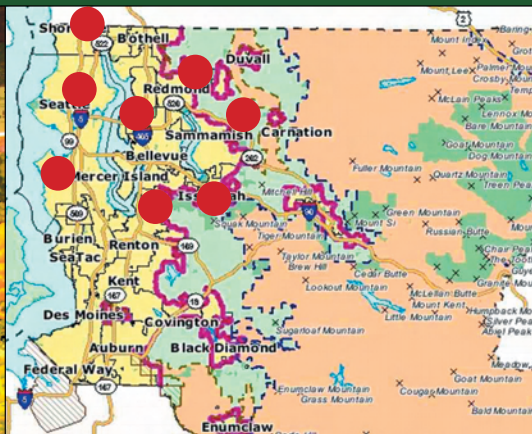


URBAN RURAL CONNECTIONS – A WHOLE KING COUNTY



Eating Locally with PCC Natural Markets

Steffan Soule and Barbara Halliday,

Edmonds, Fremont, Greenlake, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, Steward Park, View Ridge, West Seattle

As performing artists, who thrill audiences of all ages with breathtaking magic shows, husband and wife Steffan Soule and Barbara Halliday, principals in “A Touch of Magic,” understand the importance of natural vitality from natural foods. They rely on access to local, organic produce through regular shopping trips to PCC Natural Markets, and have for over 30 years.

“A professional magician has to maintain the physical stamina and mental focus of a professional athlete,” says Steffan. “Performing on stage is like being a sprinter in a track meet, except that the sprint can last 60 minutes. I couldn’t go the distance without fueling up with the right kind of foods.”

Barbara agrees, adding that they buy locally grown produce whenever possible. “A local connection to food sources has become increasingly important to us. The nutritional quality of food is highest in food eaten soon after it’s harvested. And as we’ve learned more about food safety issues and the decline of small family farms, we’ve become even more committed to buying local.”

Support of local, organic agriculture is just one of several values Steffan and Barbara incorporate into their daily lives and performances. They live as sustainably as possible and through their shows, “The Magic of Recycling” and “The Magic of Our Water,” they teach the importance of reducing and recycling waste, conserving energy and maintaining clean water in our communities. But as Steffan says, “Taking action to live sustainably starts with what we choose to eat, and our first choice is locally and organically grown food.”



Peterka Family, Carnation

Brian and Meghan Peterka and their two school-age children feel lucky to have PCC Natural Markets stores nearby. The family started relying on PCC when Brian became sick in 2000 and learned he had a wheat allergy. “PCC offered a lot of choices for a wheat-free diet that we could not find in other stores.”

Now, eight years later, the family shops almost exclusively at PCC. Meghan says “We actually schedule the 15th or 16th of the month for 5% off day.” It is important to the Peterka family to eat entirely local healthier food and not contribute to excessive inputs in travel and other things. They buy bulk grains and beans from PCC but for produce, they live on a Washington-only diet with an exception for months February through April.

Brian and Meghan are farmers with Blue Dog Farm in Carnation. When things are in season, they eat from the farm – from “wild” foods like nettles and dandelion greens to planted crops like chard, kale, potatoes and, of course the blueberries that Blue Dog is famous for. Meghan acknowledges that it sometimes challenging to find new ways of preparing foods that are seasonally available but the family enjoys challenging themselves to live more sustainably. In Spring of 2008 they decided to not purchase any food packaged in plastic to reduce landfill waste.

“Before I became a farmer I did not really think about it” Meghan explains. “Being a farmer has made me aware of the challenges facing local farmers and the health benefits of eating seasonally.” Farm work is hard, unpredictable and does not make a lot of money. It is a labor of love. “I am willing to stretch my budget to buy local at the store because I know what I am buying is a quality product that was made with care every step of the way.”

