

Dining in the Field back for 2017!

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Described as "the social event of the year," the Dining in the Field inaugural event in 2016 raised \$4,647 for the Young Farmers Scholarship Fund. This year's event aims to double that. Tickets are already selling for the Thursday, October 12 event set to take place on gorgeous Briscoe Farms on the Patuxent River. Cocktails at 4:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:00 p.m., rain or shine. Early bird tickets are \$150 online through Dining Eats Local on Facebook and the Calvert County Farm Bureau site until September 15. Dropping a check or cash off at the Farm Bureau will save you \$5/ticket. There are only 200 spots so committing early is recommended.

Brain child of former delegate Sue Kullen, the event raised awareness and support for the local farming economy. Kullen is an active member of Calvert Eats Local, a group that meets monthly at Calvert Library Prince Frederick that was started by Greg Bowen and the library from a book discussion of Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*. Calvert Eats Local (CEL) has over 500 members and is dedicated to the support of sustainable agriculture and community in Southern Maryland.

Kullen said that she was inspired by a statistic she heard at a CEL meeting that suggested that if everyone were to purchase just 10% of their food locally, it would add \$28 million to the local economy. The delicious, high-end meal she and other volunteers designed was sourced entirely from 30 local and regional sources. She challenged attendees to commit to purchasing as much of their food locally as was reasonable. The dinner which included cocktails, wine, Patuxent oysters, grilled pork chops, charcuterie & cheese board, salad, rockfish with a creamy crab sauce, and a variety of local roasted vegetables was an example of what an inspiring meal could be made from all local ingredients.

Dream Weaver owner Trish Weaver was the primary chef and caterer for the event and generously donated her time and talents for the planning and event. She said, "I love this stuff...I love Calvert County, I love sourcing my food from my neighbors and I love building community." Kullen recruited 17 other equally dedicated volunteers who shared their skills ranging from graphic design to washing up. Caterer Sue Dzurec helped create a magical atmosphere with brilliant décor and signage celebrating the farms featured.

She also helped in the "kitchen" along with Gwyn Novak of No Thyme to Cook. Suzi Gibson loaned some of her splendid local flower arrangements to the event. Jeannae Pinno with Stonesby Events helped with logistics, beauty and even helped serve the food. Woodberry Kitchen in Baltimore accepted the freshly ground local flour and grains from Next Step Produce in Charles County and baked all the bread for free. Farmers were purposely not asked for discounts since the purpose of the event is to support local farmers but the quantity made wholesale prices worthwhile for many. Slack Winery and Running Hare were generous with discounts for wine and beer. The featured cocktail cooked up by Kullen was a delightful blend of local lemons (really!) and St. Mary's County Tobacco Barn Distillery honey flavored rum.

The food was amazing and it was seasoned with the most beautiful setting and sunset and a magical fellowship shared among the diners. Did I mention that tickets are available for the October 12 event? Reserve your seat at the table!

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