



## Group offers tour of farms, art studios

BY ABIGAIL CURTIS  
BDN STAFF

BELFAST — Three years ago, when Kimberly Callas and the rest of the Belfast Creative Coalition were getting ready for the first “Cultivate: Belfast Area Farm and Art Fall Tour,” they found that would-be participants were a little bit confused.

The tour, which aims to highlight the richness of art, culture and agriculture in mid-coast Maine, needed artists who would welcome visitors to their studios and farmers who would show how they use their crops or animals to create consumer products.

“When we first put out the call, people thought they had to be both farmers and artists,” Callas, the executive director of the coalition, said this week. “Farmers were sending pictures of their art and artists were sending pictures of their farms.”

Even though the participants didn’t have to do double duty, she was tickled — and impressed — by the quality and variety of the farmers’ art and the artists’ farms. That kind of dedication and creativity is why the Columbus Day weekend event is so fun to organize and attend, she said.

“One of the neat things around here is that we have so many makers and creators,” Callas said. “I can’t wait. I feel really excited about this year.”

The event began as a way to let people, tourists and locals alike, know about places that are off the beaten track. This year, those include watching David Jacobson do glass blowing at his Montville studio, admiring the alpacas at Good Karma Farm in Belfast and checking out James Macdonald’s custom wood guitars and furniture at his Burnham workshop.

“These are the hidden gems you wouldn’t get to see otherwise,” she said. “It’s been neat to watch it evolve to what it’s meant to be.”

This year, Cultivate will feature stops at 18 different studios, workshops and farms Saturday, Oct. 10, and Sunday, Oct. 11. It is a self-guided tour, and Callas said she recommends folks interested in doing it take time at home with a map or their GPS to figure out their route ahead of time.

“We are talking remote [locations], with spotty cellphone service,” she said.

But once people are on the road, they should expect at least one thing from their foray into what Callas terms “cultural eco-tourism.” That’s the kind of tourism that steers clear of knick-knacks and T-shirts made in faraway locales and instead focuses on what is happening right in front of them.

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## Turkey shortage



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## How the avian flu might ruffle your Thanksgiving dinner plans

BY KATHLEEN PIERCE  
BDN STAFF

At Maine-ly Poultry in Warren, one of the largest turkey farms in the state, John Barnstein is raising 800 fewer birds this year — and not by choice.

In June he was dismayed to find his Canadian supplier couldn’t fill his order. This was a first in his 25 years in business.

Farmers and grocers in Maine, and around the country, have been feeling the impact of virulent highly pathogenic avian influenza, or HPAI, that sent tremors through poultry farms across the country last spring and decimated turkey flocks by 7.5 million. There were no confirmed cases in Maine, but the scare is affecting growers here.

“Canada experienced the same problem. They concentrated on taking care of the Canadian farmers first,” said Barnstein, who spent June scrambling to find U.S. hatcheries with available young turkeys called poults.

He eventually purchased 2,000 broad breasted whites from Ohio and Pennsylvania, but the delay cost him three weeks. That on top of learning to raise an unfamiliar breed has given him pause. “It’s been a really screwed-up year,” said Barnstein. “I have no idea what I’m going to end up with.”

The situation is far more dire for commercial turkey producers.

Anne Lichtenwalner, director of the University of Maine Animal Health Laboratory, said around the United States, 211 commercial poultry flocks were affected with HPAI this year compared to 21 noncommercial, small-scale operations.

The 2015 outbreak of HPAI reduced the United States’ commercial wholesale turkey supply by less than 10 of its total volume. As a result, the price of commercial turkeys will go up between 20 to 40 cents a pound, Lichtenwalner predicts.

“It’s still not clear why so few backyard flocks have tested positive for the virus,” said Lichtenwalner, adding the birds on the nation’s migratory flightways can carry the disease and free-range birds are at greater risk.

Though Maine has been spared thus far, “we shouldn’t relax,” warns the professor, who



COURTESY OF EDWIN REMSBERG

Young turkeys roam at Little Ridge Farm in Lisbon Falls. As avian influenza decimates birds in many states, Maine turkey farmers are bracing to meet customer demand this fall.

tracks the bird flu on her blog and offers tips for farmers to keep chickens and turkeys secure. “It’s still cycling through the wild bird population. So far, so good.”

With Thanksgiving on the horizon, will locally raised birds be in demand? Specialty grocers and co-ops in Maine are starting to find out.

“We are all freaked out,” said Toby Tarpinian, store manager at Morning Glory Natural Foods in Brunswick, where orders for Thanksgiving have just begun.

As a member of the Minnesota-based Independent Natural Food Retailers Association, Tarpinian knows his counterparts in the Midwest are “highly alarmed.” His supplier, which happens to be Maine-ly Poultry, is raising prices slightly and has secured him the approximate 200 turkeys he needs to satisfy customers.

“Maine has the luxury of having turkey farms, fresh turkeys where you can pick up the bird the night before Thanksgiving,” said Tarpinian.

But shoppers looking for local, pasture-raised birds this year would be wise to order them early. “Sometimes we call three or four days before slaughter and say, ‘We will take 30 more,’” said Tarpinian. With Maine-ly Poultry’s limited supply, “I suspect this year I can’t do it.”

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## Preserve harvest with canning

### Workshop offers hands-on how-to

BY KATHLEEN PIERCE  
BDN STAFF

FALMOUTH — What’s the best way to keep those apples from spoiling? Perk up those cucumbers? One can only make so many pies and salads, so learning how to can is a low-tech solution to protecting your hard-won produce.

From fermenting to freezing, preserving fresh food the old-fashioned way is undergoing a resurgence. Canning, if done properly, can be a snap.

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension is hosting a series of workshops from York to Knox counties to show you how. “Preserving the Harvest” runs from October into November.

Portland-based teacher Kate McCarty starts with an apple chutney Oct. 14 at Bonny Eagle Middle School in Buxton. Her goal is to make confident canners out of novices.

“It’s a lot of fun. You get to go home with a jar of what we make and the kitchen skills to can safely in the future,” she said.

With botulism lurking in the background, canning comes with pitfalls.

To pull it off successfully at home McCarty, a food blogger who has written two books on the Maine food and drink scene, focuses on kitchen safety and demonstrates food preservation methods recommended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



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The lid is secured before placing the jar of dill slices into the refrigerator. Allow the cucumber slices to marinate for at least two days for best results.

“We’ve seen a big growth in demand for our preservation programs,” said McCarty, who shows attendees how to use equipment and boil cans properly. “Everyone is concerned with food safety, so I spent a lot of time on that.”

The following day, Oct. 15, she plunges into preserving pickles and fruit preserves. “These are quick pickles. You can eat them fresh or refrigerate and save for a while,” McCarty said.

That event will be held at Portland’s Whole Foods Market. The workshop goes from 6 to 8 p.m.

In Rockport on Oct. 7 and Oct. 21, a boiling water bath and freezing class will be taught by food preserver Vina Lindley. The same class comes to South Berwick on Nov. 4, with a focus on chutney.

Fresh produce, canning jars and other canning equipment will be provided.

Fall is a great time to start new things. All you need is a can-do attitude.

To register for an event, visit extension.umaine.edu/food-health/food-preservation/hands-on-workshops. Workshops will be offered throughout the fall.

For more information, call 781-6099 or toll-free at 800-781-6099.

## Artists’ lofty home rises over Belfast Bay

### ABOUT A HOUSE

BY ABIGAIL CURTIS  
BDN STAFF

Two artists, one steep hillside overlooking a scenic harbor, a lot of hard work and a generous touch of whimsy: mix those together and what emerges is the four-story home of Tony Kulik and Elaine Tucker, a 15-year project that blends art with stunning views of Belfast Bay.

“We built this house for each other,” said Tucker, a Belfast real estate agent who also has painted and sculpted.

“We both spend a lot of time looking out there,” Kulik said, gesturing to the waterfront panorama far below. “I like the evening, when the sunset just lights up the harbor. The reds are super red, the yellows are super yellow and Young’s Lobster Pound [across the bay] just glows.”

His artist’s eye is not limited

to appreciating the sunset from the couple’s hilltop aerie. Kulik’s delicate wood engravings may be in your home, even if you don’t know it. He has made about 100 pieces for Burt’s Bees, including the famous bearded portrait of company co-founder Burt Shavitz used on the labels of many cosmetics products. Residuals from Burt’s Bees helped the couple pay for the 3,200-square-foot house, which they literally built from the ground up, needing to terrace the hill before they could lay the foundation for their home.

They began work in 1999. When they moved in the following year, it remained a work in progress.

“There was no kitchen, one tap with running water and lots of work to do,” Tucker said.

Kulik said they worked with a contractor until they ran out of money. Then did much of the



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Elaine Tucker and Tony Kulik stand in front of the house the two artists said they built for each other overlooking Belfast Harbor.

rest themselves. They built sturdy stone walls with the rocks they found when digging up the garden and planted perennials and a catalpa tree seedling, which has flourished

at its spot at the top of the hill. They laid the radiant heat flooring system “on their hands and knees,” Tucker said, then covered that with a thin layer

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