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Cambridge City Green Workshop: Emphasis On Eating Locally I'm Proud To Be A Locovore Supporting Our Farmers

By: Celeste Walker



The atrium of the new Civic Administration Building was the perfect place for various groups to meet and present their green strategies for a better and 'greener' City of Cambridge. As I sat and listened to the many speakers, I was continually drawn to the beauty of the atrium's focal point; a 110 m² "living wall" of tropical plants. It provides air purification, cleaning, humidity, and re-circulation of air. The soothing sound of running water provided a wonderful backdrop to the evening.

Councillor Pam Wolf proudly spoke about the City endeavouring to win A Gold Leeds Certificate for the design of the building for its environmentally-friendly design and energy conservation. In addition to the "living wall", there is a green roof, a cistern which holds 10,000 litres of rainwater for the low-flow toilets and landscaping, and much more. The official unveiling of this grand, environmentally-friendly building, will take place on June 6th.

Keynote Speakers Focus on Importance of Supporting Our Farmers

The keynote speakers for the evening were Anita Stewart, author and culinary activist, Steve Martin of Martin's Family Fruit Farm and passionate advocate for supporting local farmers, and Peter Katona, Executive Director of Foodlink of Waterloo Region, whose mission is to promote the links between local food producers, processors and consumers in the Region.

Anita Stewart, "Patron Saint of Canadian Cuisine"

Anita Stewart's latest book will arrive in stores in April. "*Anita Stewart's Canada*" speaks to her passion about Canada's "smorgasbord of ethnic traditions". Anita's speech made me



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want to embark upon a culinary pilgrimage across the country; tasting all the flavours of our multi-cultural heritage. She emphasized that Ontarians, and particularly the residents of this Region, are very fortunate to have such an abundance of food grown and produced locally.

Steve Martin of Martin's Family Fruit Farm

Steve's family farm has been on the Lobsinger Line in Waterloo since 1820. They began their apple orchard in 1971 with 100 trees and it has grown to an operation that farms 800 acres. Despite the success of being *"one of the leading packers and growers in Canada"* Steve says that farming is a challenge. He's *"amazed"* at how little people really know about the food they eat and its production.

Steve is very worried about the state of farming in Ontario. He said that at one time there were 27,000 acres of apple orchards in Ontario and now there are 15,000. The main reason for this decline is that the consumer is buying imported produce. You might think you're saving a few cents now by buying those apples from the United States, but what you're doing is undermining the Canadian farmer, and it is inevitable that one day in the future you'll pay more because the Canadian farmer won't be in business to provide competition in the marketplace. It is well known that farmers make money by selling their farms, and if this disturbing trend continues, the Ontario consumer is the one who will pay.

Peter Katona of Foodlink: A Proud Locovore

A locovore is someone who consumes local food. *"Eating locally grown and produced food is a recipe for a healthy community."* There are 1,400 farms in the Region that produce a variety of food items, and we have no excuse for not making these foods a part of our diet.

Let's say you want to be a locovore and support your local farmers, but aren't sure how to do it. The obvious question would be, where do I get local food? Do I have to travel from farm to farm? My answer is to shop at the Cambridge Farmers' Market, but there are also the farmers' markets in St. Jacob's and Kitchener. As a matter of fact, Steve is at the St. Jacob's Farmers Market every Saturday with his apples.

Foodlink also provides a Buy Local, Buy Fresh Map that features 140 of the 1,400 farms in this area. Foodlink is producing a new map and there'll be more farms added to it. You can get the map at the farmers' markets in the area, or, you can visit the Foodlink website and have a newsletter emailed to you that 'personalizes' the food-buying experience by featuring a local farmer.

If you're concerned about what you're feeding your family, then buying local just makes sense. You know where the food comes from, and are reassured of the quality of what you buy because of the rules that govern the production and processing of food in Canada. If you can't find "Pick Ontario Freshness" at your local grocery store, then ask the manager why not. Tell him/her that you want to see that Foodland Ontario symbol on products in the store.

Lots Of Great 'Green' Living Ideas From All The Exhibitors

Paul Willms of the City of Cambridge was instrumental in organizing the workshop and brought together a variety of exhibitors with great ideas. The City's **community clean-up day is on April 19th**, and this year business owners are urged to take part in the **April 18th "20-minute Makeover"**, where business owners will take time to clean the area around their place of business.

Joanie Schartzberg of **The Home Depot** spoke about the over-2000 eco-option products that the store provides. Simply ask an associate about these products. Brian May of **Chaplin Family YMCA** on Hespeler would like to extend an invitation to clean up around the YMCA on Community clean-up day on April 19th and then have fun at the BBQ at noon.

Don Corry said that for all of us who want to *"Eat Locally, Eat Wisely"* there's no better place to go than **The Cambridge Farmers' Market**. It's one of my favourite ways to spend a Saturday morning. Start your morning with a hot coffee and hot apple dumpling at the Wesley United Church, then stock up on food for the week.

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If you ate today, you really can thank a farmer, personally, at The Cambridge Farmers' Market.



Pam Wolf, Councillor, City of Cambridge welcomes us all to the City's grand opening celebrations of the new Civic Administration building. See for yourself the many features of sustainable design in architecture that could win this building a Gold Leeds Certificate. Developed by the Canadian Green Building Council, it is a point-based rating system in which points are earned for building attributes considered environmentally beneficial.



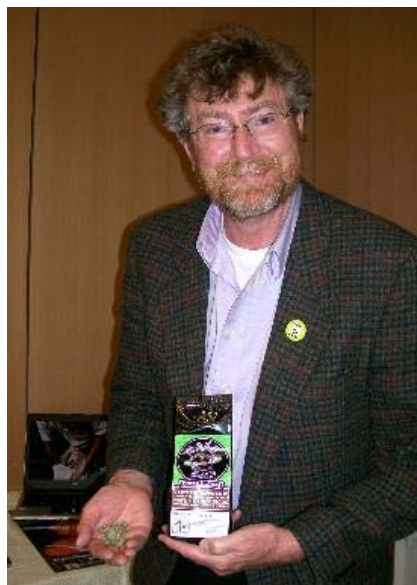
Steve Martin, Martin's Family Fruit Farm; Anita Stewart, Author & Culinary Activist; Peter Katona, Foodlink of Waterloo Region were the keynote speakers at the 15th Annual Cambridge City Green Strategy Workshop.



Kim Kidd Kitagawa of Waterloo Waste Management spoke about reducing, reusing and recycling when buying food. Here are some tips: Use re-useable shopping bags. Recycle food packaging. Compost food scraps using a backyard composter, a green bin (if available in your neighbourhood), or, you can vermicompost (compost using worms). Did you know that 1 lb of worms can consume 1 lb of table scraps?



Shana Barker and Gayle Labuz, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Affairs want you to "Pick Ontario Freshness". Ontarians have said that freshness is their number one concern (73%), followed by food safety (60%) and price (43%). Buying local produce supports Ontario farmers, the local economy, and, you can be sure its fresh.



Peter Cameron, Planet Bean Coffee carries Fair Trade Certified coffee from Peru and

Ethiopia. Fair Trade emphasizes the importance of supporting farmers and ensuring their quality of life.



Amanda Newell, rare Charitable Research Reserve; is a 913-acre reserve which has a number of programs that are all conservation-based and provides education about sustainable food production and has a community garden plot program.



Dave Steffler, Grand River Car Share; is a non-profit cooperative where you can "Drive when you need to, Save money when you don't", and is the perfect compliment to utilizing Grand River Transit service.



Rob Johnson, Wellington County Green Legacy welcomes volunteers and school groups to help plant more than 154,000 trees each year. Trees release oxygen, sequester carbon dioxide, prevent erosion, provide habitat, filter the air and water, provide shade, cool the air, provide wood products, and a spiritual connection to the land.



Carol Popovic, Community Gardens Council supervises the 37 community gardens that are planted in the Region, including 5 in Cambridge. Neighbourhoods such as Fiddlesticks get a boost from the cooperative experience of planting a community garden.

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