

SAVOUR

SERVE UP THE JEWELS OF ONTARIO'S FARMLAND
 ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: RUTH KLAHSEN & THE MONTFORTE BRAND • A DAY IN
 THE LIFE OF A GO-BETWEEN • PRESSURE COOKER TV WORKS UP A SWEAT

Earth to Table: A Restaurant & Farm Relationship

The book had modest beginnings. "We had in mind a little spiral-bound book," says Jeff Crump, Executive Chef of Ancaster Old Mill and Savour Ontario member. He wanted to document how his kitchen and a local farm had found an exciting way to work together. Then Random House got interested, then a New York agent, then *Earth to Table: A Year's Relationship Between a Restaurant and an Organic Farm* sold its Chinese publishing rights mid-December to make the book available to the Chinese, Hong Kong and Taiwan markets. That's a lot of books.

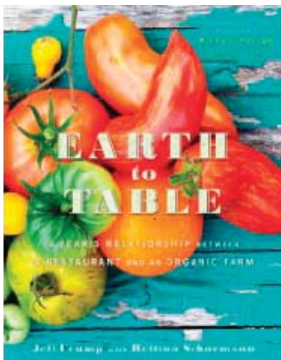
Back at the restaurant, local food is about "doing well by doing good," says Crump. About 10 to 15% of his business is people seeking out the restaurant specifically because of its approach.

"A lot of farmers are gun-shy about working with chefs," says Crump, but he found his match in Chris Krucker of ManoRun Organic Farm. "Chris got it," says Crump.

Everybody got involved. Farm hands and kitchen crew swapped shifts to feel how the other half worked. Crump was shocked at how difficult it is to pick spinach and beans. He doesn't mind admitting that he doesn't have the back to work bent over all day.

The shift-swaps continued, but for Pastry Chef Bettina Schormann, the experience cut deeper.

When Crump first took over the restaurant's kitchens, Schormann had been thinking about getting out of



Earth to Table will be in bookstores September 2009.



Left: Jeff Crump, right: Chris Krucker

the business. But Crump's ideas about working with the farm cast a new light on her work. She started going to the farm on her day off and then decided to deepen her involvement.

Schormann and Crump learned from food expert Anita

"I wanted witnesses. I wanted to mark the moment so that we would remember it."

Stewart that Red Fife wheat—the mother of all Canadian wheats and the reason why Canada became famous internationally for her wheat—was nearly extinct. Its use went into decline when agriculture became industrialized, and sturdier and higher-yielding strains went into production. Red Fife lost out.

"Bettina wanted to grow it, harvest it, mill it and make bread with it for the restaurant," explains Crump, which is how Schormann became the book's co-author. The book's story line follows the thread of her grain, from seed to sustenance.

When the first harvest of Schormann's wheat came back from the mill as a large sack of flour, Crump gathered his staff and said, "This is really something, or something along those lines," laughs Crump. "I wanted witnesses. I wanted to mark the moment so that we would remember it." Thanks to Jamie Kennedy, also a Savour Ontario member, who started using Red Fife wheat and talking about it, other chefs got interested, and demand grew so much that Red Fife is now available commercially milled. Chefs can get it through distributor Grain Process in 50-pound bags. The public can buy it through Culinarium.ca.

www.ancasteroldmill.com

www.manorun.com

www.earthtotable.ca

www.culinarium.ca

Grain Process 416 291 3226



Bettina Schormann

Business is Good

Ruth Klahsen & the Monforte Brand

When cheese-maker Ruth Klahsen stood before the panel of millionaire entrepreneurs in the first season of CBC's *Dragon's Den*, she was undaunted. She was facing down the kind of investors who would never consider putting their money into expanding the production of hand-wrought food. They're looking for a hefty return in profits, not exactly what a pre-eminent Ontario artisan can provide.

Still, Klahsen made her spirited case and lost, but she has proven that it's possible to get your market to take notice of you, to recognize the quality of your product, to buy regularly from you, to rave about you and to feature your brand by name on menus or on specialty retail displays.

The proof is on the palate. Last summer, *Toronto Life* food writer Chris Nutall-Smith wrote, "Ruth Klahsen's Monforte Dairy makes the best cheeses in Ontario. Full stop."

The trajectory of Klahsen's success began with quality. She pays a premium for the sheep's milk from naturally reared stock. Knowing what demanding chefs want, having been one herself, she created cheeses that gave her a reputation—which gave her a market.

Hitting nearly \$1 million in sales in 2008, Monforte made big plans: a new sustainable, micro-production dairy in the Community Shared Agriculture model.

Klahsen will sell "futures" in cheese and an expanded product line paying out delicious dividends.

www.monfordedairy.com

Ruth Klahsen



Photo: Terry Manzo

Good Help is Good to Find

Local food has the government's attention in a big way. The Ontario Market Investment Fund is serving up help as an expression of the province's commitment to local food. The fund is offering support to encourage strategic alliances among individuals, farmers, businesses, processors,

retailers and foodservice, as well as community, agricultural and industry organizations. Marketing, market research and promotion are also on the radar, because getting the word out is key. For more information and an application, go to: www.ontario.ca/omif.



Bright Ideas Chefs Work the Fields

Future farmers get a leg up from the 16 small organic Ontario farms belonging to CRAFT, the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training. Everdale is one of these farms. Everdale usually takes on six farmer interns, but last year they offered the first-ever internship for a chef-farmer. Stratford Chef School graduate Mark Seiling (kneeling in front) has just finished his stint. He's waiting to hear from a friend who is in the market for a farm. Once the deal is done, Seiling will work the farm with her, putting cooking on hiatus—for now.

www.everdale.org www.craftontario.ca



The Road Less Traveled

A Day in the Life of a Go-Between Team

Paul Sawtell and Grace Mandarano, shown above, have been running 100km Foods for about a year, and they've already made an important economic and culinary impact.

The partners collect seasonal vegetables from about 20 Ontario producers and then distribute them to 30 Toronto chefs for whom local food really matters. Michael Steh is Executive Chef of Toronto's Reds Bistro and a Savour Ontario member. He checks in with 100km to see what they can bring next week and to see what he can put on his menus.

"We saw the value of farmers and chefs having an authentic relationship

because it fosters mutual respect," says Mandarano, who points out that their company can get local products into the hands of chefs within 24 to 48 hours of being pulled from the ground.

"Chefs keep telling us that this is exactly what they're looking for," she continues, adding that many of these farmers were already coming to the city with their harvest. "That's 20 trucks on the road and 20 farmers away from their land," she says, a situation she's happy their distributorship has changed.

Most of Sawtell's work is on the road. His circuit begins in Toronto, heading north to Uxbridge, through

Bradford and onto a number of other spots in between. When he hits Barrie, a number of smaller farmers drive to meet him there. At each stop, and in a personal exchange with each farmer, Sawtell gathers what the earth yielded that day and finds out what will be ready for picking the following week.

Coming back, Sawtell's destination is the Toronto warehouse where the products are sorted. He tells Mandarano what will be available next week. She prepares the product list that she fires off to her client chefs, and they'll place their orders later in the week. Tuesday and Wednesday, Sawtell does his rounds and completes the circle by dropping these special orders at the backdoor of professional kitchens all over town.

www.100kmfoods.com



Cooking Up a Storm

Brings Job Barriers Down

Foodshare has been collecting local produce for distribution for 14 years. The agency is strong on education and community, with a focus on local food, farming, nutrition, children and hunger. The Focus on Youth Intern Project is one of Foodshare's consistent winners for improving life for disadvantaged youth.

Under the direction of co-ordinator Morris Komakech, the project engages 10 youths to overcome their employment barriers with hands-on experience. Five interns work the warehouse, the middle ground that connects the farm to our food at home, understanding where the food comes from, where it goes, and how to give it the care it deserves. The other five youths don chef coats and use knives and fire to transform raw ingredients into delicious, healthy meals.

"This program has a 95% success rate," beams Komakech, which is good news for foodservice. Its labour force needs restocking. www.foodshare.net

Some culinary participants of the Youth Project.





Declare your commitment to the quality & sustainability of local food, and join Savour Ontario.

Pressure Cooker TV in HD

Hot-Stuff Chefs Keep Cool Heads or Go Home

Clearly a case of too many cooks, *Pressure Cooker* is a new reality cooking show that eliminates 15 out of 16 chefs in nine episodes.

Pressure Cooker pits four teams in black-box competitions with the chefs wearing wireless heart monitors whose readings are shown in real time.

Shot in HD at Niagara College's teaching kitchens, and running on SUN TV and MEN TV, the show features a panel of tasting judges who don't pull their punches—in one case, dropping his fork after a bite of a salad. "It's inedible," says Mark Picone, chef-owner of his own culinary studio in Vineland. The two other tasting judges are Connie Volino, a seasoned culinary competitor, and Tawfik Shehata, the chef at Vertical in Toronto.

Competitors also endure the scrutiny of up-close kitchen judges who are micro-observing every move while the chefs work—and then finally they count down the seconds left ... "Three. Two. One. Hands off the plates!"

The producers are cooking up a deal to rebroadcast, so the name of the winner remains a closely guarded secret (for anyone who didn't catch it the first time around).

Stay tuned to www.thepressurecooker.tv for developments.



Savour Ontario



Ontario

A Message from Savour Ontario Dining

The Savour Ontario Dining program was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism, and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, and is part of the Pick Ontario Freshness initiative. The program is designed to promote fresh, high-quality Ontario foods and to make them the preferred choice of consumers, retailers and restaurants.

Savour Ontario encourages fine dining and vacation restaurants to communicate their pride in quality, flavour and sustainability. If your restaurant features and identifies Ontario food and beverages prominently on menu, you may benefit from this innovative branding and marketing program.

Contact us at Savour@Ontario.ca

- Member Restaurants**
- 13 Mountain Street, Grimsby
 - 360 The Restaurant at the CN Tower, Toronto
 - Absinthe, Ottawa
 - Amelia's Garden at The Waring House, Picton
 - Ancaster Old Mill, Ancaster
 - Angéline's Restaurant, Inn & Spa, Bloomfield
 - Benmillar Inn & Spa, Goderich
 - Bloomfield Carriage House Restaurant, Bloomfield
 - Canoe Restaurant and Bar, Toronto
 - Charbries, Waterloo
 - Chez Victor, Toronto
 - Clara's Fine Dining at the Claramount, Picton
 - Coca, Toronto
 - Courtyard Restaurant, Ottawa
 - Cowbell, Toronto
 - Crush Wine Bar, Toronto
 - Czechoski, Toronto
 - Domus Café, Ottawa
 - Eclipse at Deerhurst, Huntsville
 - Eddington's, Exeter
 - Eganridge Inn, Country Club & Spa, Fenelon Falls
 - Elmhirst's Resort, Keene
 - EPIC, Toronto
 - Escabeche, Prince of Wales Hotel, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - Foster's Inn Restaurant, Stratford
 - Gananoque Inn, Gananoque
 - George Restaurant, Toronto
 - Globe Bistro, Toronto
 - Harvest, Bloomfield
 - Hillebrand Estates Winery Restaurant, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - Idlewyld Inn, London
 - Il Fornello, Toronto
 - Jamie Kennedy at the Gardiner, Toronto
 - Jamie Kennedy Wine Bar & Restaurant, Toronto
 - Keefer Mansion Inn, Thorold
 - Kettle Creek Inn, Port Stanley
 - Langdon Hall Dining Room & Terrace, Cambridge
 - LIV, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - Luke's Gastronomy, Kingston
 - M.E. & Suzie's, Port Stanley
 - Murray Street, Ottawa
 - Niagara Culinary Institute, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - On the Twenty, Jordan
 - Pangaea, Toronto
 - Peller Estates Winery Restaurant, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - Perigee, Toronto
 - Reds Bistro, Toronto
 - Restaurant Tony de Luca, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - Riverbend Inn, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - Sam Jakes Inn, Merrickville
 - Sequel Restaurant & Catering, Toronto
 - Severn Lodge, Port Severn
 - Shaw Café and Wine Bar, Niagara-On-The-Lake
 - Sir Sam's Inn, Eagle Lake
 - Six Steps, Toronto
 - Spencer's at the Waterfront, Burlington
 - Splendido, Toronto
 - Stargazers on the Thames, Pain Court
 - The Athlone Inn, Gananoque
 - The Birches Restaurant, Huntsville
 - The Breadalbane Inn, Fergus
 - The Charles Inn, Niagara-on-the-Lake
 - The Church Restaurant, Stratford
 - The Devonshire Inn on the Lake, Wellington
 - The Drake Hotel, Toronto
 - The Elora Mill Inn, Elora
 - The Little Inn of Bayfield, Bayfield
 - The Merrill Inn, Picton
 - The Millcroft Inn and Spa, Alton
 - The Old Mill Inn & Spa, Toronto
 - The Old Prune, Stratford
 - The Westover Inn, St. Marys
 - Thuet Cuisine – Bite Me! Restaurant, Toronto
 - Treadwell – Farm to Table, Port Dalhousie
 - Trinity House Inn, Gananoque
 - Veritas, Toronto
 - Verses, Kitchener
 - Vertical, Toronto
 - Woodlawn Inn Restaurant, Cobourg
 - Woolfy's at Wildwood, St. Marys
 - Zee's Patio & Grill, Niagara-on-the-Lake