

Food problem under control

Health officer says precautions now being taken

The fact that so many area restaurants were found to be contaminating the food they serve probably means new precautions are being taken that could make eating out in Halton safer than elsewhere, the region's chief health officer said Wednesday.

Dr. Bob Nosal was responding to a concern raised by Halton regional chairman Peter Pomeroy at council. Mr. Pomeroy was worried about the impact a recent spate of news stories regarding the contamination could be having on the restaurant business.

Last week Dr. Nosal unveiled a report indicating that 53 of restaurants visited by his inspectors breached food preparation rules, producing unacceptable bacteria counts in items that would have otherwise been served to the public. Improper storage, a lack of work area cleanliness and poor employee hygiene were the three faults cited by the inspectors.

Dr. Nosal said most restaurants have responded "very favourably" to regional officials when the shortcomings were pointed out. "I look at it as a lot more positive than negative," Halton may well be "the best place to go out for a meal" because restaurants have been alerted to the errors.

Regional officials tested 241 restaurants and institutional kitchens in their survey. Of that number, 129 were found to be using improper refrigeration, 74 had unclean work areas and 46 had staff breaking hygiene rules.

Burlington Mayor Walter Mulkeewich wanted to know

how hard Dr. Nosal's department has been cracking down. "Have there been a considerable number of tickets or charges?"

No charges have been laid because once inspectors note a problem, "invariably it is cleaned up almost immediately," Dr. Nosal said.

"So you're on top of this?" Mr. Mulkeewich asked. "Of course," Dr. Nosal replied, adding that if there was a perceived health hazard, "something would be done immediately."

Downtown Farmers' Market returns

The Milton Farmers' Market is back downtown for another season starting tomorrow.

The first of 22 markets held on Main Street every Saturday until October 31 gets underway at 7 a.m.

The opening market is the biggest yet, with 29 vendors selling fresh produce, said Sandy Martin, executive director of the Milton Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA).

Main Street will be closed off from James Street to Martin Street until about noon. Cars must be removed from the street by 5 a.m. Saturday.

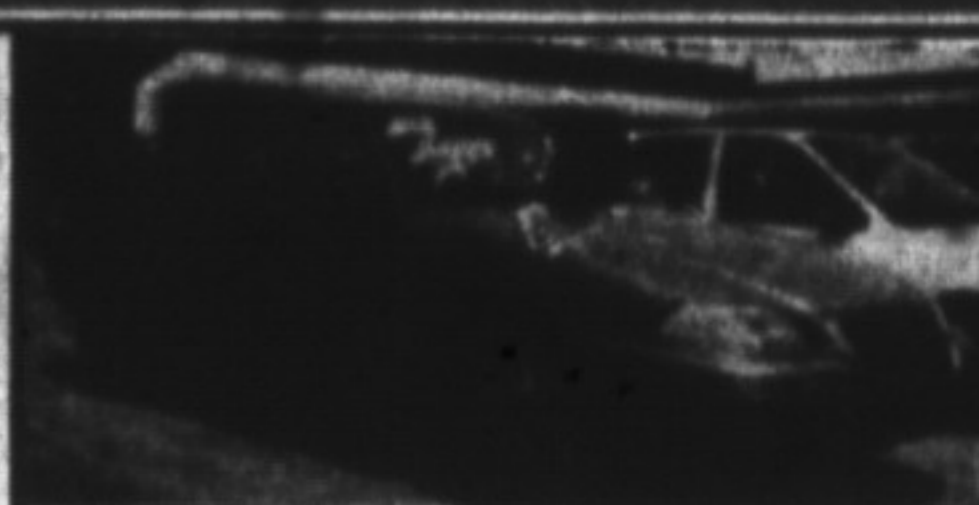
The market is a project of the Milton Chamber of Commerce in co-operation with the Milton DBIA and Foodland Ontario.

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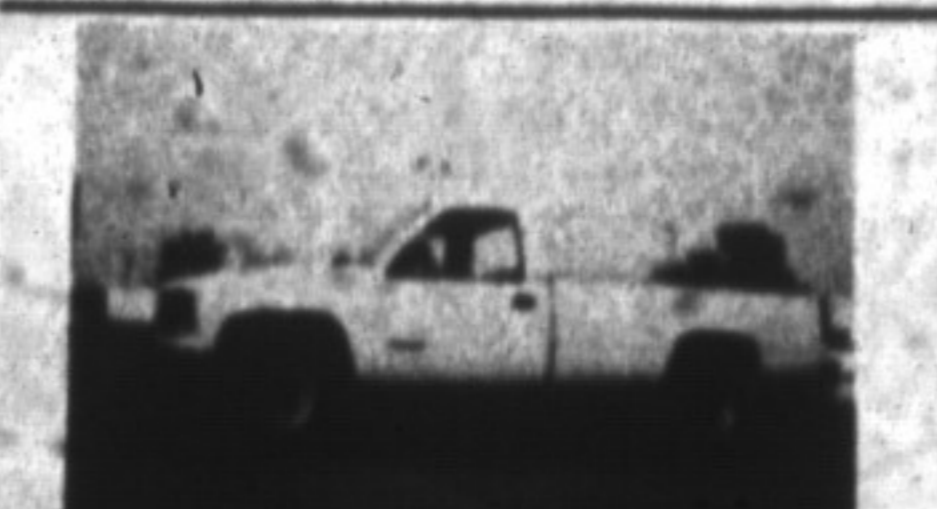
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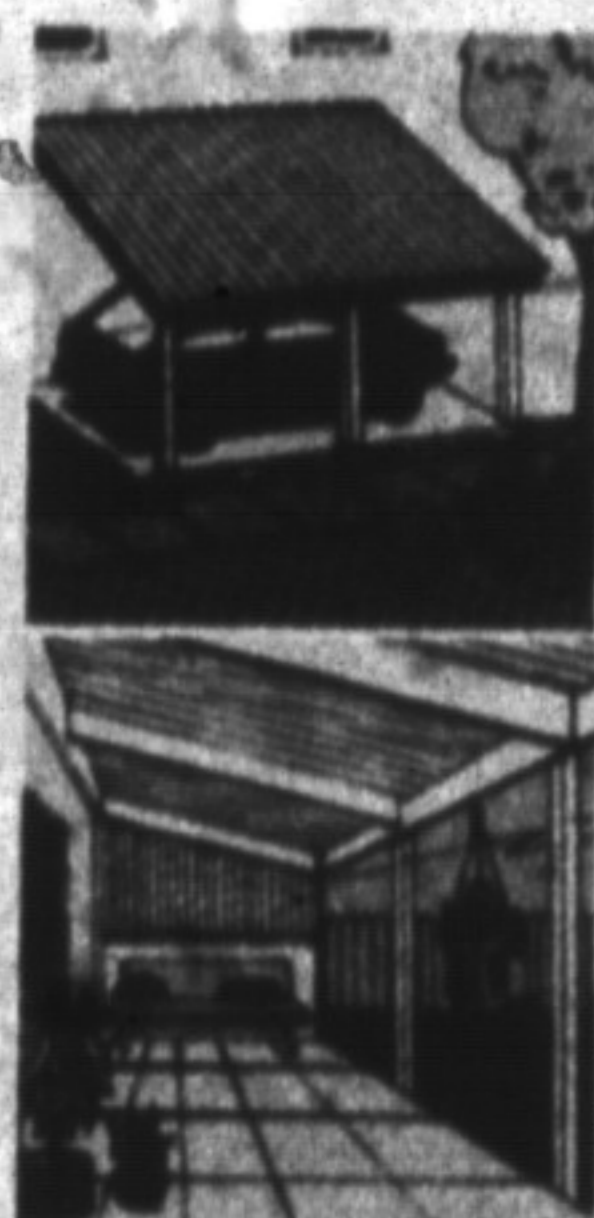
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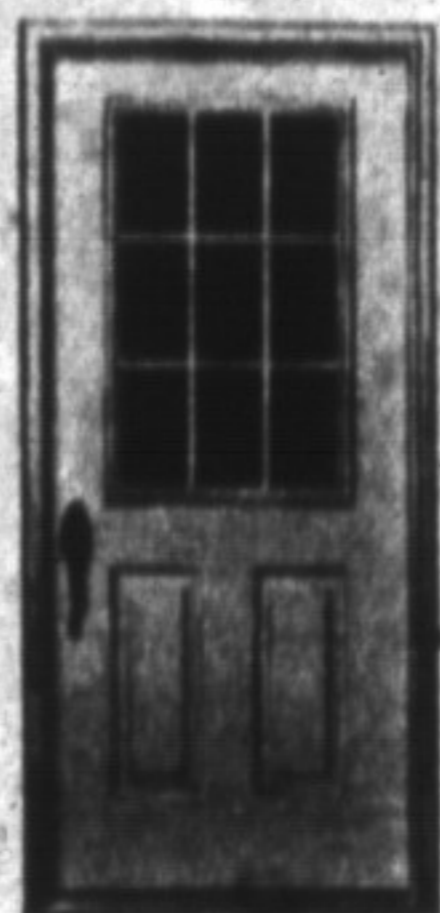
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