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Dufferin County Culinary Collective launches Field Trip Series

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Dufferin County is inviting the community to celebrate and learn about local food and farming culture through a new field trip series.

The Dufferin County Culinary Collective (DCCC) has launched a hands-on initiative known as the Field Trip Series. The goal of the initiative is to take a ?field trip? every other month and introduce Dufferin County residents to different local farms or food production sites.

During these field trips, visitors have the chance to explore the stories, challenges, and innovations behind the region's culinary and agri-food community.

?We figured it's better to get out in the community and learn what's happening instead of just sitting and talking in a room discussing the concerns and opportunities within the sector,? said Jasmine Panesar, economic development officer for the County of Dufferin.

The initiative was created by the Dufferin County Culinary Collective (DCCC), and is made up of businesses, farmers, food producers, restaurants, cafes, breweries, distillers, wineries and educators.

The idea for the field trips stemmed from a growing concern about the lack of knowledge and education around the agricultural sector. It's also seen as a way to highlight Dufferin County as a culinary destination.

?This is a huge education piece to show who our farmers are, where our food comes from, how it gets out into the community,? said Panesar. ?It's about focusing and promoting Dufferin County as a vibrant culinary destination.?

According to the Dufferin Federation of Agriculture (DFA), one of the most significant economic contributors in Dufferin County is agriculture, with over 700 farms in the community. The top five farm commodities in Dufferin County include cattle, dairy, potatoes, soybeans and corn.

The DCCC hosted its first field trip for the series back in June, with a visit to Lennox Farm in Melancthon.

The second stop of the Dufferin County Culinary Collective Field Trip Series will take place on Aug. 20 from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Hereward Farms, a family-owned lavender farm in East Garafraxa.

During the field trip to Hereward Farms, visitors will have a chance to tour the lavender farm, learn about agricultural tourism as a business while also connecting with fellow culinary, agricultural and business leaders.

Panesar told the Free Press that each field trip will focus on a different topic that is specific to the featured farm, food producer, brewery or restaurant.

Attendees must arrive at Hereward Farms by 1:30 p.m., using their own mode of transportation. Transportation will not be provided.

Spots for the field trip are limited with only 40 spaces available.

Those interested in attending the tour of Hereward Farms can register for the field trip by visiting www.dufferincounty.ca. The event

is free to attend.