



Going Local for the Holidays

By Ellen Michel

The Local Growers Guild is in the midst of a membership drive, encouraging everyone to become members within grower, retailer, community, or sponsor categories. We've set up a process at Bloomingfoods to make this especially easy: you can pay with a credit or debit card (or cash or check) while you are shopping. You can also download a PDF of the new LGG brochure at the LGG or Bloomingfoods websites, filling out the application form that way.

The LGG depends on the support of the community for its existence. We are very heartened to see our numbers increase, and expect to see this organization grow dramatically. We've put down the soil, used heirloom seeds, and now we are tending to business with care and close attention.

Membership in the Local Growers Guild makes a terrific holiday gift. Your recipient will receive a *Local Growers Guide* that can transform their table and shopping habits. They will also get an LGG bumper sticker with which to proclaim their commitment to the local foods movement. And they'll begin to receive this newsletter in the mail. Membership also confers a reduced cost at special LGG events, such as our Winter Guild Gathering.

Think of the health benefits to you and your friends as you consume more local food, grown without chemicals or harmful agribusiness practices. You give a gift to the environment, too, helping preserve the beauty of our region. And you help our local growers and food providers, who are often making difficult, expensive transitions to more sustainable and organic practices.

I think of an LGG membership as "the gift that keeps on giving." It helps build our beautiful community and fosters human connections. It encourages humane animal husbandry. It enables you source delicious local food. It helps preserve family farms and our environment. It offers education about urban farming, gardening, and permaculture. It lets you know which retailers support local farms, and sends a strong message about mutually beneficial shared values.

And once you have that local bounty spread out on your table, you can set about making homemade food, flower, or fiber gifts: jellies or jams, pickles or holiday decorations, or handmade knitted items. It's a very satisfying, affordable way to bring a delicious and hopeful holiday home.

Bloomington Kitchen Incubator Seeks Pilot Clients



Do you dream of starting a local food business? Are you intrigued by the idea of canning, freezing, drying, baking, or brewing a specialty food product? Have you considered starting a food business in the past but been overwhelmed by the health code requirements, start-up costs, and lack of access to a commercial kitchen? Well, the Bloomington Kitchen Incubator (BKI) is here for you!

This new non-profit organization was created as part of the "Growing Healthy Communities" grant awarded to MiddleWay House, the Local Growers Guild, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, and many other local agencies committed to improving our local food economy. MiddleWay has started construction on the old Coca-Cola Building on Washington Street in Bloomington, which will be transformed into a commercial kitchen during the 2009 growing season. Through the BKI this kitchen will be

available for rent by budding food entrepreneurs – farmers who want to transform their produce into prepared/preserved foods, chefs who want to capture their secret recipes in a new form, home canners who are ready to scale up to commercial sales, cake decorators, bakers, pickle-makers... whatever your dream may be.

The Bloomington Kitchen Incubator will provide a variety of support for these fledgling businesses ensure their success. Tenants will start by going through the business planning process to make sure their dreams are realistic and they have a clear plan of action. The BKI will also provide assistance navigating health code, legal and tax requirements, developing marketing strategies and materials, and identifying necessary food safety classes. Tenants will learn good business practices such as appropriate recordkeeping and can

also receive specialized training like developing nutrition labels and choosing appropriate packaging. We also expect that sharing office and work space with other tenants will create a synergy lending itself to cooperative marketing and distribution, bulk purchasing of ingredients and packaging, and sharing experiences to help all businesses thrive.

The BKI is currently looking for a few committed pilot tenants to test and improve the services offered. The first business planning course will start in February, in partnership with SEED Corps in Bloomington. After a short test run BKI will be open to all food and farming businesses. Please contact Bobbi Boos at bobbiboos@gmail.com or 812-272-3656 to learn more about becoming a pilot client or to sign up for an informational session about the project to be held Wednesday, January 14th at 7:00 p.m.

Hoosier Hills Food Bank Gleans over 4000 lbs. of Produce for the Needy

By Kim Kanney

Hoosier Hills Food Bank is wrapping up its first year of the Gleaning Project, the food rescue program that harvests excess produce from local farms and distributes it to HHFB member agencies' feeding programs. As an organization that supplies food for nearly one hundred non-profit agencies throughout six counties, Hoosier Hills Food Bank strives to obtain as many food donations in as many forms as possible. From non-perishable donations from individuals to bakery bread from local grocers; from prepared, excess meals from local restaurants and cafeterias to excess, gleaned produce from local farms, Hoosier Hills Food Bank sees a value in not only *obtaining* food donations, but also *saving* food from going to waste.

Often a great portion of a grower's yield is not marketable to their general consumers due to minor blemishes or asymmetry. Consequently, the blemished produce is never harvested from the plant and left in the fields to rot. But in a country where 35.5 million individuals live in food-insecure households, allowing perfectly edible produce go to waste is illogical and unnecessary.

Hoosier Hills Food Bank establishes relationships with area farmers so that any unmarketable produce can be rescued, gleaned and distributed to the non-profit agencies we serve. In the first pilot year, HHFB worked with four farms and collected over 4,000 pounds of produce. Our relationship with each farm is different and always accommodating to the needs of the farmers.

Hoosier Hills Food Bank worked primarily with Steve Krecik and Five Oaks Farm in Jackson County. We began our collaboration with Five Oaks at the beginning of June to help Steve with the planting and cultivating

of his fruits and vegetables. By sending volunteers to help in the fields, Steve was able to produce a greater yield, ultimately donating more produce to the Food Bank. By the end of the summer, Food Bank volunteers were often traveling to Five Oaks twice a week and had collected nearly 800 pounds of seasonal produce for the Food Bank, including eggplant, green beans, tomatoes, zucchini, arugula, sweet corn, and peppers.

Similarly, a number of volunteers have visited the fields of Joshua Lindsay south of Bloomington to assist him in harvesting the salad greens he sells at the Bloomington Community Farmers Market. By offering extra hands in Joshua's general harvest, he is able to send the volunteers back to the Food Bank with a large donation of green leaf lettuce, spinach, chard, and arugula.

In mid-July Strangers Hill Organics, a certified-organic farm just outside of Bloomington, began contributing to the Gleaning Project by setting aside "seconds" that would not sell to their general consumers because of aesthetic blemishes. When Strangers Hill's tomatoes did not fare as well as expected, Food Bank staff drove out to the farm to glean the tomatoes and distribute them to our member agencies. Hoosier Hills Food Bank and Strangers Hill already anticipate a stronger relationship next year with weekly days and more flexibility for volunteers to help Strangers Hill staff harvest throughout the seasons.

In October, as frost snuck around autumn's corner, volunteers and staff traveled to Harriman Farms in Spencer, Indiana to glean the remaining tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and pumpkins that would not have sold at the groceries Harriman takes their produce to. Between two trips to Harriman Farms within a week, HHFB staff and volunteers were able to glean over 1,850 pounds of

produce that would have been left to suffer through a bitter, cold winter. The Gleaning Project benefits everyone! HHFB staff and volunteers are able to support and assist local farms in their fields, non-profit agencies from a six-county area are able to obtain fresh and oftentimes organic produce, and HHFB volunteers from the community gain exposure to local agriculture, food rescue, and farming practices. The project is only as strong as the support of all members involved. If you are interested in volunteering your time or having your fields gleaned, please do not hesitate to contact us! You can direct all inquiries to Kim Kanney, Volunteer Coordinator, to volunteer@hhfoodbank.org or 334-8374.



Kim Kanney is the Volunteer Coordinator of the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. The Hoosier Hills Food Bank collects, stores and distributes nutritious food products to non-profit organizations which provide free feeding programs that serve both ill and needy families and individuals in Monroe, Martin, Owen, Orange, Brown and Lawrence Counties in Central Indiana.

Upcoming Events

MUSGRAVE ORCHARD FARMERS MARKET

BLOOMINGTON
SATURDAYS, DEC. 6, 13 & 20
10:30-2:30 PM

Come to the orchard shop where several vendors will be selling their locally grown goods. Contact www.musgraveorchard.com or 812-339-5006.

LGG BOARD MEETING (JANUARY)

BLOOMINGTON – CALDWELL CENTER
MONDAY, JAN. 5, 7-9 PM

Please RSVP to Maggie at 812-345-1592 in case the date/time changes.

WINTER GUILD GATHERING

BLOOMINGTON
\$20 LGG MEMBERS, \$30 NON-MEMBERS
SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 10 AM-4 PM

This year's theme is "Save Time, Money and Energy with Improved Farm Efficiency." Presenters include Keith Johnson, Art Sherwood, Jeff Evard, Karen Premo and Candice Ormiston. Registration deadline is January 3. See enclosed flyer for more information.

GROWING FOR MARKET SERIES

15 COUNTIES—PURDUE EXTENSION
THURSDAYS, JAN. 8-FEB. 5, \$50

A series designed to help farmers and other interested folks get started as market gardeners. Registration deadline is Jan. 5. For more information contact Ballard at 317-462-1113 or rballard@purdue.edu

INDIANA HORTICULTURE CONGRESS

INDIANAPOLIS – ADAMS MARK HOTEL
MONDAY, JAN. 19- WEDNESDAY, JAN. 21

An educational meeting designed to meet the needs of fruit, vegetable, wine, organic and specialty growers and marketers in Indiana and surrounding states. For more information, contact Tammy Goodale at tgoodale@purdue.edu or call 765-494-1296.

SOUTHERN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP (SSAWG) CONFERENCE

CHATTANOOGA, TN
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 21-SUNDAY, JAN. 25

"Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms." Registration deadline is Dec. 20. For more information, go to www.ssawg.org.

BLOOMINGTON WINTER FARMERS MARKET

BLOOMINGTON – HARMONY SCHOOL
909 EAST SECOND ST.
SATURDAYS, JAN. 24-MAR. 28,
9 AM-NOON

The Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market is a great opportunity to buy directly from local growers during the winter months. Our cozy indoor market also features live music, chef demonstrations, and a wonderful community. Join us for breakfast and buy local produce, meats, baked goods, dairy, and more!

MIDWEST WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

PLYMOUTH, IN – SWAN LAKE
WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY, FEB. 4 & 5

The mission of the Midwest Women in Agriculture conference is to meet the needs of women in agriculture by addressing the personal, family, and farm issues that affect their lives, their families, and their farm businesses. Presented by Purdue Extension. For more information call 1-888-398-4636.

OHIO RIVER VALLEY FARM MARKETING CONFERENCE

WILMINGTON, OH – HOLIDAY INN
THURSDAY & FRIDAY, FEB. 19 & 20

The conference offers valuable and affordable presentations, workshops, and discussions, focused on agricultural marketing. For more information, contact Tom Snyder, (740) 289-2071 ext 220, snyder.11@osu.edu or Joy Bauman, (740) 289-2071 ext 111, jbauman@ag.osu.edu.

Subscribe to our new weekly e-newsletter! Send an e-mail to us at localgrowersguildnews@localgrowers.org to receive weekly updates on local food events. We send text-only e-mails (no attachments).

Bloomington Kitchen Incubator Seeks Intern

The Bloomington Kitchen Incubator, a new 501(c)3 non-profit organization that was formed to support fledgling food businesses, is seeking an intern to work approximately 10 hours per week starting in January 2009. Duties will include working with the Board of Directors to prepare press releases, recruit new clients for the incubator, schedule training events, fundraise for the BKI, prepare grant applications, and coordinate communication between the BKI, the Small Business Development Center, and other partnering organizations. The intern position is unpaid but the

intern will have the opportunity to take free classes in food safety and business planning. The BKI also expects to hire a part-time Incubator Manager in June, with hiring priority given to the intern. Please send a resume and cover letter to Bobbi Boos at bobbiboos@gmail.com or by mail to Bobbi Boos c/o Local Growers Guild, P.O. Box 2553 Bloomington, IN 47402 by December 31, 2008.

Classifieds

EQUIPMENT

Alfalfa/grass hay for sale. Grown with organic methods, \$5 - square bales, Mitchell area. Contact John Gore at 812-276-2234.

Modine LP heaters for sale. Contact Jeff Evard at 765-528-2887. Can deliver 75 miles from Martinsville.

Straw bales for sale from Upland Brewery. \$2.50/ea. Contact Detra Wolf at 219-873-4909 or Ryan Harvey at 812-336-2337, ext. 500.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIFE Certified Organic Farm is now offering CSA memberships for the 2009 season. Please call Art Sherwood, Jeff Evard and Bobbi Boos for more information! (812) 834-3727.

LIFE Certified Organic Farm will once again be offering local growers the chance to bulk purchase the full line of plant/animal Fertrell products for 2009. See www.fertrell.com or call Art Sherwood at (812) 834-3727 for more info.

Would you like help promoting your CSA for 2009? Contact katie@localgrowers.org to be included in a CSA brochure published by the LGG.

FARM LABOR

Hunter's Creek Farm is looking for interns and employees for the 2009 growing season. For the serious intern, there are 3 rooms for rent in early spring. Call 812-583-1433 .

Keith Uridel of Hazelbrake Farm is looking for some additional help next year with his landcrafting and nursery business. Contact Keith at uridel@att.net for more information.

WANTED

A group of concerned citizens working to create a community garden in Bloomington are seeking soil, compost, or other donations to the project. Contact Frederick Walsh at 574-276-4396 or frederick.walsh@gmail.com.

Classified ads are free to members and \$5 for non-members with a 30-word maximum. Entries can be sent by e-mail to localgrowers@localgrowers.org or contact Maggie Sullivan by phone at 812-345-1592 by Jan. 5.

Bobbi Boos Wins Bill Krejci Award

Bobbi Boos was honored at the Bloomingfoods Annual Meeting when she was awarded the Bill Krejci Cooperative Service Award. The Bill Krejci Award is given to people in our community who put the international cooperative values into practice in their lives.

Bobbi Boos was a founding member and past president of the Local Growers Guild and is also a founder of the Bloomington Kitchen Incubator. She has also served on the board of Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and the IU Taskforce on Campus Sustainability.



November 14th Local Foods Dinner

Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market

It's not too late to apply for the 2009 Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market. Anyone interested in an application can contact our market master, Jessica Williams, at 812-337-0734 or wintermarket@localgrowers.org for a copy. The market will again be held at Harmony School, Saturdays from 9:00AM-12:00, January 24 – March 28. Vendor spaces are \$200 for a full-share (ten markets) or \$100 for a half-share (five markets).

LOCAL GROWERS GUILD

P.O. Box 2553
Bloomington, IN 47402
www.localgrowers.org

