



The Northwest Ohio Fresh Network

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Garlic (*Allium Sativum*) is a member of the Amaryllis family (Amaryllidaceae), which also includes leeks, onions, and shallots. It is a perennial with an underground bulb (head) composed of pungent bulblets commonly called cloves.

The pungent flavor of garlic is caused by a chemical reaction which occurs when the garlic cells are broken. The flavor is most intense shortly after cutting or chopping. This chemical reaction cannot occur after garlic is cooked, which is why smoked garlic is sweet and nutty rather than pungent.

Crazy Horse Garlic Farm, Holland, Ohio

Sharron Cygnor is looking to the future. Her position at a local chapter of a national non-profit organization is looking less stable every month. That is why Sharron, like many others during uncertain economic times, explore new opportunities. She has researched and started to grow a very healthy looking crop of garlic. Her raised beds are in the side pasture of her former horse farm. The garlic is starting to mature and dry. It is so fragrant, the smell is reminiscent of an Italian restaurant. Sharron is trying all varieties to see which will work the best in Northwest Ohio. Her raised beds will yield



some great looking garlic to sell and the best of the best will be kept, separated and planted for the next crop.

Garlic is a labor intense crop, from planting to harvesting, to processing. She is concerned about moisture and drying which presents a major mold concern with garlic. Recently Sharron found that many Italian restaurants will purchase the garlic scapes (a tangly, green specimen that looks like a cross between a plant and an octopus) to use in seasonal dishes, but by the time she heard about the need she had trimmed all her garlic and left them on the ground for compost.

This is an example of how

engaging in a network program can assist with identifying new opportunities, hence Sharon has joined the Farm to Chef program.

In order to round out her gardens this year, she is also growing herbs including basil, lavender, rosemary, heirloom tomatoes and some lettuce. Sharron read about CIFT in the latest edition of the City News which featured an article on the Farm to Chef project.

**Grape—
A new taste of NW Ohio**

Grape Lake Soda created from hometown ingredients.

Keith Marok is the creator of Grape Lake Soda. The grape-flavored pop is different than any other grape drink on the market. It is made entirely from ingredients grown in Northwest Ohio.

"That's where it comes from," said Marok. "In our neighborhood, not everyone has enough grapes in everybody's yard, but they would get together and combine their grapes and make it into blends of different juices and that's where the recipe comes from."

Marok and his family made the first batch of home-brewed soda for his cousin's wedding. After that, they made it for special family events. Now he is ready to share it with the rest of

the region.

Right now Grape Lake is a small scale operation, but soon will be branching out. Within the next three months, Marok will be manufacturing and bottling Grape Lake Soda at the Northwest Ohio Cooperative Kitchen in Bowling Green.

"Right now to get it the way we like it takes three days to make each batch," said Marok, "and right now we make small batches from five to 15 gallons. But with the cooperative's help we'll be able to make 50 gallon batches so we can expand."

Marok hopes to have Grape Lake Soda available for purchase by this fall. In the meantime, he is giving out free samples at various art events in the region. The first one is Thursday in downtown Toledo.

He will be set up from 6-9 p.m. at "The Little Gallery" at the corner of St. Clair and Lafayette streets.

Marok will also be giving out samples at the Fremont Farmers Market on July 18, the Downtown Lakeside Farmers Market July 23-25 and August 1-2 at Arts in the Park in Port Clinton.

Heather Miller, Fox Toledo



On Restaurants—Local Crop Meets Central Ohio

What's Green At Sysco

As stewards of the Earth, it is our responsibility to protect, nurture and build upon the natural resources provided to us. We will continually seek out new ways to grow, harvest and distribute food in a manner that not only preserves and protects the environment, but strengthens our ability to deliver the best possible quality to our customers. In this way, we ensure a healthy future not just for our planet, but for our businesses and end users alike.



Did you try the dessert special of strawberry crisp and strawberry ice cream last week at Cameron's American Bistro? If so, you got a first taste of a new program aimed at linking area restaurants with local sources of food.

Called Local Crop, the program is run by Sysco, the national restaurant supplier, and has just begun operations in central Ohio.

The program got its start in Cleveland last year when restaurateur Steve Schimoler decided that there must be a better way to acquire local and seasonal products than by making the rounds of farmers markets and calling artisans to find out what they had.

"Local foods should be for everybody," said Schimoler, whose Crop Bistro & Bar in Cleveland's Warehouse District prides itself on offering dishes made with local and in-season foods.

"With the Local Crop

model, we've got efficiencies that bring down fuel costs and storage costs."

Schimoler knew Sysco sold a specialty-foods concept and spent three years in Sysco's Houston offices developing other initiatives.

Schimoler contacted the company, and he and Sysco got Cleveland's Local Crop program up and running in August, starting with 30 vendors. That number has grown to about 120.

Debra Hamernick, president and chief executive of Sysco Central Ohio, brought the Local Crop concept south to the Columbus market last week.

Local Crop food products made or grown within 150 miles has started landing on local plates.

"We've got four restaurants trying it right now: M, Ocean Club, Marcella's and Cameron's Bistro," said Brian

Hinshaw, vice president and executive corporate chef of Cameron Mitchell Restaurants. He's pleased with his first foray.

"We got a whole crop of strawberries available last week at their ripest, and they were much cheaper and fresher than anything we could have gotten from California." Hinshaw said he appreciates the ease of Sysco's program, which involves going online to LocalCrop.com to check offerings and place orders.

"It comes on the next Sysco truck, and it's billed through Sysco. It's much more convenient for us and for the producers."

A number of other local restaurants are participating, as well.

By [Bill Chronister](#) The Columbus Dispatch

A Taste of the Old Country— The Budapest Restaurant

The wait staff is warm and friendly and Robert, part owner and waiter, sometimes plays piano and sings for guests. Frequent guests turn into friends which the owners chat with while their dinner is cooking.

While some things never change, some things do. The Budapest has added a lunch special of Coney dogs for workers in the area. A façade grant has helped the owners fix up the front so it is noticed as you drive by.

The menu is moderately priced and won't break your wallet, but stop by an ATM before you eat as the Budapest

does not accept credit cards.

So, if you crave comfort food like good mashed potatoes, friendly staff who will treat you like friends and make you feel at home. Come in, eat and enjoy a real treat in Toledo.



Cabbage rolls and mashed potatoes with a dessert of banana cream pie.