

Brandywine Table

Market Series: Kennett Square Farmers Market

LOYAL CUSTOMERS ABOUND AT THE 23-YEAR-OLD MARKET

Courtney H. Diener-Stokes

AROUND 3 P.M. EVERY FRIDAY, ZACK HATHAWAY heads to the **Kennett Square Farmers Market** to stock up on fresh, local ingredients to use in his latest monthly menu. Zack and his wife, Karessa, are co-owners of one of Kennett's newest restaurants, Sweet Amelia's, and he says visiting the market is one of the highlights of his week. "Every Friday it's my little getaway from work," he says.

The Market's manager, Ros Fenton, keeps Hathaway posted on what's going to be available. Today he's expecting to find late-season tomatoes, hearty greens (like kale and collards), along with squash. Some of his regular vendor stops at the market include Lindenhof Farm, Swallow Hill Farm, Fiddle Creek Dairy and Full Table Farm. "The Hathaways have really been committed to supporting local," says Liam Miller, owner of Full Table, a small, organic, low-till vegetable farm located just ten minutes from the market.



Liam Miller of Full Table Farm

Ruth Hogue is another regular customer of Full Table who never misses a Friday at the market with her husband and their two young children. With her baby and a full bag of market goodies in tow, she's excited for the fall season when she roasts root vegetables for her family. "We are really into making bowls, so we'll do rice and beans and throw in another protein, like egg or chicken, and add the roasted vegetables," Ruth says.



Ros Fenton, Market Manager

Sue Miller, owner and operator of Birchrun Hills Farm with her husband and their two sons, is another vendor Hogue frequents at the market. In her 17 years of cheesemaking, Miller has been involved with many markets and shared an aspect of Kennett Square's that makes it stand out. "It's so a part of the culture of the community to shop at the market and support the regional farms," she says.

Miller sees the fall season as a time that's ripe for cheese, with October serving as Pennsylvania Cheese Month. Now that people have wrapped up their vacations and are shifting to spending more time at home, eating food and sharing in the bounty of the harvest, cheese serves as a nice complement to the abundance of fruits and vegetables available.

Here are a few recipes that highlight the best of what the season has to offer, to help inspire some cozy dinners. Read on!



Ruth Hogue, a regular at the market

Cheesiest Happy Hour Grazing Board

Birchrun Hills offers grazing boards at their Cheesiest Happy Hour, which is open to the public and takes place at the farm in Chester Springs every Friday from 3 to 7 p.m. A seasonal board can serve as the perfect lead-up to your dinner menu at home to showcase the season. Sue Miller makes them using a combination of what's tasting good in the caves and what's coming from local farms and her own garden. Apples and pears usually make an appearance on the boards in September, but early in the month she likes to take advantage of the last local melons, peaches and tomatoes of the season. Miller enjoys adding edible flowers for a festive touch. Pairs perfectly with a basket of Firehook Baked Crackers with Sea Salt broken in half.

Serves 2



- 6 toothpicks
- 1 oz. Birchrun Smoked Cheddar
- 2 basil leaves
- 2 cherry tomatoes
- 1/3 C. Castelvetrano olives
- 2 slices Rosette de Lyon cured meat
- 1/2 C. melon balls, variety
- 1/2 ripe peach, sliced
- 1 bunch Concord grapes
- 2 oz. Birchrun Hills Honey & Sea Salt Fromage Blanc
- 2 oz. Birchrun Hills Ola
- 2 oz. Birchrun Hills Equinox
- 1/2 C. Birchrun Hills Cheese Curds, original and Habanero Spiced
- 2 mint leaves, chopped

Cut cheddar into two medium-thick slices. Using a toothpick, add one piece of cheddar, one basil leaf and one cherry tomato. Repeat on the second toothpick.

Stack three olives on a toothpick and repeat on the second toothpick.

Fold each slice of cured meat like an accordion and place a toothpick through. Repeat on the second toothpick.

Market Fridays

I've never seen so many shoppers at a farmers market with wagons in tow that were chock-full with what appeared to be an entire week's worth of the freshest local offerings of meats, cheese and bread, produce, honey and cider. Despite being on shopping missions, the shoppers appeared to take the time to be friendly and talk with vendors.

On any given Friday from 3 to 6 p.m., you can find a diverse array of 19 to 23 local farmers and artisans on an open gravel space just outside the Creamery, located at 401 Birch Street. Overseen by the Kennett Collaborative, the 23-year-old market is one of many ongoing events and programs the nonprofit organization offers around town. Previously located on State Street, the market shifted locations to the historic Creamery of Kennett Square in more recent years. Ease in parking in the Creamery's spacious lot is a nice perk.

ABOUT THE HISTORIC CREAMERY

Formerly a milk plant, the Creamery is now a community gathering space that includes a pop-up beer garden. The site was formerly the Eastern Condensed Milk Company, founded in 1902 by Theodore Pennock, father of baseball Hall of Famer and Kennett Square native, Herb Pennock. Theodore Pennock was also the president and general manager of the company.

Arrange remaining ingredients on a large wooden cutting board or tray, incorporating skewers in like groups.

Sprinkle mint over melon.

Refrigerate any leftover cheese wrapped in wax paper for up to one week for soft cheese and up to three weeks for hard cheese.

Birchrun Hills' Fried Cheese Curds

Sue Miller of Birchrun Hills Farm also serves up these fried cheese curds as an appetizer at her Cheesiest Happy Hour. She makes them using freshly made cheese curds so they're both flavorful and creamy. You can find their curds at the Kennett Square Farmers Market every other Friday. Pair with a spicy dipping sauce made with Birchrun's crème fraîche.

Serves 3

Dipping Sauce Ingredients:

- 1/2 C. Birchrun Hills crème fraîche
- Sriracha, to taste

Fried Curd Ingredients:

- Canola oil
- 1 lb. Birchrun Hills Cheese Curds
- 1/2 C. cornstarch
- 1 C. all-purpose flour

- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 (12 oz.) bottle of beer, lager



Prepare the dipping sauce:

Combine crème fraîche and sriracha to taste. Cover and refrigerate while making the fried curds.

Prepare the fried curds:

Pour the oil into a heavy-bottomed pot. Heat on medium until the temperature reaches 350°.

In a medium bowl, toss the cheese curds with the cornstarch.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt. Slowly whisk in the beer, mixing until the batter is smooth.

Using a slotted spoon, scoop the cheese curds and dip into the batter to coat. Drip off excess batter. Drop the battered curds into the oil, frying in batches of 10–14 curds.

Turn the curds as they fry until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Drain on paper towels, serve hot and enjoy.

Storage not recommended for leftovers.

Full Table Farm's Burst Cherry Tomato Pasta

This is one of Liam Miller's go-to dinners in September, and it only takes 20 minutes from start to finish. It's a great way to use up red cherry tomatoes that are a little past their prime. Basil adds to the fresh flavor of this hearty main dish that pairs perfectly with freshly grated Parmesan.

Serves 6

- ½ C. extra virgin olive oil
- 12 garlic cloves, smashed
- 4 pints red cherry tomatoes
- 2 large sprigs basil
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 12 oz. spaghetti, cooked according to instructions on package
- 1 ladle pasta water
- 1 C. basil leaves
- 1 C. grated fresh Parmesan



Prepare the sauce:

Heat oil in a large pot on low heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until softened and fragrant but not browned, about 2 minutes.

Increase heat to medium and add tomatoes, basil sprigs and salt.

Cook, stirring occasionally, until tomatoes begin to burst, about 4 minutes. Smash some but not all the tomatoes with the back of a wooden spoon to help create a sauce.

Continue to cook for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring occasionally to achieve a chunky, thickened sauce (about half the tomatoes should be broken down and the other half should remain intact).

Discard basil sprigs and take off heat while you prepare the pasta.

Prepare the pasta:

Cook spaghetti according to package instructions for al dente pasta. Just before draining, add one ladle of pasta water to the pot of tomato sauce.

Drain pasta, and add to pot with sauce. Stir to coat over medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes.

Divide pasta evenly among bowls and top with fresh basil and Parmesan.

Ruth's Simple Pan Roasted Root Vegetables

Sweet potatoes, carrots and parsnips are some of Ruth Hogue's favorite root vegetables that often make an appearance at the dinner table. Despite her preference to sprinkle fresh herbs on top before baking, she opts to keep the dish extra simple and to make it kid-friendly. Pairs well as a side dish with a simple protein, such as roasted chicken.

Serves 4 to 6

- 1½ lbs. sweet potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 lb. carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 10–12 oz. parsnips, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 T. olive oil
- 1 tsp. seasoned salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper



Preheat the oven to 375°.

Line a large baking pan with parchment paper. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine cubed sweet potatoes, carrot and parsnip pieces. Add olive oil, salt and pepper and toss until everything is well combined and coated.

Transfer vegetables to the prepared pan. Place in the oven and roast for 45 minutes until lightly caramelized and tender, stirring the vegetables halfway through cooking.

Add additional salt and pepper to taste before serving.

Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to three days in the refrigerator.

Sweet Amelia's Caramel Apple Tart

Sweet Amelia's restaurant, named after the Hathaways' one-year-old daughter, is an upscale casual restaurant specializing in American cuisine and located in the heart of historic Kennett Square on State Street. Also involved in the business is co-owner Zack's sister, Ashley, who serves as their resident pastry chef. Ashley shared this autumn-inspired tart that showcases apples along with warming spices that are the perfect complement. Pairs perfectly with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Serves 6



- 1 puff pastry sheet, thawed slightly
- ½ C. butter
- 2 T. dark brown sugar
- 2 T. cinnamon
- 1½ tsp. nutmeg
- ½ tsp. allspice
- ½ tsp. ginger
- 1 tsp. sumac
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 large tart apples, Granny Smith or Pink Lady

Caramel Ingredients:

- 1 C. granulated sugar
- ¼ C. water
- 6 T. butter, cut into cubes
- ½ C. heavy cream
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 T. vanilla

Prepare the pastry:

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Line a baking sheet with ungreased parchment paper. Cut thawed pastry sheet into six equal rectangles and lay out evenly on a baking sheet.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together butter, brown sugar and all the spices until fluffy and lightened in color, scraping down the sides often.

Spread a heaping tablespoon of spiced butter on each piece of puff pastry, leaving a ¼-inch crust all around.

Shingle thinly sliced apple pieces to cover the entire pastry.

Bake for 30 minutes, rotating halfway through, until the pastry is golden brown.

For the caramel:

Add the sugar and water in a heavy-bottom pot. Swirl slightly to get a flat layer of sugar.

Cook over medium heat until bubbling. Do not stir. Allow to bubble and cook, swirling lightly if needed.

Cook until a deep brown/golden color is achieved, about 8 minutes.

Carefully whisk in the butter, as the mixture will bubble up and steam.

Remove from heat and slowly whisk in the heavy cream. Add in the salt and vanilla.

Once cooled, drizzle caramel sauce on top.

Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to three days in the refrigerator. ♦

Courtney Diener-Stokes is an award-winning journalist, author, food writer, photographer and food stylist. Most recently she co-authored the Kimberthon Whole Foods Cookbook and Farmhouse Manna: Nourishing Recipes and Rituals for Head, Heart, Hands & Soul. She lives in the Oley Valley countryside with her husband, three children, two Babydoll South-down sheep, a flock of bantam chickens and a Bernedoodle named Daisy.



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