

# Buy fresh farm products from area growers

## 'Locavore' movement arrives

By Dotti Farrington

Local farmers are responding to an increased public interest in locally-produced agricultural products.

Don Minto of the island's historic Watson Farm joined the Coastal Growers Farm Market cooperative. It reopened for the season in early June at Casey's Farm just over the Jamestown Bridge in Saunderstown. His specialty is grass fed and pastured lamb and beef that he is newly licensed to sell at the location.

Minto said that getting the permits to sell the fresh cut meat was "quite a challenge." He is well pleased with success with the system, and with the selling so far. He noted that marketing direct from his own farm was not an option because island traffic is not enough to support such an operation.

"Coastal has a lot of freshly harvested products and a really nice atmosphere," he said. They are open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon.

Minto reported his farm also provides bulls to farmers throughout New England. He said he also gets frequent requests for blankets of home grown wool.

Watson Farm does not operate a produce stand at its location. It is open to visitors Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. for two mile, self-guided walking tours. Non-residents pay admission to help support farm preservation.

### Community Farm

Community Farm leader Robert Sutton and about 150 volunteers have been at work for weeks at their 4 acre community garden at Ceppi Farm on Eldred Avenue and East Shore Road. They grow, harvest and deliver about 6 tons of produce a year for people in need, as well as stocking a local stand to help pay for expenses.



Produce of the seven-year-old operation goes to food pantries and meal sites in Jamestown, Newport, Charlestown and Providence.

The farm stand, known for wildflower honey as well as vegetables and herbs, will open to the public as produce is available, on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon.

Volunteers work Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. until sundown through October. Residents and off-islanders, individually or in carpools, are invited to farm from one hour a season to several hours a week, as they choose. Details are available from Sutton at 423-0910.

### East Ferry Market

Islander Jennifer Talancy was due to open her fourth season early in July at her select location at East Ferry on Conanicut Avenue in the heart of Jamestown's village. She will offer her certified organic produce Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Wednesdays from 3 to 6 p.m. under a 10-foot square canopy later this summer.

She recently was given town permission to expand to the canopy to help keep her customers, her produce and herself from wilting, as they did under the 6 foot round umbrella of earlier years that proved to be inadequate. Her Stea-

rns Farm Organic Produce farm stand offers about 30 vegetables as they come into season, plus herbs and cut flowers from her East Shore Road farm.

### Hodgkiss Farm

Gail Chase at Hodgkiss Farm, North Main Road, had a one-week stand with kale, herbs and strawberries early this month. She has not set an opening date for the season, pending replacement of her stand, which was felled by time and weather. She has farmed an acre "of basic vegetables, nothing exotic" since 1982.

Chase noted concern about the summer's outlook because it has been dry so far this season. The Hodgkiss stand is known for bi-color corn, herbs, dried flowers, pumpkins and varieties of squash, as well as firewood. Farm fields are rented to other farmers for hay, she noted. Her husband, Harry, works the Chase Farm in Portsmouth.

### Dutra Farm

Jessie Dutra, at the farm she and her husband Joe operate on North Main Road at Weeden Lane, reported they have been focusing on their Holstein cows. They are members of the five-farm dairy cooperative producing Rhody Fresh milk sold in supermarkets.

"We no longer have chickens, so no eggs, and we do not have a farm

stand, but may add one soon, but not this year, to help stay sustainable," Dutra said. "We are looking at a different direction, maybe ice cream. We have to supplement the dairy operation," she added.

### Beaverhead Farm

Beaverhead Farm at Fort Getty is foregoing a farm stand for the second year as it works on cattle breeding and cross breeding. Nonnie O'Farrell reported that a specific project is breeding her Scottish Highlands with Watson Farm Red Devons. "They tell us the new breed of Highlands with Devons is Heaven," she laughed.

She said the farm may return to a farm stand in the future. The livestock are the emphasis for now, with beef expected to be available in a year. Meanwhile, she emphasized that Beaverhead is certified organic, and follows the grass fed and pasturing practices for its animals and those of other farmers' livestock pastured there.

### Other farm news

Sutton noted that farmers coordinate efforts through meetings at the Conanicut Grange Hall on West Street. He cited the new \$15,000 no-till seeder that is shared by island farmers as an example of cooperative fund-raising.

Sutton also boosted the continuing, or perhaps increased importance of the Jamestown Farms 2004 Viability Report that tells how and why farms are such an important cultural, esthetic and economic contributor to the quality of life in Jamestown. Key points are purchase of local produce, farmland preservation, and working landscapes.

Grange farmers also are involved in the Jamestown Blankets project, to which Minto referred, to develop the Rhody Warm Blankets brand made from 100 percent wool of Conanicut Island and mainland sheep.

### Pricing

Sutton cited Ken Ayars, chief of the Division of Agriculture at

the state Department of Environmental Management, for giving "highest priority to local production." Ayars office said that farm markets in the state have seen a consistency of prices competitive with supermarkets.

Local farmers rate their own sales, and those of others they see, as close to, if not better than major stores, with farm market produce coming way ahead in the freshness that seems important to their customers.

Sutton was asked about a "locavores" movement started a few years ago in California for people committed to eating only produce considered local, calculated to be grown within 150 miles of their homes.

"I like the concept, no matter what they name themselves. Buying local absolutely has struck the East Coast as more and more people are recognizing the values of farm fresh, especially in terms of the alternatives involving costs of fuel and transportation labor," Sutton said.

A farm journal documented that retail farmer markets in America grew from about 340 in 1970 to more than 3,000 in 2000. The researcher said growth reflected impact of 1976 federal laws, combined with changing economics and marketing of agriculture and growing consumer interests. The 2007 count is more than 4,300 farmer's markets.

## Hospital to hold HPV clinic

South County Hospital will hold a series of clinics to provide the HPV vaccine to women ages 19 to 26.

The clinics will be on one Saturday each month from 9 a.m. to noon at the hospital's Women's Health Center, 70 Kenyon Ave, Suite 106 in Wakefield.

The vaccine is covered by most health insurance policies.

The Food and Drug Administration approved the vaccine last year, which targets the four strains of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) responsible for 70 percent of cervical cancers and 90 percent of genital warts.

To attend a clinic, women should call 788-1486 to pre-register.

Future clinics will be on July 28, Aug. 25, Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 17 and Dec. 15.



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### LEGAL TIP

A contractor can be sued for the negligent construction of a pipeline which later caused a worker's death, the Washington Supreme Court has ruled.

A contractor built a network of subterranean pipes for a processing facility. After the facility went into full operation, a pond formed and the facility suspected a leak. As a worker entered an excavated hole to pinpoint the leak, several heavy cement blocks fell on his chest, killing him. A subsequent investigation showed that one of the pipes had failed.

The deceased worker's estate sued the contractor for negligent construction. A trial judge granted the defendant summary judgement based on the common law "completion and acceptance" doctrine, which shields contractors from liability for negligent work after that work has been completed and accepted by the property owner.

But the court reversed and adopted a new position continuing to hold the contractor liable for negligence even after the work is accepted by the owner.

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