

Support local producers with CSA boxes

Lloyd Singleton

Special to Wilmington StarNews USA TODAY NETWORK

I have recently enjoyed “hanging out” with several young adults keen to sustainability efforts in our local community. Nicknamed an “Eco-warrior” by some of this energetic, pierced and tattooed crowd, I wear the title proudly as a sign of respect by this generation of our future. As a late middle-aged guy, I am part of the tail end of the big baby-boomer generation that was reared and steeped in a fossil-fueled extraction economy and hitched to big box stores. A bit of a rebel, I am known for my proselytizing and practice of recycling, composting, respect for trees and regenerative ecosystems in landscapes and agriculture. My passion for promotion of cyclical systems is part of my identity and extends to my attitude about food as well; I prefer local, fresh and nutrient dense.

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Consumer Supported Agriculture boxes help to support a handful of local farmers each week. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Local

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grown food is more likely harvested at peak of ripeness within 24 hours of your purchase. Eating seasonally will reduce the time and miles your food has to travel, improving the nutrient value. Your

We are blessed in this region, rich in agriculture production, to have abundant, fresh food available. A local food hub, Feast Down East is a prominent internet bookmark for me, with an option to order a weekly box of fresh produce for local pickup (called a Consumer Supported Agriculture), a mobile farmers market in various locations around town, delivery to some favorite local food restaurants, and special events.

One event worth noting for this weekend could serve as your foray to local foods - the "Feast for the Fourth" fundraiser. The fundraiser includes a meal box curated by chef Ben Knight of Benny's Big Time, along with specialty items from chef Dean Neff of Seabird. Most of the ingredients are sourced from local farms and accompanied with a virtual cooking demonstration from Ben himself. This exclusive, seasonal farm-to-fork experience will raise money to support the group's vehicle fleet, essential to move farm-fresh products to restaurants, institutions, schools and our community.

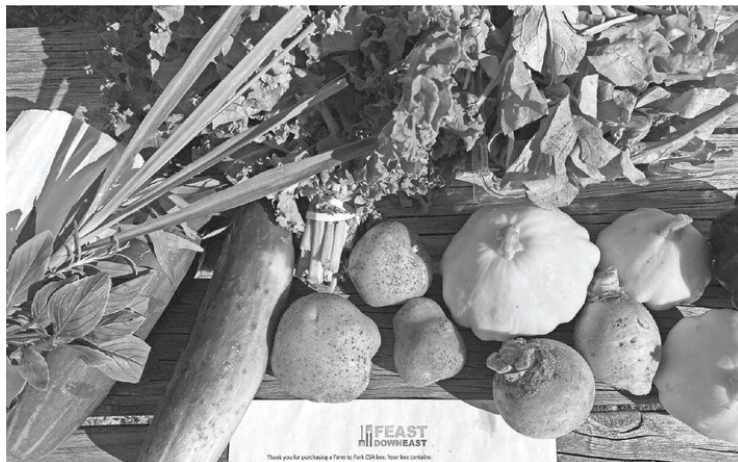
The meal box features items from Feast Down East farmers. It includes a main course of ingredients to grill a grass-fed beef burger with local cherry tomatoes and goat cheese, including charred salt and pepper shishito peppers and pickles by Dean Neff. A grain bowl side dish and blueberry bar dessert are also prepared by Neff. The beverage will be Taco Life Mexican Style Lager from Wilmington Brewing Company. Order online at the Feast Down East website (www.feastdowneast.org/) today; box pickup is on July 4 at Benny's Big Time Pizzeria from 9 a.m. to noon, located at 206 Greenfield St. in Wilmington.

If you already have your Fourth of July meal plans, consider the weekly Consumer Supported Agriculture through Feast Down East, or shopping at a local farmers market to engage your journey with local foods. Purchasing locally grown foods has many benefits for the consumer, grower and the community. Full of flavor, locally

money spent with local farmers and growers stays close to home and is reinvested with businesses and services in your community. Supporting local food producers and distribution networks fosters a safer food supply. And, if you know your farmer, you know your food. Local growers can tell you how the food was grown and harvested - I prefer knowing those practices.

I hope you can consider bringing some local food into your routine; your taste buds and health will thank you!

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A weekly Consumer Supported Agriculture box from Feast Down East provides a variety of locally grown vegetables.



By purchasing a Consumer Supported Agriculture box with Feast Down East, the purchase directly benefits local farmers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

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