

HFFA celebrates accomplishments: For our food, for our farms, for our future

On November 25th Headwaters Food and Farm Alliance (HFFA) celebrated the accomplishments of the past year along with some good local food at the Amaranth Town Hall. More than fifty diners interested in the concerns of the Headwaters attended the culinary event. Headwaters Communities in Action has hosted two food summits, the first one in 2012 led to the formation of the Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance, now on its way to becoming an entity in and of itself. This food event focused on celebrating food from Headwaters, updating HFFA's activities, and gathering information.

Shirley Boxem, the project lead said, "Anyone interested in the food system in Headwaters would have found this event of interest. This year we shared the highlights of the study: Growing a Local Food System, which outlines the gaps and challenges of our food system. We added lovely food to the mix to get the creative juices flowing for the community conversation part of the event as we are always looking for public feedback on emerging priorities and comments on work we have done."

Boxem reported that updates were brought from the Education, Literacy and Access working group on their school program to bring farmers into the schools to teach about where food comes from, and the group's food access programs. Michelle Harris from the Culinary Tourism affiliated group talked about their program including the "Taste of Maple" and "Taste of Harvest". Theresa Sauren presented the results and recommendations from the HFFA commissioned report, Growing the Local Food System in Headwaters and resulting priorities for HFFA. Jane Aultman, HFFA Chair and Deputy Mayor of Amaranth represented the entire group and served as master of ceremonies.

The local feast was presented by BJ Hands of Hands On Catering in Shelburne and Adam Ryan of Orangeville with dessert trays from Gourmandissimo in Caledon East. The food fare included produce from familiar area farms including Fiddlefoot squash, Besley vegetables, Armstrong pork, goat cheese from Woolwich Dairy, Lake Erie perch, Albion Orchard fresh cider, and Hockley Hills coffee.

Boxem says, "The HFFA is truly for food, for farming, for our future. We are committed to supporting and growing the food system in Headwaters. Our vision statement says it all: The Headwaters' Food and Farming Alliance envisions a food system in the Headwaters that is productive, sustainable, transparent, and fair; supports the health and well-being of our residents and food providers; and contributes to the prosperous and equitable economy."

By Marni Walsh