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***Locavorious Makes Michigan's Bounty Available Year-Round***  
By Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

Some might say—Locavorious, what does that mean? The owner of Locavorious, Rena Basch defines it two ways on her website: “Lo-ca-vor-i-ous. Adjective: Eating delicious locally grown food. Partaking in the glorious harvest of Michigan in all seasons. Noun: A company preserving and providing delicious locally grown frozen fruits and vegetables for the locavores of Ann Arbor.” Rena was generous enough to sit down and discuss her fairly new endeavor with me.



*Rena Basch of Locavorious displaying local corn frozen at its peak.*

Locavorious was born out of Rena’s passion about Southeast Michigan’s local food and farmers’ markets. After leaving the automotive industry, she decided to work on local food systems; her husband was supportive as long as it did not involve plowing under the front yard.

The initial concept behind Locavorious was to bring pickled heirloom vegetables to the S.E. Michigan market. As Rena was studying the possibilities for developing a community organization or business around artisanal canning, and experimenting with beets, pickles, and various recipes for them, a friend and future partner exclaimed “Just freeze it!?” After considering the way that freezing preserves the harvests’ fresh taste, nutrients, and color of produce while leaving recipe options open for the home cook— Rena agreed that freezing was the way to go. She and her family had already been freezing Michigan blueberries by the gallon bag-full. She experimented and practiced freezing techniques during 2007. By 2008, she was ready for Locavorious’ inaugural season.

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***Farmer Feature: Lenawee Farmers Emphasize Value Added***

By Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

At this time of year, Lenawee County is full of wide open country fields waiting for the first signs of spring. While the fields rest, two Lenawee County farmers sat down to discuss their work with me— and they were hard at work. My first conversation was with Commissioner, and farmer, John Tuckerman. The second was with Jim Swindeman, co-owner of Applewood Orchards. The common theme between these two farmers’ conversations with me was the emphasis on the value-added side of agriculture.

John Tuckerman is a fifth generation farmer of an 1,100 acre mono-crop farm in Lenawee. He keeps a few cows as well, which he recently sold to his son. John handles his own vaccines, and feeds the cows a mix of grass/hay, alfalfa, oats, corn, and mineral supplements.

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## Why a Local Food System Matters to Your Pocketbook- The cost and impact of groceries

by Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

Many people buy groceries, go to a restaurant, and consume food without ever thinking about where their food came from. Why should people care about where their food comes from, and more importantly buy it locally? The answer is simple; it affects our individual pocketbooks, and our local community's pocket book. Let's begin by discussing how the food system affects our individual finances - it is, after all, what we tend to care about most. We will then discuss the community impact. A good way to approach this is to do an informal cost benefit analysis of eating locally. Most people would say that this starts with their grocery bill.

Many people have the perception buying food locally is more expensive. This perception may be attributed to articles like the *New York Times* (NYT) article entitled "A High Price for Healthy Food". The flaw of the study discussed in the article, is that it was based on supermarkets with no commitment to purchasing locally produced, in-season food and did not consider alternate methods of obtaining healthy foods like farmers markets, roadside stands, direct farm sales, and community supported agriculture (CSA's). An additional flaw of the study was that comparisons between healthy and unhealthy "junk" foods were calculated based on the cost per calorie without taking factors like nutritional value into account. Other articles about the cost of healthy food have compared organic vs. conventional. However, organics do sometimes cost more than conventional, which adds to the perception that healthy food is costly. Most people

know the food they purchase is more than just calories and an organic or conventional stamp; it is also made of vitamins and minerals that promote good health as well as salt, sugars, and fats/oils that in excess may harm one's health. The perception that healthy costs more has evolved into another perception; buying locally costs more. This is because buying locally frequently involves purchasing foods considered to be healthy like fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, and dairy products - which may or may not be organic. However, eating locally is not necessarily more expensive, and can be a relatively inexpensive route to eating higher quality, healthier food.

Since local food is perceived to be linked with eating healthier, those committed to local food systems are compelled to get rid of the myth that eating healthily is more expensive- especially when the benefits of doing so are taken into account. A USDA study providing average costs for fruits and vegetables indicated that per pound the average retail cost of fruit is 71 cents, and fresh vegetables is 64 cents. Of course, prices do vary based on whether an item is in season and local; prices are lowest when the item is in season locally. A pound of most items on the USDA list would yield several servings- making it easy, with a little planning, to feed several people or create multiple meals. A pound of mushrooms, for example, could be divided up and used in a salad, on homemade pizza, and in pasta. One example the USDA used to demonstrate multiple servings was a three serving salad of 1 cup Romaine lettuce, ¼

cup onions, ½ cup cucumbers, and ¼ cup carrots; the total salad cost was 43 cents. Spending your grocery dollars this way has several benefits. These items are low in calories- good if you are trying to loose weight like the approximately 63% of overweight or obese Americans (CDC). They also provide energy in the form of natural sugars, and valuable vitamins and minerals essential to long term health. The better news is what you are not paying for! You are not paying for added salt, sugar/syrups, and fats/oils. Also, you may not be paying for the healthcare costs associated with added salts, sugars/syrups, and fats/oils which may increase the risk of developing various chronic diseases when consumed regularly in excess of dietary standards. Additionally, if the food is local, you are not paying for the cost of transportation; most foods travel an average of 1,500 miles from production site to table per a study by John Hendrickson.

Let's say there are objections to the concept that a 2 cup salad divided among 3 people constitutes a whole meal. Even if we add beef, keeping in mind a proper food pyramid serving is about 5oz., our cost is fairly low. A whole or half, all natural, grass-fed beef purchased from a local farmer and processed at a local butcher may cost around \$4.18 per

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*Local salad greens growing last summer in a local field. Are you eating them?*

***"However, eating locally is not necessarily more expensive, and may actually be a relatively inexpensive route to eating higher quality, healthier food."***



## Why a Local Food System Matters to Your Pocketbook- The Cost and Impact of Groceries

by Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

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***“The approximate total cost of this local healthy meal of salad, potato, and filet mignon is roughly \$5.08 for three people or \$1.69 per person.”***

pound after processing. While this is slightly higher than ground beef in the store, per pound, a whole beef which runs about \$3.49 can be custom processed to include filet mignon steak around 15.99/lb (at the store) and other high end cuts which more than offset the slight amount more you will pay on burger. So toss 1 pound of filet mignon on with the salad for three.

Most would say a meal is not complete without a starch right? Add a potato. According to the USDA the average cost of potatoes is about 31 cents a pound; assume we need a pound and a half since according to the food pyramid a serving is 1 medium potato. The approximate total cost of this local healthy meal of salad, potato, and filet mignon is roughly \$5.08 for three people or \$1.69 per person. Contrast this with non-local unhealthier choices available. If you purchased a drink, burger, and fries each from the dollar menu of your favorite non-local fast food venue the total would be \$3. One grocery store, uncommitted to buying local, had their cheapest TV dinner listed at \$1.00, and \$1.75 if you were not part of the store's preferred customer marketing program on their website. It serves one person, so three meals would be \$3.00, or \$5.25 if not a preferred customer. A box of macaroni and cheese serves 4 people at about \$1, but does not include vegetables or meat. In these non-local examples you may be paying for added salt, higher fat/oil content foods, and transportation costs.

Now that we have considered the cost of a healthy meal let's

compare the local and non-local versions of the same meal. Even if the non-local version of our produce costs the same as the USDA estimates, if we wanted to purchase the same meal without regard to local, it would cost us a total of \$24.73 because its non-local filet mignon is listed at 15.99/lb. Additionally, there is no way of knowing how the beef was raised if this is of concern to you. The local, in this case, is all natural and grass fed. Buying locally allows consumers to talk to the farmer about how a product was grown or raised and decide whether they believe that process has a health impact.

Purchasing your healthy food items locally may allow you to further cut grocery costs if you purchase only what you need. Farmers markets and most CSA's allow you to tailor the quantities you purchase. This means at the market if you only need 2 carrots- you can buy two carrots instead of an entire bag or bunch; a CSA might make the adjustments by delivering more or less frequently or by the box size. By purchasing the quantities needed, less money is tossed into the garbage when unused food spoils. Do you need to buy in bulk for home canning/freezing? Many farmers offer lower per pound prices when selling larger quantities.

On a community level grocery purchases have a large impact. A food dollar spent with a local business (think places headquartered and committed to purchasing locally, and local farmers) generates 2-4 times the benefits of a dollar spent at a non-locally owned

business. The reason the benefits are so much higher with local purchases is because local businesses are more likely to purchase goods and services within the community. This creates and maintains jobs in the community, increasing the tax base which, in turn, means there are more funds for better schools, roads, and other public services. For those needing concrete numbers, a study by Michael Shuman estimated that if the city of Detroit started spending just 20% of its food dollars locally it would increase the city's economic output by a half billion dollars a year, create 4,700 jobs, and pay more than \$125 million more in earnings while increasing Detroit's business tax base by \$20 million. He also reported the estimated results of this type of spending shift if it were to occur in the entire Metro area which includes: Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Wayne, and Washtenaw counties. The region would see an increase in output of \$3.5 billion creating 36,000 jobs paying \$900 million more in earnings. The regional tax base would increase by \$155 million in business taxes alone.

There are many benefits to local food purchasing. Your pocketbook and local community will thank you!



*Jonathan Goetz selling at the Ann Arbor Farmers' Market last summer & one of many local beneficiaries of your local food purchases.*

## *Locavorious Making Michigan's Bounty Available Year-Round*

By Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

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In 2008, Locavorious began its “community freezer”. It works like this. During the peak harvest time, Rena purchases the best fruits and veggies available from local farmers. She focuses on items that freeze well. Rena along with a small staff, and the occasional friend professionally prepare and package the produce—locking in peak flavor and nutrition. Each package label includes the contents, date of packaging, and a recognition of the farm it came from. The package is stored until winter in the “community freezer”. Locavorious prides itself for being able to take produce from “farm to freezer” in about a day. Members who have purchased a share in the freezer- similar to a CSA- receive their bounty during the winter months. Thus Locavorious has become the solution to a challenge faced by many locavores during the Michigan winter, making healthy yet local food available during seasons when the harvest is a bit slim.

Rena selects local farms based on who she knows well and their farming philosophy. Local was defined by her customers as being within 100 miles of Ann Arbor, or Michigan. She tries to support organic and sustainable farming when it is available. While this is her general preference, she does understand that some crops may need some special or occasional interventions when threatened by destructive natural forces. Farms she has partnered with include Tantre, Frog Holler, Sodd's Berry Farm, and Gardening Angel Organic Farm to name a few.

Rena counts her inaugural season a success. She had about 75 participants in the community freezer. Locavorious successfully prepared shares for the members covering the months of November through February which included among other things: blueberries, strawberries, peaches, raspberries, corn, peas, green beans, edamame, broccoli, and tomatoes. She delivered these frozen yet fresh-tasting nutritious local produce items to members at the Ann Arbor Farmers' Market and the Corner Brewery in Ypsilanti. Rena has a drive to provide her customers with the best product available. This was visible in her smile, as she described the lessons that have lead to early improvements. She recounted an infamous “pea emergency” in which a farmer—experimenting with a pea variety—called to say all the peas were ripening unexpectedly early. Rena had to scramble to get the appropriate equipment lined up to shell the peas in time. She quickly learned how supportive the local farming community was, as several folks offered to help out. She also learned about the sometimes unpredictable nature of a harvest, and will keep this in mind when considering equipment intensive produce. Another learning experience led to improvements in the packaging materials.



*Delicious red raspberries, frozen at the peak of freshness by Locavorious.*



*Rena Basch owner of Locavorious at the Ann Arbor Farmers' Market with her family at their first distribution*

While learning, Rena's business mind is hard at work on her next idea, but she's tight lipped about that. To watch for Rena's next great idea at Locavorious or to join the community freezer you can contact her through the Locavorious website: [www.locavorious.com](http://www.locavorious.com) or recipe blog [www.locavorious.wordpress.com](http://www.locavorious.wordpress.com); Rena would love to hear from you.

*“Thus Locavorious has become the solution to a challenge faced by many locavores during the Michigan winter, making healthy yet local food available during seasons when the harvest is a bit slim.”*

## Farm to School Spotlight: Napoleon Community Schools, Jackson County

By Michaelle Rehmann, Farm to School Program Director



On Tuesday, December 16, students at Napoleon Community Schools had the opportunity to stump their teachers. What's round, pale green and looks like a little ball they asked? Perhaps peas, they always look a little pale this time of year, or maybe weird lima beans you might think. Nope, the children were talking about brussel sprouts!



Eager to get a Farm to School program up and running, Food Service Director Andrea Haskell took on the vegetable dreaded by children around the world and served it to her students. Steamed with a little bit of butter, these tasty cabbage relatives were grown at Tantre Farm in helsea. Brussel sprouts are chock full of vitamins A and C, folic acid, and lots of fiber making them the perfect vegetable for a winter meal.

Although some of the students were skeptical at first, many were willing to try the brussel sprouts and amazed at just how good they tasted. As the Farm to School program at Napoleon begins to gain momentum, Haskell will be looking for other new and interesting vegetables to serve

her students in the coming months. I can only imagine what will be on the menu next, beets anyone?



*A Napoleon student gives a thumbs up to brussel sprouts!*

## Chinese Delegation Visits Southeast Michigan

By Michaelle Rehmann, Farm to School Program

On the coldest day of the year, six delegates from China braved subzero temperatures to learn more about school lunch programs in Southeast Michigan. The delegation, consisting primarily of China Development Research Foundation staff, spent several weeks in the United States learning about the National School Lunch Program and Child Nutrition Programs. The group met with many organizations and governmental bodies in Washington D.C. and several states, to explore the creation of a free and reduced-lunch program in China. The trip to Michigan was coordinated by MSU Director of China Programs, Weijun Zhao and C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems Farm to School Specialist, Colleen Matts; it provided them with insight into several area schools with high percentages (over 50%) of free and reduced-lunch participants.

The first stop was Springport Public Schools, a rural school district in Jackson County's northwest corner. Here Nutrition Education Teacher Emily Reardon and Food Service Director Susan Heisler hosted the group. Ms. Reardon explained, in detail, the connection Springport students make to local food through their Agri-business and Agri-science classes. She



*The Chinese delegation visiting Southeast Michigan schools.*

discussed how food grown on-site is incorporated into the school meal program during a tour of classroom areas, the on-site barn where sheep are raised, and the student-run greenhouse. Ms. Reardon highlighted the community's role in supporting agriculture at the school via donations for barn construction or land for vegetable production. Ms. Heisler's tour also included the cafeteria, service line, kitchen, and storage rooms which provided information about the cost of equipment, and tools necessary to run a successful meal program. Finishing the tour, she shared information regarding meal planning, nutritional requirements, meal production costs, and sales records for her district.

The delegation then traveled to Jackson Public Schools where, over a light lunch of fresh wrap sandwiches, baked chips, and whole fruit, Food Service Director, Brant Russell and Health and Human Services Coordinator, Linda Meeder shared the challenges they face in this urban school district. Ms. Meeder shared her concerns of childhood obesity and diabetes while discussing the district's school wellness policy, meant to address these issues. Mr. Russell discussed the cafeterias' approach to healthy eating by sharing sample menus, and rotation examples for fresh fruit and vegetable bars. Fruit and vegetable bars have been identified as a way to incorporate locally grown produce into the schools' Farm to School program, and can be used to emphasize the importance of seasonality to students. Mr. Russell also shared the challenges of the free and reduced meals program; many parents in his district struggle to complete forms accurately or do not understand eligibility requirements. Based on his knowledge and experience, Mr. Russell provided suggestions regarding how the system might be improved to become more efficient for those involved. He also distributed information and data on his food service operation including: a history of participation in the free and reduced meals program, federal reimbursement claims, and the change in meal pricing over the last ten years. The meeting concluded with a tour of Jackson High School's cafeteria and kitchen where delegates were able to see the myriad of tools used for school meal preparation.

## Farmer Feature: Lenawee Farmers Emphasize Value Added

By Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern



*Gould Farms located in Morenci, Mich. (Lenawee County).*

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Tuckerman enjoys the fruits—or better said meats—of his labor in his own home. He particularly enjoys the fresh taste of home-grown beef. In terms of his crops he has considered going organic, but was dissuaded somewhat by the three year conversion process. However, he recognizes the need for conservation and participates in many of those practices.

John's son is looking forward to becoming the sixth generation farmer. However, his son is considering taking the farm in a different direction—all-natural beef. Tuckerman believes the biggest challenge for his son will be overcoming the learning curve.

Tuckerman was asked about the challenge of getting local food to the local market. He noted that there were several factors contributing to this. One was that agriculture for better or worse, is run by large agri-business corporations. He said that as long as consumers keep buying the cheapest available products, the scale up of farms and a food system run by corporations will continue. Tuckerman acknowledged, however, that the point will come when big becomes too big. He also noted that avid gardeners could be a source of local food, and add to the local

food economy.

Tuckerman enjoys many aspects of farming including: being his own boss, getting to wear multiple hats, animal husbandry, and running a business. One of Farmer Tuckerman's hats is that of a part-time County Commissioner. When the commissioner hat is put on, it is quite evident that Commissioner and Farmer Tuckerman is quite aware of and passionate about how to help farmers reap the rewards of adding value to their crops.

Commissioner Tuckerman cited that "Agriculture is the number two industry in Michigan, but it is frequently overlooked. We miss the value-added side of things." He spoke about the ethanol plant that was built in Lenawee County to provide corn growers with a ready market for their crops. The presence of the plant in the county creates jobs, and ensures that many of the revenues from the process are reinvested in the community. The plant is also exploring other ways to add value to crops, and crop waste through CO<sub>2</sub> and oil extraction. He notes that ethanol is not a solution to the US's dependency on foreign oil, nor to environmental concerns. However, the Commissioner noted it was a stepping stone. To address these longer term

solutions, while helping farmers add value to their land, the county and Great Lakes Wind, LLC are looking at harnessing the wind energy available on the farms' wide open expanses. Additionally, the ethanol plant is looking to harness the steam it releases to increase sustainability. Options that may be considered include providing heat for aquaculture or green houses.

The impression that Lenawee County farmers are interested in value-added agriculture was reinforced by my conversation with Jim Swindeman. Jim and his two brothers run Applewood Orchards, Inc. in Deerfield, Mich. They represent the third generation on this family run orchard which has long held the philosophy "If you cannot do it right, don't do it at all".

The orchard was started by their grandfather in 1935. He started with 16 acres with about 48 trees per acre to supply some local retailers. The orchard now supplies major retail chains with about 300 acres with 900

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John Tucker, Lenawee County Commissioner and Farmer

*Commissioner Tuckerman cited that "Agriculture is the number two industry in Michigan, but it is frequently overlooked. We miss the value added side of things."*

## *Why a Local Food System Matters to Your Pocketbook- Could a local diet save you and your employer on healthcare costs?*

By Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

A hidden cost of the food we purchase may be our long term healthcare expenses. As mentioned in our previous article, there is a perception that eating from a sustainable local food system is healthier for you. A recent study begun by the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill will seek to evaluate that perception from a more scientific perspective. The study will evaluate the environmental health implications of sustainable farming, determine whether a local diet has any health or nutritional benefits, and if so determine opportunities and barriers to creating such food systems. The results of this two year study will not be released until at least 2010. In the meantime however; we can begin to understand why a local diet is thought to be healthier and why establishing the scientific data behind it could have profound consequences.

The idea that local sustainable food system is healthier exists for myriad reasons. Some of these reasons include: locavores tend to eat more fruits and vegetables; the seasonal nature of local diets increases variety, and therefore, exposure to various nutrients; locavores can interact with growers and ask about the effects and use of pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones, and antibiotics; and since the call to eat locally generally means eating food grown or produced within 100 miles of home, many large commercial food companies fall out of the eating picture - meaning locavores eat fewer highly processed, calorie dense foods. Many of these reasons are leading to the assumption that a local diet may be a tool to use to lower the growing number of people classified as overweight and obese.

If a local diet proves to be a tool in the struggle against growing waistlines, the effects could be quite profound economically speaking. This would add yet another economic reason to support local food. To gain a glimpse at the possible impact of a local diet in this area we must review some statistics on the overweight and obese. Approximately 63% of Americans are overweight or obese, and in Michigan, 64.3% of the population is classified as overweight or obese according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Being obese or overweight can increase one's risk factor for various chronic diseases including, but not limited to: coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, high blood pressure, stroke, and osteoarthritis (degeneration of cartilage and bone in the joints). Since these diseases are chronic, the cost of treating them is a long term expense for individuals and businesses. Diabetes costs the economy \$174 billion a year which includes \$116 billion in medical costs and \$58 billion in lost productivity and work days, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Institute of Occupational Health and Safety. They also assess the total economic burden of cancer as \$217 billion which includes \$89 billion in medical costs and

\$130 billion in lost work days and productivity; and the cost of cardiovascular disease \$448 billion. These numbers are staggering, and rising along with American's weight. These numbers translate into a higher cost of insuring employees for businesses, and more out of our individual pockets as they pass some (but not all) of the cost of health insurance on to us

in an attempt to manage their overall costs and profit line. There are also the more frequent costs of co-pays for treatments and prescriptions to be considered. Wouldn't it be wonderful if shifting our food dollars to the local food system allowed Southeast Michigan to cut health care costs for its businesses while also creating an additional incentive for new or existing businesses to locate in or re-locate to Michigan?

Even if the North Carolina Chapel Hill study does not absolutely prove that a local diet is healthier, we should still remain committed to the local food system. After all, Mr. Shuman's study, from our previous "Why the Food System Matters" article, has some rather compelling numbers for job creation which, in Michigan's current economic climate, is a rather bright opportunity not to be missed!

Beyond existing or potential economic and health reasons though, those committed to local food enjoy some much less measurable benefits like the joy of strolling through a local farm or farmers' market on a Saturday morning, visiting with the people who grow and raise our food, discussing our favorite farmers & cooking techniques with chefs committed to local food, and learning to enjoy the variety and taste of each season. All of these additional benefits increase a community's connectivity something that cannot be measured.

*"If a local diet proves to be a tool in the struggle against growing beltlines, the effects could be quite profound economically speaking."*



## Meet Jane Bush, Business Development Specialist

By Jennifer Fike

One of FSEP's program areas is Business Innovation and Networking. In order to further work in this area through the development of an Agri-food Michigan Regional Skills Alliance (MiRSA<sup>®</sup>), FSEP welcomes Jane Bush as our new Business Development Specialist. In this role Jane will provide business planning services to maintain and grow the regional agricultural economy and make agriculture a thriving component of communities in Southeast Michigan. Among her responsibilities will be to identify new and existing opportunities and entrepreneurs in Southeast Michigan's agri-food sector, engage in business planning, and assist in assessing the skills needed within the sector.



Jane Bush is the owner of AppleSchram Orchard producing apple products like cider, applesauce, and apple butter, as well as other farm products and vegetables grown in her hoop house. AppleSchram Orchard was the first certified organic apple orchard in Michigan and also produces pasture-raised pork products. She began pasturing hogs six years ago and was "pulled into the market" by local interest and demand. Jane direct markets approximately 60 hogs yearly through farmers' markets, and several retail stores. All of the meat is processed without nitrates, pastured and fed lots of apple pulp and apples. She is also currently involved with a research project at MSU using hogs as pest control in the orchard.

Jane is also the founder of the farmer's egg cooperative, Grazing Fields. Jane is committed to sustainability and practices no-till, drip irrigation, integrated pest management, woodlot management, composting, mowing/cover cropping, and rainwater retention.

Jane was a founding board president of Michigan Integrated Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS). The Eaton County Conservation District recently awarded her their "Cooperator of the Year". The award is given to producers who support District programs; practice and promote the wise use of soil, water, and natural resources on their farms; and provide agricultural leadership throughout their community.

Through assistance provided by FSEP, Jane has been selling produce at the University of Michigan dining halls for the past two seasons. She is currently working with farmers and U-M to source local tomatoes this summer across campus.

Jane can be reached at [bushj@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:bushj@ewashtenaw.org). Please join me in welcoming Jane to FSEP!



### SAVE THE DATE! JUNE 18, 2009

Join us for our fourth annual conference on Thursday, June 18 at the Lenawee Vocational Technical Center featuring keynote speaker Kamyar Enshayan.

Enshayan has worked in Northern Iowa to make locally grown foods more visible and available; focusing on connecting institutional food buyers to nearby farmers and processors. In 2007, 26 Northern Iowa metro area grocers, restaurants, and institutions purchased \$2.2 million from local food and farm businesses. Enshayan has been on the Cedar Falls City Council since 2003 and is the director of University of Northern Iowa's Center for Energy & Environmental Education.

For information on registration, sponsorships, and exhibiting, please visit [www.fsepmichigan.org](http://www.fsepmichigan.org)

## Farmer Feature: Lenawee Farmers Emphasize Value-Added

By Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

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Jim said that the trellising techniques and root stock they use allow them to grow more trees in a smaller area with a higher yield. He feels that this is not only makes good business sense, but good land conservation sense. He said that using his grandfathers' methods more land would be required for the orchard to produce their current output.

Jim finds great satisfaction in planting an orchard and seeing a crop in 3-4 years. Over the years the orchard has become completely vertically integrated. This means that Applewood Orchards grows, stores, packages, markets,

sells, and ships their own products. Jim said that this allows them to add value to their product, and maximize the orchard's profits by controlling all costs while capturing all revenue streams. The orchard also does consignment for other orchards as well. Jim said one of the bigger challenges of this operation is ensuring a consistently top quality product for their customers. This has meant some extra investments, like frost protection measures, but in a tough season they find it more than worth it.

Another challenge they face is the increasing amount of regulation, by government and self imposed by the industry. Jim

noted that because of the recent peanut recall, many of his retailers are asking to review their suppliers' recall procedures. He states that they have a policy and are prepared, but that this type of environment requires farmers to be more business minded than ever. Jim and his brothers welcome the recent focus on the links between health, diet, and healthcare costs. Jim thinks that this is not only making the case for his product and doing some advertizing for him, but may help fuel the next generation of growers.

To learn more about Applewood Orchards, you can visit them at: [www.applewoodapples.com/](http://www.applewoodapples.com/)



**INTERESTED IN HELPING YOUR LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM NONPROFIT? CONSIDER AN INTERNSHIP AT FSEP.**

Opportunities for interns and volunteers are available at FSEP. Please contact Jennifer at [fikej@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:fikej@ewashtenaw.org) or call (734) 222-6859.

## Did you Know??? Reflections on Interesting Food Facts...

By Jamie Bash, FSEP Intern

- Americans spend a lower percentage of their budget on food than other countries. (When compared to 114 other countries.) Report available at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/InternationalFoodDemand/> (select all countries/ all commodities) Reflection: maybe spending a bit more on higher quality, local food wouldn't be such a bad thing.
- In 1970 Americans spent about 35% on dining out, now that number is close to 50% (find the chart at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/DietQuality/FAFH.htm>) Reflection: Locavores should ask if the restaurants they're frequenting to buy local food.
- 79% of the fish and shellfish Americans consume is imported, and 32% of our fruits and nuts are imported. (Data available at: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/February08/DataFeature/>) Reflection: these are great areas to either switch to a local product or find a local substitute for.
- "According to a USDA study, a consumer can meet the recommendation of three servings of fruits and four servings of vegetables daily for 64cents. This represents 12 percent of daily food expenditures per person, so consumers have 88 percent of their food dollars left to purchase the other three food groups; low-income households have 84 percent of their food dollar left."

Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib792/aib792-4/aib792-4.pdf>

Reflection: Buying healthy, food is not as expensive as many commentators say.

**79% of the fish and shellfish Americans consume is imported, and 32% of our fruits and nuts are imported.**

## Upcoming Food Community Events

**Detroit Eastern Market**—Open Saturdays 5 a.m.—5:00 p.m. 2394 Russell Street between Mark and Gratiot. <http://www.detroiteasternmarket.com/>

**Downtown Monroe Farmers' Market**—Located at 20 E. Willow Street behind the Big Boy. Open every Saturday, 6 a.m.—noon, and Tuesday mornings in the summer and fall.

**Canton Farmers Market**—Opens Sunday, April 26. 500 N. Ridge Road (the Bartlett-Travis House). Sundays, 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m. <http://leisure.canton-mi.org/farmersmarket.aspx>

**Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market** —Opens Tuesday, May 5. KeyBank parking lot, corner of Hamilton Street and Michigan Avenue. Tuesdays 2-5:00 p.m. <http://www.growinghope.net/projects/farmersmarket.shtml>

**Adrian Farmers' Market**—Opens May 2. Toledo Street parking lot. Saturdays 8 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

**Chelsea Farmers' Market**—Opens May 2. Downtown Chelsea on Park Street. Saturdays 8 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

**Dexter Farmers' Market**—Opens, May 2. Alpine Street off of Main Street. Saturdays 8 a.m.—1:00 p.m. and Tuesdays 4-7:00 p.m.

**Manchester Farmers' Market**— Opens Thursday, May 7 on Adrian Street in Manchester. Thursdays from 4-7:00 p.m.

**East Warren Avenue Farmers' Market**—Opens Saturday, July 11. Located in East English Village on the NE Corner of Bishop and E. Warren Ave. Saturdays 10 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

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**Green Today, Jobs Tomorrow Conference**—Workforce Development for Michigan Energy, Economy & Environment, May 11, 2009, 7:15 a.m.—6:00 p.m. Lansing Center, Lansing, MI. Visit [www.migreenjob.com](http://www.migreenjob.com) to register.

**20th Annual Garden Walk**—Saturday, June 13 from 10 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Proceeds to benefit Agrarian Adventure. Visit [www.annarborfarmandgarden.org](http://www.annarborfarmandgarden.org) for more information.

**Grillin' for Food Gatherers** on Sunday, June 14 from 3– 8:00 p.m. Visit [www.foodgatherers.org](http://www.foodgatherers.org) for more information.

**FSEP Annual Conference** at Lenawee County Vocational-Technical Center on June 18. Call 734.222.6859 for sponsorship and registration information, or visit our website in the coming months!

**Food Med 2009** - June 30 - July 1—Third International Conference on Local, Sustainable Healthcare Food, Detroit, MI—MGM Grand Hotel. Visit [www.foodmed.org](http://www.foodmed.org) for more information and to register.



Food System Economic Partnership  
705 North Zeeb Road  
P.O. Box 8645  
Ann Arbor, MI  
48107-8645  
Phone: (734) 222-6859  
Fax: (734) 222-3990  
E-mail: [fikej@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:fikej@ewashtenaw.org)

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We're on the web! Find us at  
[www.fsepmichigan.org](http://www.fsepmichigan.org)

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*FSEP is a non-profit collaboration of urban and rural community and business leaders that exists to catalyze change in the food system of Southeastern Michigan. We provide research, education and outreach with urban and rural partnerships, resulting in agricultural development opportunities, sustainable communities, and healthy local economies. The geographic focus area of FSEP encompasses the five counties of Jackson, Monroe, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties.*

## *FSEP Partner Organizations:*

### **Governments**

Jackson County  
Lenawee County  
Monroe County  
Washtenaw County  
Wayne County  
State of Michigan

### **Farm Business Organizations**

Michigan Coalition of Black Farmers  
Michigan Farmers Union  
Organic Growers of Michigan

### **Businesses /Community Organizations**

Agrarian Adventure  
The Conservation Fund  
Eat Local Food, LLC  
*edible WOW*

Ecology Center

The Henry Ford

Lenawee Economic Development Corp.

Locavorious

21st Century Seeds of Hope

Washtenaw Land Trust

Zingerman's Community of Businesses

### **Resource Providers**

MSU Extension

MSU Product Center for Agricultural and Natural Resources

University of Michigan

### **Sponsors**

Chelsea Milling Company

C.S. Mott Chair of Sustainable Agriculture

Hacienda Mexican Foods

SYSCO Food Services of Detroit

United Bank and Trust

Whole Foods Market

