 13

Save the Date ~ Time TBA

Thatcher Hall
SUNY Potsdam

Celebrate the vision of GardenShare and enjoy local foods at our annual benefit dinner. Social hour. Growing Community Award. Lots more. All are welcome.

Tickets available in September. Sales will benefit GardenShare programs. . .

watch for more info:
GardenShare.org

The GardenShare T-Shirt



100% cotton.

Women's (scoop-neck, butter yellow): M, L, XL

Men's (khaki): L, XL, 2XL

Youth (oatmeal): XS, S, M, L

STYLE	SIZE	QTY.	\$15	TOTAL
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860 Maple Ridge Rd
Richville NY 13681

\$15 including tax, plus \$5 shipping

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Check all that apply:

☐ Here's my tax-deductible donation to GardenShare: \$ _____

☐ Send me a free subscription to this newsletter.

☐ Send me a free *Local Food* bumper sticker.

☐ Send me the free 2009 *Local Food Guide* for St. Lawrence County.

☐ The name above is a friend—please introduce them to GardenShare.

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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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GardenShare

**860 Maple Ridge Road
Richville NY 13681**

(315) 347-3778 • info@gardenshare.org
www.GardenShare.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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