

BUCKS COUNTY HERALD

DINING OUT

Cross the Delaware for fresh Bucks County food

Culinary adventure awaits in "farm to fork" series

Susan S. Yeske

If you love your local farms, you may want to follow their produce and eggs across the river for a different kind of culinary adventure.

In a novel approach to taking advantage of the best of the current growing season, the upscale restaurant elements in Princeton, N.J., is launching a "farm to fork" series featuring food from Bucks County farms.

Beginning July 4th and continuing through Labor Day, executive chef Scott Anderson will craft three-course \$39 prix fixe meals featuring a different Bucks farm each week. The featured farm will be chosen based on what is being harvested each of the eight weeks.

Participating over the course of the summer will be Blooming Glen Farm in Hilltown, which grows organic vegetables and herbs; Blue Moon Acres in Buckingham, which provides chemical-free micro-greens and herbs; Branch Creek Farm in Perkasio, which grows specialty vegetables and microgreens; Manoff Market Gardens in Solebury, which grows peaches, apples and berries; Sandy's Eggs in Lower Makefield, which will provide pasture-raised eggs; The Farm School at Snipes in Falls Township, which grows fruit and vegetables; and White Star Growers in Buckingham, which is known for its lettuce.

Anderson has built his culinary reputation, and that of elements, on the use of locally grown, sustainable products to create "interpretive American" dishes. He and

his staff make their own patés, wursts, mustards and pickles, and use local poultry, seafood and meats whenever possible. The restaurant has won awards as one of the 25 best in New Jersey and time, the series is designed to raise awareness of local food sources by connecting diners directly with the farmers who produce the foods they consume.

The chef works regularly with Anderson and his team of chefs have prepared a meal at the prestigious, invitation-only James Beard House in New York.

Anderson said the dinner series is a natural extension of the elements staff's creative process. In addition to giving him and his staff a new challenge of working exclusively with one farm at a time, Zone 7, a distributor that provides fresh ingredients from local farms to restaurants in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania. Impromptu menus will be crafted after a report comes in each week from Zone 7 on what the farmers have available.

Zone 7 (freshfromZone7.com) is the middleman for farms and

restaurants throughout New Jersey and Bucks County. Each week, company founder Mikey Azzara contacts the farmers to find out what they are harvesting, then relays the information to restaurant chefs, who place their orders for the week ahead. It's not unusual to see Azzara or members of his staff driving cars or trucks filled with cases of fresh berries, lettuces, radishes, squash, tomatoes, corn, peaches, apples or whatever else is in season.

"I think this is a great idea for elements because using local, sustainable farm products have been at the foundation of Scott's cooking since the beginning," Azzara said. The dinner series gives him the opportunity to showcase that.

Among the restaurants served by Zone 7 are Sprig & Vine and Triumph Brewing Co. in New Hope, Earl's Bucks County in Lahaska, the Lovin' Oven in Frenchtown, N.J. and Hamilton's Grill Room and Kindle Café in Lambertville, N.J.



Scott Anderson, executive chef at elements in Princeton, is featuring Bucks County farmers' products this summer.