

Good Food NEWS

A look at the people who grow your food

Summer is almost here and the farm fields are quickly turning from brown to luscious green. I thought this would be a good time to introduce you to two farms, both of which are supplying our delicious and seasonal asparagus.

Presenting...

Eddy Pattyn Farm

The asparagus in the organic boxes was grown by Eddy Pattyn and his partner Ilse Retz who take pride in hand picking and snapping off the asparagus which gives his customers more value for their money. Eddy grew up on a farm and purchased his own farm near Barry, Ontario 27 years ago, formerly a vacant piece of land. He said he wasn't happy with his job at the time and decided to go back into farming.

Eddy grows asparagus, fingerling potatoes, watermelons, tomatoes and pretty much every other garden vegetable. He sells his produce at the Barry Farmers Market, to FoodShare, to local restaurants and at a roadside fruit stand.

Eddy believes that Canadians are lucky to be fed so well and wishes that consumers would realize the value of fresh and local food and spend more money on it. He feels that, on average, Canadian's spend more on entertainment and their vehicles than on their food. Many Canadians spend as much on gasoline and car maintenance as they do on groceries.

Eddy sees the future of farming moving to places like Peru, Chile and China where labour is cheap and there are few regulations. He is a proponent of Farmers Market Ontario, an organization that is helping to certify farmers' markets that sell exclusively local produce and products. He hopes to see more urban youth learn about agriculture in school and on farm tours.

Glen Huron Apples, Bob Griffen and Theo Schaap

The Asparagus, radishes, potatoes and lettuce in the Good Food Box and the Asparagus and radishes in the Wellness box come from Glen Huron Apples and Cold Storage, a farm and storage facility in Glen Huron, Ontario.

Glen Huron Apples and Cold Storage is a family run operation that packs, stores and distributes their own farm produce like apples and potatoes and distributes produce from local farmers in the surrounding area. They now process over 2,000 bushels of apples a day.

The founder, Frank Griffen, began as a farmer who sold apples in barrels and paid \$3 a day to pickers in 1946. He later invested in a storage building that was later converted into an innovative cold storage facility. His son Bob joined the business and helped to turn it into a state of the art farm and distribution center supplying produce all across Canada.

They produce and offer local asparagus, radish, lettuce, zucchini, strawberries, broccoli, cucumber, cherries, cabbage, eggplant and much, much more.

Thank you both for your hard work and delicious produce!

- Mark-Jan Daalderop



photo by Laura Berman

Asparagus, right off the farm



Food Share

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recipes

Asparagus Risotto

12-16 asparagus stalks,
 1 TBS olive oil
 1/2 cup diced green onions
 1 cup arborio rice
 3/4-cup dry white wine (optional)
 3 cups chicken stock
 1/3 cup Parmesan or Romano cheese
 1/2 cup green onion, diced
 1 tbsp. butter
 salt and ground black pepper to taste

Cut asparagus into 1 1/2-inch pieces. Cook asparagus in 2 cups of boiling water for 5 minutes or until the asparagus is bright green and a little tender. Drain and set asparagus aside. Add the asparagus liquid to the chicken stock and bring to a simmer.

Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a heavy-bottomed pot and saute the green onion until soft, 3-4 minutes. Add the rice and coat with the oil. Next, add the wine, if using, and stir until absorbed. When the rice has absorbed the wine, start adding the stock/asparagus liquid in 1/2-cup increments. Stir constantly (this develops the starch and makes risotto creamy) add more liquid just when the previous batch is absorbed.

When the risotto is almost done (approximately 18 minutes), add the asparagus with the last batch of liquid. Stir until it is creamy and the rice is tender, but still with a little firmness. Add the cheese and stir to incorporate. The risotto should be even creamier now. Taste and add salt and pepper as needed. Finish with the tablespoon of butter and mix until it is all melted. Garnish with a little diced green onion, more black pepper and extra cheese.



featured this week: ASPARAGUS

Asparagus is a perennial garden plant belonging to the Lily family (Liliaceae) and is often thought of as a luxury vegetable, prized for its succulent taste and tender texture. It is harvested in the spring when it is 6 to 8 inches tall. While the most common variety of asparagus is green in color, two other edible varieties are available. White asparagus, with its more delicate flavor and tender texture, is grown underground to inhibit its development of chlorophyll content, therefore creating its distinctive white coloring. It is generally found canned, although you may find it fresh in some select gourmet shops, and it is generally more expensive than the green variety since its production is more labor intensive. The other edible variety of asparagus is purple in color. It is much smaller than the green or white variety (usually just 2 to 3 inches tall) and features a fruitier flavor.

Originating in the eastern Mediterranean region, it has become naturalized throughout much of the world. It was thought to be cultivated in ancient Egypt with varieties discovered in northern and southern Africa. Falling into relative obscurity in the Middle Ages, asparagus was "rediscovered" and popularized in the 18th century by Louis XIV.

Asparagus stalks should be rounded, and neither fat nor twisted. Choose thin or thick spears, as you prefer. They should be firm and green with tightly closed tips. The cut ends should not be too woody, although a little woodiness at the base prevents the stalk from drying out. Once trimmed and cooked, asparagus loses about half its total weight.

Use asparagus within a day or two after purchasing for best flavor. Store in the refrigerator with the ends wrapped in a damp paper towel. Alternately, trim the bottom of the spears and stand the asparagus, covered in a plastic bag, in a cup with an inch of water in the refrigerator to keep for a few days. Place the asparagus in the back of the refrigerator away from any light, since folate is destroyed by exposure to air, heat or light. When cooking, make sure to not overcook!

Asparagus is an excellent source of vitamin K, the B vitamin folate, vitamin C, vitamin A. Asparagus is a very good source of numerous B vitamins - including vitamin B1, B2, B3 and B6 - as well as dietary fiber, manganese, copper, phosphorous, potassium and protein.

Roasted Asparagus with Lemon

2 lbs trimmed asparagus
 1 TBS extra-virgin olive oil
 1-2 lemons, cut into wedges
 Salt & pepper to taste

Heat oven to 425°. Put asparagus in a jelly-roll (15 1/2" x 10 1/2") pan. Drizzle with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Turn till evenly coated, then arrange in a single layer. Roast 10-15 minutes, or till tender when pierced, and tips start to brown. Serve warm, with lemon wedges.

DELIVERIES

for the week of: JUNE 19th
 orders are due 5 pm Tues. JUNE 12th

for the week of JUNE 26th
 orders are due 5pm Tues. JUNE 19th

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 (at temporary location)

