

# Munch ON THIS



## ***An Idea Who's Time Has Come Again***

*By Marcia Rae  
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The domestication of plants and animals began about 10,000 years ago in the Middle East, and was independently invented at least four more times in different parts of the world. It seems that it was just a good idea for humans.

10,000 years ago the world's total population was about 1 million. By 1850 it was 1.2 billion. Now it is 6.8 billion. So that last 5.6 billion was added in just 150 years, coinciding with the discovery and use of oil and natural gas. What we are coming to understand is that while the oil and natural gas will all be used up at some point in the future, we are sort of stuck with a lot of mouths to feed.

For some 9,850 years a farm was internally sustainable, generating food using stuff already on the farm such as human and animal labor, dirt, animal poop, water, growing plants, and the sunlight that fueled it all. Only during the last 150 years have farms trucked in stuff from outside the farm to make food; stuff in the form of machines and chemicals.

Lucky for us, there is a movement afoot. Lucky for me I had a chance to glimpse its potential this weekend at the Small Farms Conference, sponsored by the OSU Extension Service. In its 10<sup>th</sup> year, this is a gathering of people who are re-inventing farms that work – and they give me hope.

But they need our help. They need laws that support their efforts. They need people who care enough about our future and healthy bodies that they seek out good, real food. They need land that is protected from the developers' shovels. They need financial support in the form of access to capital. They need the vigor of new, young farmers with a financially feasible path to farm ownership. They need processing facilities and distribution networks.

Munch on this – No farms, no food. How will you help? Solution. Check out [WillametteLocalFoods.com](http://WillametteLocalFoods.com). Help with your pocketbook.

Join the Calapooia Food Alliance Saturday, March 13 for our second Munch Night at Bella Cucina. We will be munching on yummy food and watching the movie, *Ingredients*, with discussion facilitated by Sharon Thornberry, recipient of the Billi Odegaard Public Health Genius Award.

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