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Feed Your Soul with tours to area farms

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NIAGARA FALLS — Feed Your Soul, a Buffalo-based company that develops public events around the region's farms and chefs, has announced its summer line-up of outings, including stops at farms in the Niagara region.

Since the tours have sold out so quickly each summer, Feed Your Soul is offering three different tours, one each month, July through September.

Each tour stops at a minimum of three farms, and features a midday lunch from one of the area's top chefs.

July's tour focuses on farms in Erie County, including: Weiss Farms, a member of Eden Valley Growers known for strawberries and heirloom produce, Arden Farm, an organic farm that was part of the original Roycroft Campus, and Oles' Family Farm in Alden, a farm with a popular share-based business and growing restaurant trade.

August's tour focuses on the hot trend of urban farming by making stops at four City of Buffalo farms, including a visit to Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP), Buffalo's original urban farm, which is located on a single acre and makes use of a straw-bale greenhouse and a fully-sustainable aquaponics system.

September's tour heads to Niagara County where it includes two Lockport farms — Flavor Farm and T-Meadow Farm, as well as a vineyard walk through Leonard Oakes Estate in Medina. Throughout the tour, information about sustainability and the region's agricultural viability will be shared.

The tours are operated by Christa Glennie Seychew, a food writer and also creator of the popular local cooking competition, Nickel City Chef.

“Surprisingly, our current food system has separated many of us from a sense of seasonality and a solid understanding of how to make good use of what is available from any of our region's 8,500 farms,” Seychew said.

“We love that what started three summers ago as a way to connect chefs to our local harvest has become an annual series,” she said, adding that the tours attract health practitioners, nutritionists, culinary students and everyday people interested in seeing another side of Western New York.

Her company is also planning “Feed Your Soul's Chef & Market Lunches,” which include a tour, one Sunday a month, through Buffalo's Elmwood-Bidwell Farmers Market. The tour is lead by a chef from an area fine dining restaurant, and guests are given the opportunity to speak with the farmers and food artisans, ask questions about some of the more curious vegetables for sale and sample many of the goods available.

As the group makes its way through the market, the chef will purchase the best and freshest items, all of which will become lunch after the market portion of the day ends and the group makes its way down the street to Delish, one of Buffalo's cooking demonstrations schools.

There under the careful tutelage of the chef, the group will work together to prepare a light lunch from the

ingredients purchased at the market.

Details and ticketing information for these events are available online at feedyoursoulbuffalo.com.