Food EVENTS in Central Oregon

Here at a few upcoming Central Oregon events that might appeal to your inner "foodie":

Slow Food High Desert Farm to Table Dinner

Sunday, Aug. 14, 5 p.m.
Maragas Winery, Terrebone, OR
For more information, contact slowfoodhighdesert@gmail.com

Meet Your Farmer Night

Tuesday, Aug. 16, 6 p.m.
Common Table Restaurant, Bend

A Summer's Evening at Field's Farm

Saturay, Aug. 27, 5 p.m.
Fundraiser for Small Farm Conservancy; $45 per person; call 541-549-2064 for more information.



Central Oregon LOCAVORE *How It Works!*

Interested in participating in the Central Oregon Locavore program? Here's a rundown of how it works:

- Go to the website, www.centraloregonlocavore.com, and look at all the wonderful fruits, vegetables and other goodies that are available. Click on your choices.
- On Thursday, between 4 and 6:30 p.m., visit their location on Wilson Avenue to pick up your selections. That's it. If you can't get over to their place, they deliver, giving you farm-fresh food for the week with little effort on your part.

LOCAVORE'S CORNER:

How TO BE a LOCAVORE

Supporting your local farmers and producers has never been so simple.



by Chef Bette Fraser / for The Bulletin Special Projects

If you have ever wished that there was a fresh alternative to the traditional grocery store without having to go to the farmer's market every week, your wish has been granted.

Your fairy godmother is a hard-working woman by the name of Nicolle Timm, operator of Central Oregon Locavore.

Central Oregon Locavore, which started in April of 2010, is an online food cooperative offering a large variety of organic fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, coffee, chocolate, artisan cheese, beer, wine and bakery goods. It also offers planet-friendly beauty products, cleaning products, locally grown plants, candles, pet food and a large variety of other products.

With more than 150 suppliers, more products are added all the time. All the products come from local farms, ranches and suppliers such as Sand Lily Farm, Sparrow Bakery, Great American Egg and Dancing Cow Farm.

See "How It Works" in the box to the left to learn how to participate.

Timm is a Bend native who grew up knowing many of Bend's local farmers. In Ashland, she received a degree in nursing. However, it wasn't until a move to Denver, where she studied high-risk child labor and delivery, that she also became interested in nutrition.

It was then she realized the sad state of our nutritional health and how difficult it was to obtain locally grown and raised foods.

She worked on a raw dairy farm for a year and learned that small family farms are one of the toughest businesses around. Regulations imposed on family farms by the states and federal governments are onerous and complicated, while marketing and distributing their wares are incredibly difficult.

Because of her desire to see the family farm succeed, especially here in Central Oregon, where we are so far away from the fertile valleys on the western side of the Cascades, Niki started Central Oregon Locavore.

If the farmer stays and works on the farm, the rancher tends to his herd and the baker bakes, we ensure a more stable food supply. In the process, the local economy is stimulated and the money stays within the community — in the pockets of the farmers, the ranchers and the bakers.



Niki Timm, Central Oregon Locavore

For every dollar spent in the community, 90 cents stays in the community. That is a big impact! You can also sleep better at night knowing that the local farmer treats his or her animals with respect and dignity, allowing them to have healthy lives and enjoy the sunshine.

In fact, you can visit many of the local farms and ranches to see for yourself.

Central Oregon Locavore also sponsors Meet Your Farmer Night at Common Table Restaurant on Oregon Avenue in Bend. On the third Friday of the month, you can have a four-course dinner at the restaurant with products from the featured farm. The farmer will talk about her or his place, typially with a slide presentation, and answer questions. It is an enlightening and informative, not to mention a delicious way to feed your body and soul.

They also sponsor Willing Workers On Local Farms (WWOLF). Each month, a group of volunteers heads out to a local farm to help with projects, from rebuilding fences and chicken coops to weeding and planting. It is great way to get involved with your food and your community.

Niki and her dedicated group of volunteers make Central Oregon Locavore succeed so we can have access to fresh, local food. Her first customer was her mother, Becky McCall.

Niki now calls her Mom her "star customer." Becky found a new joy and appreciation for cooking with the food that she purchases from local producers.

"It tastes so much fresher and better, and I find I don't need to eat as much of it to feel satiated and nourished," she said. "I even lost some weight. I am also having a blast learning how to cook new cuts of meat that I never would have bought in the store. It's like a culinary challenge whenever I open my freezer and see all the packages of local meat in there."

Her brother, Spencer Timm, is the main delivery man, ensuring that customers who need that option get their order each week.

So change your routine and make a relationship with your food and your community. Check out Central Oregon Locavore and see what it's all about.

Chef Bette Fraser is the proprietor of The Well Traveled Fork, hosting cooking classes, culinary tours and providing catering services. She can be reached at WellTraveledFork.com or 541-312-0097.