

Dispatches

Now is time to sign up for Senior FarmShare Program

Mainers have great access to fresh local foods. They revel in the juiciness of dew-kissed berries, the crunch of sweet corn and the tangy pleasure of a bite of goat cheese from the farm down the road.

But there are some people on limited incomes who can't afford to eat this way, and some who just simply lack the mobility to wander through farmers market stalls on a Saturday morning.

The Maine Senior FarmShare Program can help bring fresh, local fruits and vegetables back to their tables all summer long. This is the time of year to sign up for the program, so if you know an eligible Maine senior who could qualify, why not help them get started?

Seniors who qualify get \$50 worth of fresh produce from local farms. You may not think that will go very far, but for people on limited incomes, every bit helps stretch the budget. Plus, the 127 farmers who participate every year have been known to be a little extra generous from time to time.

Last year, 18,739 Maine seniors took advantage of the program to supplement their diets.

The program is based on the CSA model. The farmer and the senior sign a contract detailing how and when the produce will be delivered over an eight-week period. Some farmers require pick-up at the farm or farmers' market, and others offer delivery.

To be eligible for the state Senior FarmShare Program, a senior must be a Maine resident, at least 60 years old, and have a household income of no more than \$20,665 for an individual or \$27,991 for a two-person household.

To find a participating farmer, contact the Area Agency on Aging at (877) 353-3771, or check out the list at getrealmaine.com.

For more information, contact Julie Waller, manager of the program, at 287-7526, or email her at julie.a.waller@maine.gov.

ALFRED

Dessert & Tea will benefit York County hunger groups

Looking for something different to do on Mother's Day?

Enjoy a little dessert and tea, and fight hunger at the same time, at the Mother's Day Dessert & Tea to benefit York County Shelter programs and the group Mothers & Others Against Hunger. The event will be held from 1 to 4 p.m., and includes a silent auction.

The shelter's dining common will be transformed into a formal tea house on May 13, with linen tablecloths and napkins, flowers and waitstaff.

Desserts from the shelter's Bakery at Notre Dame will be available at prices that are affordable for families. The menu will include a mixed berries shortcake or slice of pie for \$2.50 (add \$1 more for ice cream or whipped cream); fruit turnovers for \$2.50; a brownie, Congo bar or fruit square for \$1.50; a whoopie pie for \$2.50; and Scottish oak cake for \$1.95.

There will also be savory options available, including turkey, ham, veggie and egg salad sandwiches.

In addition to teas, coffee, milk and colas, guests can order a Shirley Temple (lemon-lime soda, orange slice, cherry, ice and a splash of grenadine) or a Roy Rogers (cola, orange slice, cherry, ice and a splash of grenadine). Two music students from the University of Southern Maine will play classical and fiddle music during the tea.

Call 793-2759. To learn more about the organization, go to yorkcountyshelterprograms.org.

BELFAST

Annual Empty Bowl Supper will raise funds Saturday

The annual Empty Bowl Supper will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Miller Street.

The supper is a fundraiser for the El Salvador Sistering Committee of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. Guests pay

\$25 (\$35 maximum for families) for a Maine-made bowl that will be filled with soup. Breads and desserts will also be available.

Live music will be provided by the Tom Luther Trio, performing original modern jazz.

The committee brings Salvadorans to Maine to tour farms, meet with community organizers and agricultural officials, and participate in the Common Ground Country Fair.

Empty Bowl suppers started in Michigan in 1990 as a way to remind people of world hunger. The events are used today to support food banks, soup kitchens and other organizations that fight hunger.

For more information, call 568-4142.

FALMOUTH

Harvest for Hunger looking for helping hands

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension's Master Gardener program is asking local gardeners to consider planting an extra row of fruit and vegetables this year to donate to local soup kitchens and food pantries.

The Maine Harvest for Hunger Program is especially looking for people to grow fruits, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, winter squash and potatoes.

The USDA estimates that 10 percent of Maine households are "food insecure." More than 40 percent of Maine children under age 12 show some evidence of hunger.

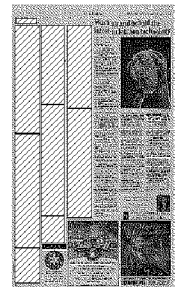
For more information or to enroll in the Maine Harvest for Hunger, call Colleen Hoyt at (800) 287-1471, or go to umaine.edu/cumberland/programs/maine-harvest-for-hunger.

FREEPORT

Plant-based cooking classes offered at church

Retired surgeon Dr. Gaylen Johnson and his wife, Kitty Johnson, will offer two classes on plant-based cooking from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday and May 6 at the Freeport Seventh-day Adventist Church.

During the classes, Johnson will discuss how to reduce the risk of



cancer and diabetes through diet and lifestyle choices. Kitty Johnson will then demonstrate how to cook eight vegan recipes. All attendees will have the opportunity to taste the dishes and take home a free cookbook.

There is no cost to attend the classes, but donations will be accepted. The church is located at 63 Pownal Road. Call 926-5551.

PORTLAND

Break free of sugar habit with macrobiotic expert

Americans eat a lot of sugar – 158 pounds per person per year, to be exact. But all this sugar can take a toll on health, in the form of obesity, diabetes, tooth decay, yeast infections, joint pain and memory loss. Learn how to break free of sugar with noted macrobiotic expert Warren Kramer.

He'll be in Portland on May 4 and 5 to discuss this topic. On May 4, he'll deliver a dinner lecture, "How to Lick the Sugar Habit and Understanding the Importance of Sweet." The event takes place from 6:30 to 9 p.m.

From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 5, Kramer will offer a cooking class called "Cooking for Blood Sugar Stability." He'll discuss how snacking and overeating can be signs of unstable blood sugar.

It costs \$80 to attend both classes, or \$45 for one. Both events take place at the Five Seasons Cooking School, 87 Saint Lawrence St., Portland. Call 233-6846 to register.

Winemaker Dinner Series welcomes visitor from Italy

Vignola Cinque Terre, 10 Dana St., will launch another installment of its Winemaker Dinner Series on May 8 when it welcomes Luca Currado Vietti of the Vietti Family Winery in the Piedmont region of Italy.

The evening will begin with a reception at 6 p.m., followed by a dinner that will include, among other dishes, veal carpaccio, crispy

rabbit salad, Maine potato gnocchi and grilled duck breast and leg.

The dinner costs \$75 per person, and seating is limited. Call 772-1330 for reservations.

Back Bay Grill launching new bistro menu this week

Leave it to Larry Matthews to come up with the idea of serving American Caviar Pizza.

Matthews, chef/owner of Back Bay Grill, 65 Portland St., is launching a new bistro menu this week that will only be available on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights.

The menu will change from week to week, and will feature two courses for \$30 per person. Wine pairings will be available for an additional \$10 per person.

This week's menu starts with a first course of lamb carpaccio or a mushroom and leek tart. For the main course, customers have the choice of an apple-brined pork chop served with buttery potato sauce, chives and bourbon-glazed apples, or cast iron skillet-seared local fish served with orange-scented couscous, tomato brown butter vinaigrette, braised fennel and orange powder.

The bistro menus will be available through June 7 and posted each week on the restaurant's Facebook page.

Browne Trading Market hosts wine, cheese tasting

Browne Trading Market will have a free wine and cheese tasting from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday.

The market, located at 262 Commercial St., will feature wines from Orin Swift Cellars in Napa Valley paired with the market's own smoked salmon and gourmet cheeses.

Wines will include a 2010 Veladora Sauvignon Blanc; Abstract, a red blend; The Prisoner, a red blend; Palermo Cabernet Sauvignon; and a 2009 Saldo Zinfandel.

For information, call 775-7560.

Dozen Maine restaurants

join in 'Dining Out for Life'

About a dozen Maine restaurants are participating in "Dining Out for Life" on Thursday, a program in which restaurants all around the country donate a portion of their proceeds for the evening to an HIV/AIDS organization in their city.

Since it began in Philadelphia 22 years ago, the program has expanded to 60 cities and more than 3,000 restaurants.

Portland-area restaurants donating 25 percent of their proceeds Thursday include The Good Table and Sea Glass in Cape Elizabeth; and Pepperclub, Blue Spoon, Figa and Plush West End in Portland. Their funds will support the Frannie Peabody Center in Portland.

To see a complete list of participating Maine restaurants, go to diningoutforlife.com.

'Pints for Peace' raises funds for Friends Forever nonprofit

Andy's Old Port Pub, 94 Commercial St., will hold a "Pints for Peace" launch party at 4 p.m. May 12.

Pints for Peace is a national event that raises money for Friends Forever, a nonprofit organization that funds two-week youth leadership and conflict resolution retreats for teenagers from historically troubled global regions such as Northern Ireland and Israel. The teenagers are hosted by local communities in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Louisiana.

Participants register online, then collect pledges from friends, family and co-workers.

The top 25 fundraisers are entered into a drawing to win a trip for two to Ireland.

Other Portland bars and restaurants holding promotions for Pints for Peace include Bull Feeney's, Portland Pie Co. and Bubba's Sulky Lounge.

Go to pintsforpeace.org, call (603) 433-7607, or email bcarrigg@friendsforeverusa.org

– Compiled by Meredith Goad and Avery Yale Kamila, Staff Writers