

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Welcome to the first edition of the new food-focused newsletter series, “*Food For Thought*”, brought to you by the Food Committee at Calvin Hill. This newsletter will highlight the many wonderful food celebrations and activities at Calvin Hill, and provide interesting and current information about food and nutrition to promote healthy living for Calvin Hill families.

FIRST POTLUCK OF THE YEAR

The first Calvin Hill potluck dinner of the year took place on November 18th, with many families in attendance and an impressive assortment of bountiful, homemade food and ethnic dishes. Among the highlights were small Pakistani chicken kabobs, great salads, lasagna, stuffed shells, turkey meatballs, Louisiana corn soup, brisket with baby carrots, and delicious desserts including a bottomless bowl of chocolate mousse.



Thank you for your delicious dishes, warm company, and friendly conversations. We hope to see you at the next Calvin Hill potluck in the spring - a specific date will be announced in the New Year!

A VISIT TO THE YALE SUSTAINABLE FARM

This past fall, the Kindergarten class made a special trip to the Yale Sustainable Farm, located on Edwards Street in New Haven, just past Science Hill. At the Yale Farm, students, faculty, staff and community members come together to learn about the connection between land and food. It is a lush, productive, organic farm that produces hundreds of varieties of vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers. Year round, the Farm's harvest is sold by students at CitySeed's Wooster Square Farmers' Market, and the Union League, one of New Haven's most highly regarded restaurants, regularly features produce from the Farm.

The kindergarten class had a wonderful time touring the garden, exploring the vegetables, and tasting tomatoes and flowers! Below is a thank you note that the class wrote to Laura Hess, their guide around the garden:



Dear Laura,

Thank you for showing us around the garden. We had so much fun. Thank you for everything to eat. Thank you for letting us taste the flower. The garden was so beautiful. Thank you for letting us try the tomatoes. Thank you for letting us see the flowers and the vegetables. The tomatoes were so good. Thank you for letting us be quiet and see the butterfly. It's a monarch butterfly. I like the color of the butterfly and your garden is beautiful.

*Love,
The Kindergarten*



"The butterfly is on the flower and we're being quiet so we could see the butterfly."



**To Learn More
About the Yale
Sustainable Farm,
visit their website:
www.yale.edu/sustainablefood/**

FOOD FACTS

These days there are more places for families to enjoy the freshness and goodness of organic and locally grown foods. Besides the supermarkets, you can find them in health food stores, specialty stores, co-ops, gourmet delis, farmers' markets, and community-supported agriculture programs. Although it's becoming common knowledge that there are benefits to eating organic and locally grown foods, there's sometimes confusion over what these terms mean, and where to find them.

What does “*organic*” really mean?

The term "organic" refers specifically to how something is grown or produced. Items can only be labeled organic if they have gone through a USDA certification process. Certified organic food products cannot involve the use of conventional pesticides, antibiotics, chemicals, preservatives, fertilizers, food additives, or genetic engineering. Organic meat and dairy products are derived from animals that are fed only organic grain and are not given antibiotics, hormones or supplemental medications. Often, within the same supermarket, both organic and conventional versions of products are available. Processed organic food usually contains only organic ingredients, or if there are a number of ingredients, at least a minimum percentage of the plant and animal ingredients must be organic, and non-organically produced ingredients must still meet requirements.

What about foods that are labeled “*all natural*”?

The label ‘all-natural’ identifies meats or grocery items that are raised or produced without antibiotics, hormones, and artificial additives. All meats labeled organic are all-natural.

With meats, you may also want to keep your eyes open for “*Grass-fed*” labels – the label grass-fed guarantees that beef cattle have grazed on grass, rather than being grain-fed on corn. Grass-fed beef is lower in fat, has higher-quality protein, and has more omega-3 acids than its corn-fed counterpart. Grass-fed beef also has lower ecological and public health costs.

For more information on organic foods, please consult the following articles published by the USDA and Mayo Clinic:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/Consumers/brochure.html>

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/organic-food/NU00255>



EATING “GREEN”

How can I find food products that are grown locally?

Buying locally grown produce ensures that it is fresh, and usually means that it was picked when ripe, rather than picked early in order to withstand shipping. By purchasing close to home, you can also support the local economy.

The taste of a tomato or a head of lettuce depends on what variety it is, where and how it was grown, when it was harvested, and how long it took to travel to your plate. Purchasing in-season from farms in the region guarantees ripe, flavorful produce, preserves rural landscapes, and reduces the environmental costs of transportation.

Places to Shop for Locally Grown and/or Organic Foods

New Haven Farmers' Markets

In July of 2004, CitySeed launched City Farmers' Market in Wooster Square. Since then, the organization has started three additional markets around New Haven, some running from July through October, others from May through December. These farmers' markets connect local farmers directly with residents of New Haven, and provide some of the most fresh and delicious meat, dairy, and produce around. Among the foods you can find at market are: breads, cheeses, milk, yogurt, eggs, meat, seafood, maple syrup, fruit, and all kinds of seasonal vegetables, including salad greens. For information about all market locations and the vendors at each market, visit www.cityseed.org. Two of the more popular markets are below:

Wooster Square

Saturdays, 9am – 1pm

Downtown

Church Street at the Green

Wednesdays, 11am – 4pm

Edge of the Woods

379 Whalley Avenue, New Haven

Edge of the Woods is New Haven's largest organic foods store. They have a bakery, deli, and juice bar, in addition to grocery items including produce and bulk foods. Some items to look for in particular are: Green and Black's chocolate (organic, fair trade, excellent chocolate), Equal Exchange coffee (fair trade), and local milk.



For more information and resources on “eating local” please visit the *Yale Sustainable Food Project* <http://www.yale.edu/sustainablefood/> and *CitySeed* <http://www.cityseed.org>



Nica's market

603 Orange Street, New Haven

Nica's is a small, family-owned Italian market. They sell Beaver Brook aged cheeses and milk (see below), Calabro mozzarella and ricotta, made locally in East Haven, Chabaso bread (see below), and local produce.

Direct Sources for Food and Drink

Beaver Brook Farm (cheese, milk, sausage)

Sankow family
139 Beaver Brook Road
Lyme, CT 06371
1-800-501-9665

Beaver Brook farm is a family-owned, 175-acre farm in the Pleasant Valley section of Lyme, CT, home to 600 sheep, and some cows and lambs. All of their animals are raised on pasture, without hormones or antibiotics. They make aged cheeses and lamb sausage for reasonable prices. See their website for contact information: www.beaverbrookfarm.com

High Hill Orchard (apples, pears, cider)

Wayne Young
170 Fleming Road
Meriden, CT
(203) 294-0276

High Hill Orchard is a 25-acre orchard that has been in Wayne Young's family for three generations. Wayne practices Integrated Pest Management, which means that he takes an ecological approach to pest control, using an array of complementary methods: natural predators and biological controls, various physical techniques, and pesticides as a last resort. Wayne grows apples and pears, and makes great cider.

Chabaso Bakery (bread and baked goods)

360 James Street
New Haven, CT 06513

Chabaso bakery is located in Fair Haven on James Street. You can buy their bread and baked goods on Chapel Street at Atticus Café, at their factory outlet on James Street, or at a host of other markets in New Haven. Chabaso's artisanal breads have no preservatives, use unbleached, unbromated flour, and are designated kosher. Their breads have been voted "Best Bread in Connecticut" for two straight years. For more information about the types of bread they offer, see www.chabaso.com



Do you have an idea for a topic that you would like us to address in a future newsletter? If so, please drop a note in Rebecca Puhl's parent pocket in the Three's room, or send her an email at Rebecca.puhl@yale.edu



**Stay tuned for more
food news and
healthy recipes in
February's
newsletter!**