

Headwaters Food Summit will be this coming Monday at Royal Ambassador

The second annual Headwaters Food Summit and Local Trade Fair will be held Nov. 25 at the Royal Ambassador Event Centre in Caledon.

Presented by the Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance (HFFA), the day-long event will feature keynote speaker Loblaw Research Chair of Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Guelph Dr. Ralph Martin. His address will be on the topic of Does it Make Sense to Build a Local Food System in a Globalizing World? and it will cover a breadth of information on how local food systems can increase resilience of a community in light of the challenges associated with a global food system.

The event will offer four breakout sessions that will bring together experts to address topics such as:

? Building the Business Case for Local Food Systems with Janet Horner, executive director of the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance;

? Engaging Community: Food Education, Access and Literacy, featuring a panel discussion with local experts;

? Policy Challenges for a Local Food System with Jamie Reaume, chair of the Ontario Food Terminal;

? Local Food Promotion and Culinary Tourism with Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance Executive Director Rebecca LeHeup.

The event will be followed by a Local Food Trade Fair, featuring food and spirits purveyors from Headwaters, including the 100 Acre Bakery and Woolwich Dairy from Dufferin County and Albion Orchards and Spirit Tree Cidery from Caledon. This will be an excellent networking opportunity bringing together producers and purchasers to build new business relationships.

The day will be sponsored in part by Dufferin.biz, Foodland Ontario, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health Unit and The Hills of Headwaters Tourism Association, as well as other local sponsors.

Local food is an important component of the local economy. It brings together food production, distribution and consumption with benefits generated to all parties along the supply chain. Headwaters has strong agricultural roots and farming is still a major economic driver in the region and a valued cultural component of the community. In fact, Headwaters includes some of the best agricultural land in the country. Its close proximity to markets in nearby cities and the second largest North American food processing economy in the Greater Toronto Area makes the land a valued resource both for food and economic development.

The Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance is a collaborative initiative which oversees and supports activities across multiple Working Groups with a vision to support a food system in the Headwaters that is productive, sustainable, transparent and fair; supports the health and well-being of residents and food providers; and contributes to the prosperous and equitable economy. The primary objectives of HFFA are to grow a stronger local economy through the development of a local food system that includes residents who have access to healthy food and have the skills needed to support healthy eating, a diverse and sustainable farming system and local leaders who embrace the development of a local food system through development of supportive policies.

The Food Summit will run from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., followed by the Local Food Trade Fair from 4 to 6 p.m.

For more information on HFFA or to register for this event, visit www.headwaterscommunities.org