

Stand By Your Land

By Julie Knopf

It wasn't that long ago, maybe two or so years past, that I was still buying all of my weekly groceries from the supermarket.

Once in a while I'd hit a farmer's market or check out Whole Foods for some in-season top of the line peaches or corn, but for the most part, I was a one-stop shopper. However things change and so does one's appetite for better ingredients, better selection, and

more knowledgeable staff.

People who take pride in the product they sell and who actually give you the time of day become worth seeking out. Food shopping has become an art form for me. Finding newer and better places to purchase perfectly ripe and multi-hued mangoes, ominously dark leafy Swiss chard and sweet and meaty lamb chops is a fun challenge that results in better tasting food and sometimes better prices. But a special new incentive for

me to dig deep into the local agriculture is to support the small family farmer. Local small farmers can offer much in the way of wonderful products, and many of them farm organically, including treating the animals humanely. These positive methods not only keep the animals happy, they also produce better tasting and healthier products. Ann Karlen of Philadelphia's Fair Food Farmstand hooked me up with all the local farming info I could ever need, and since she's in the thick of it, she knows her stuff. Spearheading the Buy Fresh Buy Local campaign, Ann has helped to move farm fresh foods to local restaurants and markets all around Philadelphia. To get involved, read on...

A super cool way to do your shopping without making those tough veggie



Ann Karlen of Philadelphia's Fair Food Farmstand

decisions is by becoming a member of a **Consumer Supported Agriculture (CSA)** organization. How it works is you sign up as a member by paying a harvest fee. This fee is like paying for stock in the farm. In fact, this money helps the farmer plant his produce and prepare for the summer harvest.

In return for the "stock" each member receives a box full of freshly picked produce that they may either pick up at the farm or at one of the convenient city pick-up points. Urban farms also participate in this program, some of which are Greensgrow Farm and Somerton Tanks Farm. I have sampled the goods from the latter and must

say that the products were unbelievable. Beautiful, lush, vibrant, and ultimately delicious, this is my new favorite way to shop.

And because the contents vary according to what is in season that week, the possibilities never end. No more waiting in line, no more touching this and smelling that. All of the shopping is done for you, and you know every item is mint just by looking at it. Check out my recipe for the Garden Frittata below, in which all vegetables used were from Somerton Tanks Farm via their CSA program.

If you still enjoy the interactive experience of shopping, there are tons retail

stores and farmer's markets that sell local goods. Keep in mind, however, that not all products or merchants sell exclusively local items. Inquire when it is not clear where something has come from or how it was farmed.

Remember, though, that supporting a local business in itself is a wonderful thing.

All of these merchants are great for buying food to cook at home, but what happens when you eat out?

Well, it turns out that many progressive restaurants are using local farmers for their meats, dairy, veggies and fruit. From BYOBs like Azafran, Chloe and top-rated Django to chic dining at Fork and Salt, forward-thinking spots are doing their part to bring the best of Southeastern Pennsylvania to your plate.

Other groups to check out include **Farm to City**, a project that organizes farmer's markets, as well as helps farms start CSA programs and initiates online buying clubs that promote buying winter goods. The **White Dog Café Foundation** supports local business ownership, works in harmony with natural systems, fosters cultural and biological diversity and strives to



Stand By Your Land

continued from page 12

improve community life. The **Fair Food** project, an offshoot of the **White Dog Café Foundation**, works to bring the local farmer to the city restaurateur as well as the consumer. Visit their food stand in the Reading Terminal Market on Fridays and Saturdays. The **PIG Alliance**, a project of Fair Food, promotes small-scale humane animal agriculture. To really gross yourself out, log onto factoryfarming.org and read about the evils.

Here is just a sampling of some of the places you can experience local produce:

CSA Farms/Buying Clubs
Covered Bridge Produce
www.farmtocity.org

Greensgrow Farm
www.greengrow.org

Scarecrow Hill Farm
www.scarecrowhill.com

Somerton Tanks Urban Farm
www.farmtocity.org

Lancaster County Organic Farm
www.farmtocity.org

FARMER'S MARKETS

15th Street & South Street: Wednesdays 3 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Girard Avenue & 13th Street: Fridays 10 am - 4:30 p.m.

23rd Street & Pine Street: Saturdays 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

43rd Street & Baltimore Ave.: Thursdays 3 p.m. - 7 p.m.;
 Saturdays 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

RETAIL

Essene Market & Café
www.essenemarket.com

Reading Terminal Market
www.readingterminalmarket.org

Weavers Was Cooperative Association
www.weaversway.org

DINING OUT

Bistro St. Tropez
www.bistrosttropez.com

Coleman Restaurant at Normandy Farm
www.normandyfarm.com

Geechee Girl Rice Café
www.geecheegirlricecafe.com

Jamaican Jerk Hut

Little Fish

Monk's Café
www.monkscafe.com

Rx

Standard Tap
www.standardtap.com

White Dog Café
www.whitedogcafe.com

GARDEN FRITTATA - SERVES 1

2 tsp. butter
 1 garlic clove, minced

PRESS/REVIEW - JULY 7 • 2004

13

1 small red potato, sliced 1/8 inch thick
 - kohlrabi, peeled and sliced 1/8 inch thick
 - small zucchini, sliced 1/8 inch thick
 Salt and pepper
 2 eggs
 1 tbsp. cream
 1-2 oz soft-ripened cheese like Brie, sliced
 Handful flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped for garnish

- Preheat oven to 400.
- Place sliced potatoes in cold salted water and bring to a boil. Cook for about five to ten minutes, or until potatoes are slightly tender, but not cooked through. Strain.
- In a non-stick or seasoned small sauté pan, melt butter over medium flame and sauté potatoes for about four minutes.
- Whisk together eggs and cream and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
- Add kohlrabi, zucchini and garlic to pan and sauté for five minutes, or until veggies are cooked, yet still crisp. Season with salt and pepper and turn flame down to low.
- Add eggs to pan and let cook without stirring for about two minutes or until the bottom has set but not browned.
- Place pan in oven for about five minutes, or until the top is just set. Remove from oven and place on top of stove.
- Using a rubber spatula, gently loosen the frittata from the sides and bottom of the pan, then slice it onto a warm plate.
- Garnish with cheese and parley.
- Serve for brunch with a Mimosa.