

# Hogtown HomeGrown™

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Inside this issue:

The everyday challenge to “eat local”	1
What’s Fresh Right Now?	2
Local and Fresh—Watermelon	2
Watermelon Caprese Salad	2
Smoked Salmon Spiral Rolls	3
Watermelon Mojito Salad	3
Orange Glazed Blueberries	4
Ricotta Toast with Orange Glazed Blueberries	4

## The everyday challenge to “eat local”

Last Saturday morning, I met two cooking students at the farmers market. Not only was the parking lot at capacity, the market’s aisles were filled with shoppers, wagons and friends hugging hello. We ricocheted from vendor to vendor, marveling at the quantity and assortment of fresh produce and locally produced food. It seemed as if all of Gainesville was ready to eat local.

Then I opened the food section of the online version of our hometown newspaper. Three articles: Blue Bell’s new cookie cake ice cream flavor, KFC and Cinnabon’s new dessert biscuit, and a food writer’s take on Burger King’s new meatless Impossible Whopper. Any articles about our wealth of farmers and producers? Nope. Nothing local except the ads.

Sometimes I despair that no one really cares about how important it is to eat food that is grown or produced locally. Then I have an experience like last Saturday’s farmers markets or I read that the City Commission’s catered dinners were purchased from local businesses and I feel some hope.

While local food-related non-profits, such as Working Food and Florida Organic Growers, have created and sustained both substantial and incremental changes, it is up to each of us to keep our community local and sustainable.

Since 2008, May has been declared Eat Local Month in Alachua County and Hogtown HomeGrown has sponsored the Eat Local Challenge. During this time of the year, our markets are full of produce and shoppers and our farmers are busier than ever. May is the perfect time to challenge yourself to eat something local every day and at every meal. Eat at locally owned restaurants and ask which farms’ food is on the menu. Having a party at home or work? Look first for a local caterer or producer and serve your guests local food.

Eating locally grown food purchased from local producers is not always the first choice of many, but if you make your own incremental changes, you will eventually find you have made a substantial effort to keep our community local and sustainable. And that is better for all of us than any new ice cream flavor, dessert biscuit or faux-meat burger.

**EAT LOCAL  
CHALLENGE**

Hogtown HomeGrown

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# What's Fresh Right Now?

**Bananas**

**Beans**—green, purple

**Beets**—red, golden, chioggia

**Blueberries**

**Bok Choy**—tot soi, mei choy

**Broccoli**—crowns, broccolini

**Cabbage**—green, red, napa

**Carrots**—red, orange, yellow

**Cauliflower**—white/purple/orange, romanesco

**Celery**

**Citrus**

**Fennel**

**Garlic**—chives, gar-leeks

**Ginger**

**Greens**—arugula, collards, white russian/lacinto/curly kale, rainbow/swiss chard, mustard, escarole, endive, spinach

**Herbs**—parsley, dill, cilantro, curry leaf, italian/thai basil

**Honey**—orange blossom, gallberry, wildflower, tupelo

**Kohlrabi**

**Leeks**

**Lettuce**—red/green leaf, red/green romaine, salad mix

**Loquat**

**Moringa**

**Mushrooms**—shiitake, white/blue oyster, dried shiitake

**Nasturtiums**

**Onions**—green/red, yellow

**Papaya**—green, ripe

**Peas**—snow, sugar snap

**Potatoes**—red/white

**Radicchio**—purple, treviso

**Radishes**—globe

**Rutabaga**

**Shoots and Sprouts**

**Squash**—round/long/italian zucchini, yellow, white/yellow pattypan

**Strawberries**

**Tomatoes**—cluster, heirloom, grape

**Turnips**—purple top, salad

**Turmeric**—orange

# Local and Fresh— Watermelon

The first time I came to visit Gainesville was May 1979 and, though it was unusually cool, it was watermelon season and we visited the Newberry Watermelon Festival. I was enchanted by everything—the queen, the parade, the seed spitting contest—except the watermelon.

Like my maternal grandfather and aunt, I just don't like watermelon. Yeah, I know, unbelievable, but true. That said, the sweet juiciness and the crispy crunch is irresistible to many and a few are willing to "taste test" my recipes!

Look for firm melons with smooth skin and heavy for their size. Inspect the pale spot where the watermelon rested on the ground and pick the one with a yellowish rather than white spot. Some people swear that thumping a melon works to pick a winner, but you need to learn that skill from one of those experts.

## Watermelon Caprese Salad

### INGREDIENTS

1 slice watermelon, 1 inch thick, quartered

Pinch of salt

16-20 fresh basil leaves

4 slices fresh mozzarella, 1/4 inch thick

4 slices ripe tomato, 1/4 inch thick

Drizzle of olive oil

Drizzle of white or regular balsamic vinegar

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat grill.

Grill watermelon on one side.

Flip slices and top each with a pinch of salt, 4-5 basil leaves, and a slice each of mozzarella and tomato.

Cover grill and let cook 2-3 minutes or until cheese just begins to melt on the edges.

Remove watermelon slices to serving platter or plates, Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic. Add pepper as desired.

Serve immediately.

Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

# Smoked Salmon Spiral Rolls

## INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup warm water  
1/2 teaspoon honey  
1 package dried yeast  
1 1/4 cups warm water  
1 Tablespoon honey  
2 Tablespoons olive oil  
2 teaspoons salt  
3-4 cups all purpose flour  
1 Tablespoon olive oil  
6 ounces total mixed creamy cheeses, room temperature (I used mascarpone and chevre)  
1 cup leeks, chopped and sautéed until limp  
1 cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, chopped  
8 ounces sliced cold-smoked salmon  
1-2 Tablespoons olive oil  
Optional Topping: Trader Joe's Everything But The Bagel Sesame Seasoning Blend

## DIRECTIONS

Mix 1/2 teaspoon honey into 1/4 cup warm water. Stir in dried yeast.

Combine 1 1/4 cups warm water, 1 Tablespoon honey, 2 Tablespoons olive oil, 2 teaspoons salt and 2 cups flour. Stir until stretchy strands form. Add yeast mixture and additional flour as needed to form soft dough. Knead 5 minutes until dough is smooth.

Place 1 Tablespoon olive oil in a large ceramic bowl. Place dough ball in oil and turn to coat. Cover bowl and place in warm spot to rise until doubled.

Oil an 8x8 baking dish.

Punch down dough, form into small rectangle and use rolling pin or flat hands to roll or pat into an even 12x15 rectangle.

Position the dough with the long side facing you. Spread cheese mixture on the lower half of dough. Leaving a 1 inch margin on the top long edge, spread cooked leeks and sun-dried tomatoes on top half. Place the salmon in one layer starting at the bottom long edge—it should completely cover the cheese.

Tightly roll the dough from the long side. The salmon may slide a little, so just make sure it doesn't land in the 1 inch margin on the top edge. When rolled, pinch dough together along the long edge to seal.

Use a very sharp serrated knife to cut the filled dough into 9 pieces. Place each piece, cut side up, in oiled baking dish. Cover with a light towel and let rise 30-45 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Drizzle tops of rolls with 1-2 Tablespoons olive oil and sprinkle with Everything seasoning, if using. Bake 35-45 minutes or until light golden and firm to the touch. Cool 20-30 minutes before serving.

Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

# Watermelon Mojito Salad

## INGREDIENTS

4-6 slices watermelon,  
1 inch thick  
  
2 cups cucumber,  
peeled, seeded,  
quartered lengthwise  
and chopped  
  
1/2 cup fresh mint,  
torn into small pieces  
  
3 Tablespoons honey  
  
1/4 cup fresh lime  
juice

## DIRECTIONS


Preheat grill.

Place watermelon slices on hot grill and cook two minutes on each side or until grill marks form. Remove rind and cut melon into cubes. Place in large bowl. Add cucumber and mint. Stir gently to combine. In a jar, shake together honey and lime juice. Add to salad and stir. Cover and refrigerate.




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Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More

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## Tricks and Tips

If you looked at the recipe for Ricotta Toast with Orange Glazed Blueberries and had questions about butter and salt on toast, let me explain—

Granny, my Mom's mom, used unsalted butter in her cooking. When she wanted butter on toast or a biscuit, she used her unsalted butter and a sprinkle of salt. I saw this as I grew up, but since we were always dieting at home, we used low-fat margarine which has salt.

Now I have come full circle and we use unsalted butter, so I always add a sprinkle of salt to my toast!

## Orange Glazed Blueberries

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice  
1/3 cup raw sugar  
2 cups whole blueberries

### DIRECTIONS

Bring juice and sugar to a boil in a saucepan. Stir well, reduce heat and simmer until thickened.

Add blueberries and swirl to coat with glaze. Cook over low heat 5-10 minutes until glaze is thicker, but blueberries are still whole.

Remove from heat and allow to cool at room temperature for at least 30 minutes before serving. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

## Ricotta Toast with Orange Glazed Blueberries

### INGREDIENTS

1 slice sourdough or rustic country bread  
Unsalted butter and salt (optional)  
1/4 - 1/2 cup ricotta cheese, preferably whole milk and fresh  
1/4 cup glazed blueberries, drained  
Optional Toppings: orange zest, coarse salt, raw honey, chopped basil

### DIRECTIONS

Toast bread on both sides and add butter and salt if desired.

Spread ricotta to the edges of the toast. Place berries on top of ricotta.

Add optional toppings as desired. Serve immediately.