



*"I don't like the turkey, but I like the bread he ate."
-a three-year-old's reaction to her Christmas dinner*

Beef Broth Class: Jan 13

Ever wanted to know how to make really outstanding tasting and nutritious soup stock? Join in the Beef Stock Making Class on Monday, January 13th, at the Red Lodge Community Church at 6:30 pm. We will make great beef broth using beef bones from Wholesome Foods, local and organic. The cost for the class is \$10 which includes 7 lbs. of beef bones and instruction.

Robin Taylor will demonstrate the surprisingly easy way to make a rich, delicious broth and send you home with your beef bones and a recipe. The ingredients you will need at home are carrots, onions, celery, garlic, tomato paste and red wine. To sign up or for questions, call Robin Taylor at (406) 425-0788.

SnapPlus Donations

SNAP (formerly food stamps) is a Federal program to help feed low-income people. SnapPlus is a fund established to provide additional money for our low-income citizens who receive SNAP benefits. It was created and is managed by the Red Lodge Area Food Partnership Council and the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation.

SNAP shoppers can receive dollar-for-dollar matching funds (up to \$20 per week) to spend with market vendors at the Red Lodge Farmers' Market. Other purchasing venues may be added in the future. By making their benefit dollars go farther, SnapPlus encourages SNAP users to frequent venues where they can obtain healthy, local food and support local farmers.

We invite you to make a tax-deductible contribution to SnapPlus to put more buying power in the hands of SNAP recipients while supporting our local farmers and ranchers. Your generosity will help to further our collective goal of fresh, healthy food for all our citizens. With one in ten Carbon County residents receiving SNAP benefits, this program is more important than ever before.

Your generous contributions serve a dual function—putting food on the table for low-income families, and supporting local family farms. Consider making a donation directly to the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation/SnapPlus, PO Box 1871, Red Lodge, MT 59068.

FPC Strategic Planning Outcomes & Opportunities for Your Involvement

After almost four years as an organized group, FPC held a strategic planning session on November 22nd in order to assess the effectiveness of current initiatives and plan for maximum impact going forward. We were very pleased to have 17 people in attendance, representing a broad spectrum of our community. Several who were not able to join us sent suggestions and input and you are all invited to do that also as we continue to plan and learn from this work. The full notes from our planning session are available upon request.

After discussing the FPC mission, we brainstormed our vision for the elements that make a strong, sustainable local food system. We then reviewed the fourth annual report compiled by FPC in order to evaluate the ongoing work and discussed what criteria we would use to determine if projects were successful.

During the final portion of our planning process, we brainstormed projects that would move our community towards our collective vision of a strong local food system. The suggested projects that had the most support from those in attendance were then grouped into five new areas of focus. After further discussion, we added a sixth area. Here are the Food Partnership Council's six Areas of Focus for 2015:

- **Local Food Happenings**, including farm tours and other educational and food events
- **Food Hub**, working to strengthen and expand the almost one-year old on-line Rocky Fork Food Hub, increasing the number of producers and consumers involved and local products available for purchase
- **Producer Resources**, forming a collaborative team of local producers to identify ways of working together and resources needed for success; also reaching out to those interested in farming or producing value-added products in our area
- **Infrastructure**, determining what is needed in terms of transportation, storage, processing facilities, etc to increase the amount of food and food products grown, produced, and purchased locally; also developing plans to address the identified needs and tap into resources and models statewide, regionally, and nationally
- **Marketing**, developing strategies to continue to educate our community about the importance and value of purchasing and consuming local food and improving our effectiveness in explaining how to access local food; also effectively advertising FPC projects and events
- **Local Food Access**, working with increasing funding for doubling SNAP dollars at the Farmers Market and other local food venues, working with the WIC program, the food bank and other low income food resources to improve collaboration and identify new ways of assisting and encouraging our low income population to purchase and consume local and fresh food.

We are very excited about the planning work that was done and the focus areas identified for 2015. Please think about which area(s) you feel most passionate about and let me know if you would like to know more about an area and possibly offer your assistance and ideas. We can get an amazing amount of creative and impactful work done with a little involvement from a lot of people! Contact Martha Brown at mbrown.mt@gmail.com or call (406) 445-7214.

Rocky Fork Food Hub News: Give Local!

Newly listed on our website at www.rockyforkfoodhub.com are many items that you might want to consider for your holiday gift giving. Give the benefit of supporting your local growers, boosting our local economy, and experience the great feeling of knowing your gifts will nourish long into the coming new year.

Rocky Fork Food Hub is an online ordering system for all types of locally produced goods in response to our community's interest in buying close to home.

Order delicious local foods and health and beauty products starting December 15 - order pickup on December 18. Visit the website for details, www.rockyforkfoodhub.com.



FoodCorps Update

By Emma Fernandez

With the garden covered in snow, FoodCorps work turns mostly to indoor classroom lessons. Students are learning about plant parts, food groups, weather cycles, and more, accompanied by tasting and cooking lessons. I have also begun a new partnership with The Children's Center to lead short lessons and activities for their students.

In addition, I am working hard to create a new Food and Wellness Committee to promote wellness projects including farm to school and nutrition education in Red Lodge schools. The committee will consist of administrators, teachers, parents, and community members and will meet roughly once a month. Our first meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 7, at 5:15 at the high school -- please join us to lend your voice to the conversation! If you have any questions you can email me at emma.fernandez@foodcorps.org.

Fresh Ground Flour

Rocky Fork Food Hub now offers fresh ground whole wheat flour. The organic hard red spring wheat berries are from Wholesome Foods with the milling being done by Food Partnership Council. Thanks to a grant from Red Ants Pants Foundation, our GrainMaker mill is ready to work hard for you! Rocky Fork is selling in 3 lb. bags for \$8. If you would like other quantities, please contact Janet Peterson at foodpartnership@gmail.com.

Why buy freshly ground flour? Flavor, nutrition and support local! Sustainable Homesteading states that you might be thinking: "I am buying whole grain (maybe even organic) flour, so I should be OK." Well, whole grain flour is frequently produced by first separating and then recombining ground bran with endosperm flour. The germ which contains important antioxidants, vitamin E, B vitamins and polyunsaturated fatty acids is often left out, because the flour would go rancid too quickly.

According to Nutrition Lifestyles, flour which is freshly milled contains an entire complement of B vitamins and is rich in vitamin E. It also contains the fiber which is essential in human nutrition. The milling process breaks the protective layer of bran surrounding the kernel of wheat and exposes the vitamins and minerals to oxygen. Oxygen breaks down the chemicals which make up vitamins and converts them into useless compounds - a process which begins immediately upon milling. For this

reason freshly ground flour should be used just after it is milled. If you must store fresh flour, keep it in the freezer. This does not prevent vitamin oxidation, but it does keep the wheat germ oil from becoming rancid.

So check out our fresh flour and make your holiday bread the best ever! www.rockyforkfoodhub.com

Harvest of the Month

By Emma Fernandez

Harvest of the Month is a new program in Red Lodge that highlights a seasonal, Montana product each month in classes, taste tests, and in the cafeteria. December's harvest of the month is winter squash!

Winter squash are a great Montana storage crop! Common winter squash varieties are acorn squash, butternut squash, delicata squash, spaghetti squash, and pumpkin. Winter squash is a wonderful source for Vitamin A and beta carotene to promote eye health, Vitamin C to boost the immune system, and potassium to strengthen heart and bones.



Want to get More Involved?

FPC always has projects or initiatives in the works. You can get involved in whatever interests you. Contact Martha Brown at mbrown.mt@gmail.com or call (406) 445-7214.