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519-822-4310 or call toll-free across Canada: 866-871-9868

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If you haven't received your newspaper by 5 p.m. daily and 9 a.m. Saturday please call Circulation at 519-822-7771 Circulation Fax 519-822-7459

Phone hours:

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Guelph Mercury | Share the abundance of local food

arch is national nutrition month with this year's theme celebrating food, from field to table.

Guelph has an abundance of fresh fruit and vegetables, depending on the season. Every Saturday, hoards of locals cram into the small Farmers' Market building to stock up.

We are urged to buy local, and encouraged to purchase only what has been grown within a 100-mile radius of our kitchen, which is more difficult in the winter, but manageable in

spring and summer when crops are plentiful. When the season is high and crops are boun-

tiful, there are many ways to take advantage: • Support local farmers by shopping at the market on Gordon Street (www.guelphfarmersmarket.com).

• Take part in the Community Shared Agriculture program run through the Ignatius Jesuit Centre (www.ignatiusguelph.ca/csa). In the program, members buy a "share" at the beginning of the season, and pick up their weekly box, full of fresh veggies, fruit and herbs. With the box is a newsletter with notes on how to use the ingredients, as well as recipes.

• Take part in the Garden Fresh Box Program. The program is a non-profit, fresh produce buying service created to help people access affordable fresh fruits and vegetables and also to support our local farmers.



Run throughout the year, there are two choices of boxes: large is \$20; the smaller is \$15. The boxes contain loads of fresh vegetables, fruit, and occasionally fresh herbs. Included is a newsletter which explains exactly what neighbouring farms the goodies are sourced from, and contains recipes explaining how to use the more unusual ingredients that might

not be familiar. I have taken part in this program for about a year now, and get quite excited when it is 'garden fresh box day,' never knowing what to expect! There is such enormous value in the box, I really don't know how they do it, but they do it well. (www.guelphchc.ca).

However, there is a profound disparity between buying local, participating in the 100mile diet and local residents living on or below the poverty line lining up for one of our local food banks.

Our community has such a wealth of fresh local food on one hand and such a lack of food for a growing number of the population at the other end of the spectrum.

What can you do as a local citizen to help bridge the gap between abundance and lack?

• Donate food or money to the local food bank.

• Sponsor a family through the garden fresh box program. Many families want to buy the monthly box, but simply can't afford it. For the price of a few coffees a month, you can make a difference for an impoverished family who would enjoy and benefit from eating fresh fruit and vegetables. If they sincerely want to eat fresh, shouldn't they be able to? Contact: 519-821-6638, ext. 344, or email

gfbox@guelphchc.ca.

• If you grow more vegetables than you need in your garden and have too much to deal with, you can donate it to the food bank or Sister Christine's drop-in centre. A simple delivery is a simple solution.

Spring is the time to go local or go home, whether you plan it, buy it or share it, while supporting local farmers. There is no excuse for not picking and sharing at least a few lettuce leaves this season.

Melody Wren is a member of the Mercury's community editorial board.



Getting it right **Our accuracy pledge**

Nothing is more important to us than accuracy. We always strive to ensure the information we provide is factual and correct. But sometimes we make mistakes, and

when we do, we will correct them promptly and prominently. If you see a factual error, please contact the newsroom at 519-823-6060 or by email at editor@guelphmercury.com.

Lotterv results

Yesterday's unofficial winning numbers: Lotto 6-49: 5, 19, 27, 32, 44, 46. Bonus: 25 Ontario 49: 4, 25, 34, 37, 48, 49. Bonus: 6 Pick 3:613 Pick 4:1572 Keno: 4, 8, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 25, 28, 34, 43, 44, 51, 57, 58, 63, 65, 69 and 70 Encore: 1581380

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