

Holiday home cookin'

You don't have to travel far to get your Christmas food items

BY CHRIS TRABER
Staff Writer

It is possible for you to adequately and elegantly grace your holiday table by serving food and drink all produced within 100 miles from where you live in York Region.

In fact, it could be fun, stress-reducing exercise that's good for you, the local economy and the environment.

The 100-mile diet is based on the premise buying everything locally is a boon for the environment, lessening pollution caused by transportation and storage of food from far away.

Save for those items, such as coffee, tea, certain fruits and nuts that simply aren't grown within our boundaries, the 100-mile concept makes sense.

If your mission is to impress with Christmas morning breakfast, see King Cole Ducks sales manager Pat Thompson in Aurora.

"If you want to be popular, make eggs benedict with our smoked duck," she said with a chuckle. "It's amazing."

The family business supplies ducks and their by-products globally and locally, she said.

"Duck is all dark meat and one will feed two to three people," Ms Thompson said. "In addition to the whole duck, we offer boneless and smoked breasts and fully cooked roasted half ducks."

The company even sells duck feet and tongue.

"It's a delicacy in the Asian community," she said.

You can pre-order ducks and pick them up at the company's facility at Warden Avenue north of Aurora Road or at the Queensville Country Store at 1631 Queensville Rd.

Until this week, the majority of your holiday meat and poultry can be picked up or delivered by King City's Beretta Organic Farms, owner Cynthia Beretta said.

Livestock from the farm is certified organic, she said. None of the animals receive growth promoting hormones or antibiotics and their feed is free of pesticides, herbicides and genetically modified organisms.

During the winter, the most

popular orders include turkey, chicken, prime roast and sausage for stuffing, she said.

You can call ahead and pick up your order at the farm near Weston and King Roads or at the farm's Etobicoke processing facility.

If you like to work up an appetite before indulging, put Pine Farms Orchard & Fruit Winery in King City on your shopping excursion list.

The farm invites you to walk

or cross country ski through its orchards, owner Pam Rolph-Romeril said. Afterwards, you can visit the farm's Christmas store, open until Dec 31, and shop for farm-produced homemade baked goods, soups and fruit beverages, with or without an alcohol kick.

Pine Farms near Keele Street and King Road makes shortbread cookies, steamed pudding, minced meat pies and tarts another delectable offerings.

Using farm-grown black currants, apples cranberries and grapes from Niagara (still within 100 miles of York Region), the farm produces fruit dessert wines, traditional and flavoured ciders.

If you'd like to entertain with more traditional wines, including dessert ice wine, take a trip to the Magnotta Winery in Vaughan.

Producing more than 30 different award-winning wines locally with Niagara grapes, each has

1 Beretta Organic Farms
King Rd. & Keele St.
416-674-5609 Fax 416-674-0710
www.berettaorganic.com

2 Forsythe Family Farms
10539 Kennedy Rd., Markham
905-887-1087
www.forsythefamilyfarms.com

3 Homestead Farm
663 Graham Sd.,
Newmarket
905-775-2106

4 King Cole Ducks Ltd.
15351 Warden Ave., Aurora
1-800-363-3825
www.kingcoleducks.com

5 MacWilliam Farms
22645 Leslie St., Holland Landing
905-836-0656
www.macwilliamfarms.ca

6 Magnotta Winery
271 Christie Rd., Vaughan
905-738-9463, 1-800-461-9463
www.magnotta.com

7 Pine Farms Orchard & Fruit Winery
2700 16th Sd., King City
905-833-5459
www.pinefarmsorchard.com

ILLUSTRATION/JULIA DEMPSEY

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For more local and 100-mile diet information:

- ▶ www.directoryyorkregion.com
- ▶ www.farmersmarketsontario.com
- ▶ 100milediet.org
- ▶ 100miledietmanaimo.org

vintners quality alliance approval, marketing manager Darlene Gray said.

The York Region winery and beer producing microbrewery has a free sampling bar and tasting events.

In addition to imbibing regional wine, you'll enjoy keeping some extra seasonal cash.

"At our store you'll be saving the 50 per cent LCBO mark up," Ms Gray said.

If the venerable rabbit is on your holiday menu, visit MacWilliam Farms in Queensville.

Owner Robert MacWilliam supplies the animals live and provides addresses for federally certified operators who inspect, slaughter and dress the creatures.

The farm, just north of Newmarket, also sells honey produced on the property.

A culinary holiday staple is the farm fresh egg.

"The next couple of weeks are very busy for our retail and wholesale businesses," Homestead Farm co-owner Pat White said. "Lots of eggs are used for baking."

Homestead in Newmarket sells a range of egg varieties and sizes, she said.

The offerings include organic, free run, white, brown and liquid egg whites and yolks.

Forsythe Family Farms in Markham is also open until Christmas. The petting zoo and farm tours are limited during the winter, but the popular destination for parents and kids has a good selection of natural meat, poultry, produce and baked goods in the farm's quaint barn store.

Local produce, including carrots, potatoes, onions, rutabaga and frozen cranberries is still available, owner Jim Forsyth said.

The farm store has natural meats and free range turkeys, in addition to desserts baked on the premises and farm-produced honey, jams and preserves.

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