

Hundreds steer over to Heatherlea's grand opening

Heatherlea Farm Shoppe, a farm-gate store with a mission to raise and craft the highest quality artisan foods, hosted their recent grand opening.

Locals, visitors, dignitaries and association members filtered through Heatherlea's new building for food, beverages and music to celebrate the occasion.

Customers explored the new store and enjoyed samples and beverages from the Heatherlea Café and catering menu.

Head Butcher Jason Cooney and Butcher Stephen Aspinall were blown-away with the crowd and the meat sold that day. They served up some of the finest, locally raised meats, including 50-day aged porterhouse and T-bone steaks. Just past the meat counter, customers looked into the cutting room to see the butcher's work or the aging room where the quarters of beef hung to be aged for three weeks or more. Heatherlea's new shop is reminiscent of an old fashioned butcher shoppe, including the knowledgeable and friendly-neighborhood butchers.

The event began with owners Pat and Gord McArthur welcoming the gathered crowd. They invited others to say a few words before the ribbon was cut, including Mayor Allan Thompson; Councilor Barb Shaughnessy; Michele Harris, executive director of Headwaters; Leslie Forsythe, president of Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association; and Barb Smith of Foodland Ontario. They spoke of Heatherlea being a welcome addition by making local food more accessible, benefiting tourism, increasing job opportunities and bringing some of the best meats to the community. Thompson presented the McArthur's with a certificate of congratulations on the grand opening.

Heatherlea began in 2009 as a farm-gate store to market their grass-fed black Angus beef to the surrounding community, but today it's grown beyond their wildest dreams to encompass the wants and needs of their customers. The store offers a wide selection of fresh and frozen local meats including angus beef, chicken, pork, lamb, bison, emu, Tamworth/Berkshire pork, fish and seafood. Browse the shop for local eggs, milk, cheese, produce and fine pantry foods. You can also grab a bite to eat along with a delicious treat and coffee.

The addition of the café and butcher shoppe creates a truly unique farm-to-fork experience. Be sure to watch for the opportunity of custom aged beef (beyond three weeks). They are also part of the first farmers to be producing meat chickens under the brand-new Artisanal Chicken Program. The first of their chickens will be available in the butcher shoppe around mid-May.

For more information, visit www.heatherlea.ca



Mayor Allan Thompson and Councillor Barb Shaughnessy were flanked by Headwaters Tourism Executive Director Michele Harris, Don McArthur, Melinda McArthur, Gord McArthur, Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association President Leslie Forsythe and Barb Smith of Foodland Ontario at the recent grand opening of Heatherlea Farm Shoppe. Submitted photo