

Help Us Grow the Local Growers Guild!

On October 1st, the Local Growers Guild is kicking off its annual membership drive with an emphasis on recruiting new community members. We feel that the only way that the Guild can truly achieve its vision of educating, connecting and supporting local growers in Southern and Central Indiana is to significantly increase the number of community members who are dedicated to purchasing locally grown products.

Our goal is to increase our community membership from 30 to 400 during the months of October and November. It is our hope that community members will share the bounty of the harvest this fall and consider making a contribution of \$20 or more to support our many projects such as the Local Growers Guide, Dine Local Night, the Winter Guild Gathering, the Winter Farmers' Market and the Incubator Kitchen.

In order to do this, we need your help!! We have overhauled our membership brochure and have designed beautiful buttons that say, "Ask me about the Local Growers Guild." We will be distributing these brochures and buttons to you and hope that you will help us distribute them. If you are a grower, please bring the brochures to any market, stand or store at which you vend. If you are a retailer, please consider displaying the brochures in your business. We encourage you to reach out to regular customers who may be interested in joining our organization. If you are a community member, please bring the brochures to any meetings or organizations where people are committed to growing the local foods network.

In addition, we are kicking off a new membership drive strategy: **The Local Foods House Party**. We are encouraging all of our retailer, community and grower members to invite people interested in a vibrant local foods economy to their private home or business for local refreshments. House parties should take place during the months of October or November.

Some suggestions for a successful house party include:

- Send guests invitations, making it clear that the event will be supporting the Local Growers Guild.
- Serve refreshments.
- Give a brief presentation about the Local Growers Guild.
- Ask everyone to consider joining the Local Growers Guild and supporting local growers.

More information (and brochures) will be mailed to every member within the next week. We realize that we are asking you to donate a significant portion of your time to the Local Growers Guild. As a token of our appreciation to you, we will be entering all participants into a raffle to win gift certificate to Finch's Brasserie. Please e-mail Katie Zukof, Assistant Director at katie@localgrowers.org or call 812-339-8198 if you have any questions and to let us know that you want to be entered into the raffle.

Thank you so much for your support! The Local Growers Guild cannot reach its full potential without you.

Resources to Check Out

Can farmers be the key to stopping global warming? **Carbon Farmers of America** thinks so. This group is working with farmers around the country to rebuild rich topsoil with a high content of organic matter. They believe we can use the natural cycle of plant life and decay to take carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and transform it into humus, effectively removing it from the atmosphere while improving the soil. Intrigued? Visit www.carbonfarmers.org for more information.

Farm Aid recently created the **Farmer Resource Network**, an online directory providing farmers with ideas and assistance for any aspect of their farms. (www.farmaid.org) The Farmer Resource Network connects growers to more than 400 organizations developing innovative approaches to producing, processing and marketing food from family farms. Their goal is to share stories about successful farm operations and connect you to people with ideas to diversify and strengthen your farm.

SARE Farmer-Rancher Grant Applications are due December 1st. Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education annually awards grants of up to \$6,000 to individual farmers and up to \$18,000 to groups of three or more farmers doing research in sustainable agriculture. For more information, visit the SARE website (www.sare.org) or contact your local Purdue Extension office and ask about the IP Video and powerpoint guides they have developed to help with grantwriting.

A Report Back from “The Politics of Food” by Maggie Sullivan

As I'm sure you all know, healthy, sustainable food is a hot topic all around the nation (and the world) these days. I had the opportunity in September to attend a three-day conference in Raleigh, N.C. entitled “The Politics of Food.” The goal of the conference was to explore how we can create a truly sustainable food system that protects the environment, pays fair wages to all workers, generates affordable food, and distributes food effectively.

There are a lot of issues to consider and the conference brought together people who were passionate about different aspects, which led to some lively discussions. I am happy to send a full report on the conference to anyone who is interested but for now, here are stories from a few different groups around the country who are working to rebuild their local food systems.

Triangle Food Commons

This group is based out of the triangle area of North Carolina (Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill) and has started a grassroots local food system effort. They have developed five different working groups to look at different aspects.

1. Local Food Distribution Systems
2. Alternative Local Economy
3. Community Farmland Trust
4. Farmer Education & Incubators
5. Affordable Local Food

Of these, I thought the most interesting was the Community Farmland Trust. They are exploring ways to preserve farmland and keep it in the hands of farmers rather than turning it over to development. Their idea is to buy land from older farmers who want to preserve the land but also have a decent retirement. The older farmer would train an apprentice who would then be allowed to farm the land, buying it back from the trust over time, or renting it in a way that he/she would be able to build up some equity/assets to buy other land or save up for retirement.

Apparently, there are several other groups across the nation that are investigating various ways to keep farmland in the hands of farmers, including Vermont Land Trust, Equity Trust, and American Farmland Trust. I believe it's an issue that needs to be examined here in Indiana, especially if we want to encourage the younger generation to start farming.

Community Farm Alliance

My favorite part of the conference was hearing about success stories and some of the best ones came from the Community Farm Alliance in our neighboring state of Kentucky. CFA did a great job bringing tobacco farmers together to lobby their state government to direct 50% of Kentucky's tobacco settlement money to the development of a sustainable food system. The money is being directed

towards a variety of projects including support to help tobacco farmers transition to fruits, vegetables, and small-scale animal production as well as developing farmers' markets and other market opportunities around the state. Perhaps even more impressive, the CFA continues to lobby their state government and achieve goals such as stopping the NAIS program in Kentucky. I think they could be a powerful ally and mentor as we think about what we can achieve here in Indiana.

Food Trust

Another cool success story was the Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools program developed by the Food Trust in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They designed a program to educate kindergarteners and their families about the importance of eating healthy, locally grown food which includes seasonal field trips to a local farm throughout the school year. The program started as a small pilot project but in 2007, the state government allocated \$500,000 in funding and has been able to implement the program in more than fifty schools.

Women, Food, and Agriculture Network

This group, based out of rural Iowa, is focused on making sure women's voices are heard in the agricultural community. Did you know that over 50% of farmland in Iowa owned or co-owned by women? They have done several studies showing that Iowa farm women are deeply committed to healthy farmland, farm families and farm communities and have a strong interest in environmental protection and community development but their voices are often unheard in the largely male-dominated agricultural community. So WFAN is doing some awesome work rallying female farmers and farm women to speak out and to fight for better farmland management and protection of farming communities. I was inspired.

How Does The Local Growers Guild Compare?

We are a young organization compared to most of the presenters who have been working on local food systems for ten or even twenty years. Still, I believe we could have done a great presentation about the work that we are doing including the Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market, the Kitchen Incubator project, our Dine Local Night events, and all the little ways we connect growers and retailers and educate consumers. I really enjoyed seeing what other groups are doing and felt very inspired but also felt proud of what we have accomplished right here in Indiana in just a handful of years. In fact, I just received a call from a group in Virginia that is very impressed by our Growers Guide and Dine Local Night events and is hoping we will help them do the same in their area. I believe it's only the beginning.

Upcoming Events

LGG BOARD MEETING (OCTOBER)

BLOOMINGTON – CALDWELL CENTER
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 7:00PM-9:00PM
Please RSVP to Maggie at 812-345-1592 in case the date/time changes.

CLOSING THE FOOD GAP

LEXINGTON, KY – EXTENSION OFFICE
OCT 16-18, \$75

Learn from regional and national experts about the process of creating sustainable food systems in Kentucky. Tickets available through KY extension at (859)312-7024 or www.sustainlex.org.

“MENU FOR THE FUTURE”

DISCUSSION GROUP

BLOOMINGTON – RACHEL'S CAFÉ
TUESDAYS, OCT 7-NOV 18, \$20

Read and discuss the Northwest Earth Institute book “Menu for the Future” including passages from Michael Pollan, Wendell Berry, Frances Moore Lappe and more regarding healthy food choices. Register with Ria at 336-2512 or mcollee@indiana.edu, or Betsy at 876-8249 or bpcaul@bluemarble.net.

STARTING A SPECIALTY FOOD BUSINESS IN INDIANA

VINCENNES, IN – APPLE HILL ORCHARD
THUR, OCT 9, 8:00AM-4:00PM, \$75

Learn the basics of starting a specialty food business from experts at Purdue University. For information or to register please contact your local Purdue Extension office.

CHEESEMAKING WORKSHOP

ASHTABULA COUNTY, OHIO
Nov 19-21, \$425

Learn the basics of cheese-making and how to establish a cheese-making business taught by Peter Dixon of the Center for Farmstead Milk Processing in Vermont. For more information, contact Ohio State Extension at 440-576-9008 or averill.10@osu.edu.

LGG BOARD MEETING (NOVEMBER)

BLOOMINGTON – CALDWELL CENTER
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD, 6:30-8:30PM

All are welcome! Please RSVP to Maggie at 812-345-1592 in case of date/time changes.

SIMPLY HEALTHY FAIR – “LOCAL FOODS AND AGING WELL”

BLOOMINGTON – UU CHURCH
Nov 13-15

Judy Wicks, owner of White Dog Café, will speak about local foods at the Monroe County Public Library on Thursday, Nov 13 at 7:00pm. Free and open to the public.

The LGG will host a four-course Local Foods Dinner on Friday, Nov 14 at 6:00pm in the Unitarian Universalist Church. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased through the LGG website.

Saturday there will be a variety of workshops about local food, healthy living, holistic health, and other topics at the Unitarian Universalist Church from 9:00 to 5:00. Tickets are \$11 (\$9 for students and seniors) and available at the door.

Saturday evening will conclude with a Healing Sounds Concert at the Unitarian Universalist Church featuring Bil Whitefeather, Janiece Jaffee, Baraka, and many others. Tickets are \$11 in advance, \$13 at the door.

For more information, visit www.indianaholistichealth.net/wellnessexpotickets.htm.

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).

News from the Local Growers Guild

Winter Market

Applications for the 2009 Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market will be sent to all LGG members and past market participants this month. Anyone else 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).

Membership Renewal

It's time to renew your membership! We will be sending out renewal forms shortly as well as brochures and additional information to help with our ongoing membership drive (see story on page 2.)

Local Foods Dinner

The Local Growers Guild will be holding a Local Foods Dinner on Friday, November 14th, as a benefit for the Guild and for the Center for Sustainable Living. Tickets are \$35 for a four-course meal featuring locally grown ingredients, prepared by Harvest Lodge (best known for their tamales). During each course, local growers will speak about their farms and the ingredients they provided for the meal. We are looking for farmers interested in selling or donating ingredients and sharing their stories at the event. Please contact Maggie at 812-345-1592 or localgrowers@localgrowers.org if interested. Tickets to the dinner will be sold through our website.

Classifieds

<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>180 square bales of hay grown from certified organic medium red clover and timothy seed(field certification in process) at May Creek Farm, south of Bloomington. Priced at \$4.00 per bale Contact Tom at 812 322-7676 or Dave at 812 322-3547.</p>
<p>FARM LABOR</p> <p>Hunter's Creek Farm is looking for interns and employees for this fall and the 2009 growing season. For the serious intern, there are 3 rooms for rent in early spring. Call for more info. 812-583-1433.</p>

<p>ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The LGG now has a forum on the internet for farmers, retailers, and consumers to exchange ideas and questions. Just click on the "Forums" link on our website and check it out!</p>
<p>WANTED</p> <p>A group of concerned citizens working to create a community garden in Bloomington (2nd and Washington) are seeking soil, compost, or other donations to the project. Contact Frederick at 574-276-4396 or Frederick.walsh@gmail.com</p> <p>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 Oct. 20th.</p>

Annual Meeting – Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who helped make our Annual Meeting a success! We had fabulous weather to enjoy Schacht Fleece and Meat Farm. Thanks very much to Matt and Mandy Corry to hosting and giving wonderful tours of their farm. Thank you also to all our retailers who donated food and gifts for our door prize drawing.

We had about forty people in attendance from all around southern Indiana and spanning all our membership categories – farmers, retailers, and community members. The business meeting was short but we talked about everything we have worked on this year and brainstormed for the future. One suggestion was to take over the old Walmart store in Bloomington and make it a hub for local food. Another was to reach out to local schoolchildren and teach them about life on the farm.

Thanks to everyone who came out and participated!

Want to improve **Locally Grown News**? Send us your stories, classifieds, information about upcoming events, and PICTURES of your farm. The LGG is also working to update its marketing materials. Please help us out!

About This Newsletter and Our Organization...

This newsletter is a publication of the Local Growers Guild, a cooperative of growers in southern Indiana dedicated to promoting local food, and is mailed to our members six times a year. Our mission is to educate, support, and connect local growers, consumers, businesses, and communities.

We run a variety of projects including publication of a "Local Growers Guide" annually, sponsorship of "Dine Local Night" events, coordination of the Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market, and development of the Bloomington incubator kitchen project.

We have three categories of membership – grower, retailer, and community member.

For additional information, please check out our website or feel free to contact us at 812-345-1592 or localgrowers@localgrowers.org.

LOCAL GROWERS GUILD

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