

HFFA to host spring dinner to support local food industry

The Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance will be promoting local food providers and encouraging community engagement at its Spring Dinner event at Mrs. Mitchell's restaurant

Written By **Joshua Drakes**

For those interested in organic, locally sourced food, the Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance (HFFA) is holding a Spring Dinner event on April 18. Attendees will enjoy a good meal and learn about local agricultural initiatives.

Marci Lipman, co-chair of the HFFA, said that connecting farmers and consumers is their goal.

'We try to educate people about where their food comes from,' said Lipman. 'We want to connect eaters with the farmers, the ones who produce their food so that people can understand where it comes from, who grows it, and how it's grown.'

This spring dinner event is part of that initiative. The food served will be provided by local farmers at Mrs. Mitchell's Restaurant, located at 887395 Mono-Mulmur Townline, Violet Hill.

Lipman said that anyone that's looking to learn more about local agriculture, or simply wants a fresh, locally served meal, should come to the dinner.

'If you've never been to Mrs. Mitchell's, it's a very big treat, it's a beautiful restaurant,' she said. 'Come for a really delicious meal and in a beautiful venue and learn about local farming. It's a very special evening.'

'It's a social event, so people come in and they see their friends, or they meet new people. And then we have a farmer, one or two who come and speak and tell us about what they do on their farm,' Lipman added.

'They start a dialogue. And people can then ask the farmer, 'how is this carrot grown?' Or 'how is this potato grown?' Or 'do you use fertilizers?' Or 'is this beef grass fed?' Things like that.'

The dinner is one way the HFFA's mission is carried out. Putting consumers in direct connections with farmers will encourage even more local dialogue or similar events. Lipman said that currently, a lot of locals don't know about the farms and the products that can be sourced within a few minute's drive from town.

'There are a couple of points of having local food that is accessible to people,' she said. 'One of them is that it doesn't travel. We have a very good farmers' market in town. If you go to the market in the spring, you can buy every kind of greens that's grown maybe a couple of kilometers from your home. It doesn't have to get in a truck and come from California and pollute the whole world with fossil fuels.'

Lipman added that it's also beneficial for the local economy.

'You're putting money in your neighbor's pocket,' Lipman said. 'And that farmer can go and buy their groceries in a local store or buy their feed for their chickens in a local store. So You're creating a circular economy.'

Admission to the dinner is \$100 and seating is limited.

Visit headwatersfoodandfarming.square.site to buy tickets.