

# Sunnyside Quarterly

Sunnyside Natural Market is a locally owned, family operated, community focused, small business. Operating in Kensington since 1997.

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[www.sunnysidemarket.ca](http://www.sunnysidemarket.ca)

## This Season at the Market

Spring has sprung! The smells of flowers and dirt fill the air, the river is swollen and cerulean, and - the surest sign of the changing seasons - people have started wondering when local greens will grace the produce counter.

The oldest surviving book of recipes is titled *Apicius*, a Roman collection dating from the third-century AD. It contains an early recipe for one of springs most prized vegetables: asparagus. Known as the 'Queen of the Vegetables,' or, affectionately in French, *points d'amour*, these young edible shoots are eagerly expected as spring arrives the world over, and Alberta is no different.



We've got fresh, local asparagus from Tamminga Farms, located just east of Lethbridge. They grow their asparagus without the use of pesticides or herbicides, and the result is a tantalizingly delicate flavour that evokes its season.

From south of the border, grapes and melons have started coming in from California. The cantaloupe is sweet and thirst-quenching. We hope to have locally grown melons from Gull Valley Greenhouses (Blackfalds, AB) by mid-summer.

Speaking of Gull Valley, aside from the exquisite greenhouse-grown tomatoes we received from them throughout the winter, we're excited to have their green beans available - crisp, sweet, and unquestionably vernal. We also have a variety of sweet and hot peppers from them.

The first Alberta-grown greens to arrive are spinach and sorrel from our old friends at Country Thyme Farms. These leafy greens are grown organically near Bowden, AB. We've also received spinach and radishes from Blue Mountain Biodynamic Farms (Carstairs, AB).



In the coming months we'll be hosting more Sunnyside Natural Market Speaker Series. The unparalleled Kris Vester of Blue Mountain Biodynamic Farms will be speaking on June 20th, summer solstice, from 7-9. Don't miss this one: Kris is always a wealth of information and inspiration. More details will be posted on Facebook and our website shortly. Elise of Apiaries and Bees for Communities will also be in for a Wine & Bees night. Don't miss the chance to learn all things bees!

Visit our website to sign up for our monthly mail-out, where you can learn more about these events, as well as receive monthly specials, recipes, and more!

## Sunnyside Verified



We've officially launched Sunnyside Verified, the first labelling initiative of its kind in Western Canada. Look for the checkmark on product price tags to indicate a product is guaranteed non-GMO. This program has been two years in the making, and after plenty of back and forth between suppliers and farmers we can confidently say we are giving our customers the ability to make an informed choice on their food, given that our federal government has voted not to pursue such transparency.

For more information on products in our dairy, meat, or eggs sections, look for detailed buying guides.

If you have any questions on Sunnyside Verified, or are curious about how ingredients on products have been verified, don't hesitate to ask!

## Seasonal Recipe:

### *Savoury Breakfast Muffins*

These muffins are a great option for a healthy bite in the morning when you want something quick. Then, get outside and enjoy the spring weather!



#### **What you'll need:**

- 1 cup Tree Island Plain Cream Top Yogurt
- 1/2 cup crumbled organic feta
- 1/2 cup organic cottage cheese
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh herbs (dill, mint, rosemary, oregano, thyme)
- 3/4 cup Highwood Crossing rolled oats
- 1 cup Highwood Crossing flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper

#### **Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare 12 standard muffin cups.
2. Mix all dry ingredients. Combine all wet ingredients in a separate bowl.
3. Stir wet ingredients into dry ingredients, and spoon batter into muffin cups.
4. Optional: sprinkle sesame, flax, sunflower or pumpkin seeds on top.
5. Bake for 30 minutes.
6. Let muffins cool in tin for 10 minutes before removing.

Attribution: [www.treeislandyogurt.com](http://www.treeislandyogurt.com)



## The Grass Fed Difference

'Grass Fed' has become the label to look for in recent months, and for good reason: both grass fed dairy and meat have been shown to have improved health benefits to conventional or grain-fed counterparts.

Unfortunately, the label of 'grass-fed' is still relatively new, and throughout Canada the term is largely unregulated. It wasn't until 2013 that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency approved the first certification label for grass-fed meat, through the certifying body Animal Welfare Approved. Alberta's TK Ranch was the first Canadian farm to achieve this certification!

Sunnyside Natural Market develops close relationships with our farmers and producers, and we get out to visit



farms as much as possible. Growing these relationships ensures we can provide grass fed products we trust.

With grass-fed dairy, what it really comes down to is the proper balance of omega-3 and 6 fatty acids - fats that are essential to our health. Conventional milk, meat, and lots of processed foods contain a surplus of omega-6 fats which crowd out omega-3 fats and prevent proper absorption.

Studies have found grass-fed cows produce a milk higher in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), an omega-3 essential fatty acid that has been shown to reduce inflammation, lower risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes. Grass-fed milk contains double the fatty acid content of conventional milk, and a study out of the UofT found that grass-fed whole milk had an "omega-6:omega-3 ratio of 1.8:1 compared with conventional milk that tested as high as 6:1." This more balanced ratio is essential for the proper metabolization of omega-3.

Grass fed dairy also has more conjugated linoleic acid (CLA). This fatty acid has been connected to protection from colorectal and breast cancers, diabetes, and heart disease. Studies have also found grass-fed milk to contain more vitamin E, selenium and beta-carotene than conventional milk.

There are also added benefits for eating meat from an animal that is only fed grass or pasture raised. Grass feeding and finishing ruminant animals like cows, goats, or sheep has been shown to produce meat with a more favourable balance of omega-3's and 6's. Likewise, pasture raising pork and poultry can produce a healthier meat.

Dr. Richard Bazinet, a professor with the University of Toronto presented a study at this year's

Organic Alberta Conference in which he measured the fatty acids profiles found in steak from grain finished beef, and steak from Alberta raised grass fed and finished beef. The grain finished beef was found to have levels of omega-6 fat that was dramatically higher than omega-3 fat. Steak from cattle only fed grass had a much more nutritionally balanced ratio.

Not surprisingly, when an animal is fed what it is supposed to eat, it is healthier - not just for the animal, but for us too.

Visit our website for more information on grass-fed animals, including why it's a more ethical choice, and a list of products you can find in our store that come from grass fed or pasture raised animals.



## Who's Your Farmer?

Scott DiGuistini and Merissa Myles

started Tree Island Yogurt in 2012 with the

hope of creating an exceptional, grass-fed yogurt that wasn't being produced elsewhere in Canada. Based in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island, Tree Island Yogurt is made with only 100% whole milk from the grass-fed cows of Guy Sim's Birkdale Farm. Guy raises his cows without the use of antibiotics or added hormones, and pasture raises them from April to October. During the colder months, the cows are still fed dried or fermented grasses, as well as a grass forage mix of alfalfa and ground barley to ensure a healthy, happy animal that produces nourishing milk.

Grass-fed dairy was a no-brainer for Scott and Merissa, who noted the higher level of omega-3's, CLA's and beta carotene in their milk is an important part of producing not just gourmet yogurt, but a more wholesome yogurt as well.

What sets this yogurt apart can be both seen and tasted. Merissa points out the golden colour in their yogurt - especially evident in the cream top & natural greek varieties - is the result of the increased beta carotene found in grass-fed dairy. They also set up a blind taste test, in which grass-fed milk was the unanimous winner as the most flavourful dairy. Dr Bazinet's research also found that Alberta grass-fed dairy has a better flavour profile than conventional or non-grass-fed dairies.

For Scott and Merissa, producing Tree Island Yogurt is a blend of science and art. Ingredients are carefully selected, and the yogurt is then handcrafted in small batches using a traditional, slow-kettle cooking method.

Check out our yogurt section for a variety of delicious and artisanal flavours from Tree Island - available in both cream-top and greek style yogurts.



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