



Registration Opens for the Eastern Ontario Local Food Conference

MEDIA RELEASE

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Registration is now open for the Eastern Ontario Local Food Conference, scheduled for November 13-14, 2019 at the NAV CENTRE in Cornwall.

The conference is expected to attract over 200 local food producers, processors, consumers, rural economic development officers, NGOs and others who directly impact local food. It is being organized by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in partnership with the City of Cornwall and the United Counties of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry (SDG).

“The Eastern Ontario Local Food Conference will celebrate and support our regional local food system,” said Ernie Hardeman, Ontario Minister for Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. “The conference provides businesses and organizations with a chance to come together, build new relationships, and share timely information. Our mission is to grow Ontario's agri-food sector and support rural communities, helping to create a stronger economy for the province.”

The conference theme, *Growing Communities Together*, aims to highlight the importance of diverse food businesses and organizations working towards shared community and economic development.

“We are thrilled to be helping to organize this conference and welcome visitors to our community,” says Bernadette Clement, Mayor for the City of Cornwall. “The event presents a unique opportunity to explore our rich cultural history, discuss distinct collaborative strategies between regional leaders, and celebrate a flourishing local food landscape.”

This year's event will welcome keynote speaker, Tareq Hadhad, who came to Canada as a Syrian refugee and founded his gourmet chocolate business, Peace by Chocolate. Mr. Hadhad's keynote will not only share his experience of settling in Canada, but also address topics such as inclusion in the food system, workforce development, global peace efforts, and shared economic prosperity.

“The United Counties of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry is one Ontario's most productive agricultural regions and home to some of Canada's most innovative food producers,” says Jamie MacDonald, Warden for SDG. “We look forward to welcoming local food champions and introducing them to the tastes and flavours of this part of Ontario.”

The conference will also feature a number of seminars and workshops, three regional local food tours of the area, an exclusive local food and drink menu, and an open-floor trade show with community and business exhibitors.

The Eastern Ontario Local Food Conference is the premier event supporting the local food sector in Eastern Ontario. It was developed in 2011 in response to a rapidly growing sector in need of a stronger network and more targeted technical support.

Since that time the conference has supported numerous businesses and organizations that represent the innovative, vibrant and sustainable local food system in Eastern Ontario. Although celebrating its 8th conference program, this year marks the first time the Eastern Ontario Local Food Conference has been held in the Cornwall / SDG region.

For more information about the conference theme, draft agenda, tour details and to register, visit www.eastontlocalfood.com. Those looking to sponsor and exhibit during the conference are encouraged to look online for the sponsorship package or contact info@eastontlocalfood.com.

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