

Local food sources now at your fingertips

Map, website points people to producers, retailers, chefs who produce or sell food from Grey-Bruce

Posted By Don Crosby

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A map that directs Grey-Bruce residents and visitors to local sources of farm-fresh food was released at the Keady market on Tuesday.

The agriculture and culinary map lists farmers' markets, restaurants and retail outlets as well as farmers who produce fruit and vegetables, meat, fish, game and dairy. It includes places where baked goods, honey, syrup, preserves, grains and locally produced wine and beer can be found.

The map is a collaborative effort by tourism departments and producers in the Grey and Bruce counties.

"Both counties have been looking at agriculture as a really important part of tourism. In Grey County we started looking at it from the tourism side while Bruce County approached it more from the producers side," said Brian Plumstead, the tourism manager for Grey County.

"We've been working collaboratively first of all to establish a database of producers of local food, then the map was the next step. There's also a wonderful website, www.foodlinkgreybruce.com, which people can go to and it's got all of these on the map and more. There are some people that are not on the map," said Plumstead.

Jenny Amy, the vice-chairwoman of the Grey Bruce Culinary Association, said she hopes people who live here and tourists will use the map to find places where local food is grown and sold.

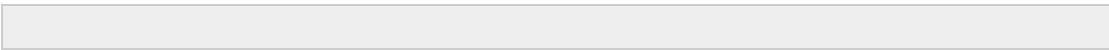
She said she expects the map to give a boost to the local economy.

“We’ve given out a lot of maps (in the past couple of weeks) and we’ve already seen people . . . come because they found our name on the map,” said Ruth Hill, of Hill Farms Market on Highway 6 and 10 north of Chatsworth. “We’ve seen cars drive in that had the maps open . . . A lot of people have trouble finding places once they get off the beaten track and not sure how to find things, so it’s quite helpful to have a map.”

Grey and Bruce counties provided seed money and staff support to get the agriculture/culinary association started “but I think this program is driven by the producers and the growers and the retailers of local food,” said Chris Hughes, head of Bruce County tourism.

“We’ll provide the expertise in marketing . . . but we want to make sure that the actual people who are benefiting are in control.”

“You are different and you are special. It’s a matter of telling your story with pride and letting people know when they come to the region what is unique and what is different about Grey-Bruce,” said Rebecca LeHeup Bucknell, co-chairwoman of the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, who was on hand for the launch of the map.



“You take the product you have here in Grey-Bruce and link it back to the land, to the people whose livelihood feeds us and the chefs who take those products and make them into more spectacular experiences through food, the festivals, the fairs and the markets. That all adds to the experience of coming here,” LeHeup-Bucknell said.