

Homegrown

Stories from the Farm

To my parents, who took me to the farm.

Homegrown

Stories from the Farm

by

Evelyn Hoyt Frolking

with

Tod A. Frolking

The McDonald & Woodward Publishing Company
Granville, Ohio

The McDonald & Woodward Publishing Company
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Homegrown: Stories from the Farm

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Endorsements for
Homegrown
Stories from the Farm

In an era of increasing consumer interest and knowledge about their food choices, this book allows us to gaze back from the other side of the plate, to understand the challenges and passions that drive the local food movement from the producers' point of view.

— Carol Goland, Executive Director
Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association
Columbus, OH

Homegrown is an interesting book which chronicles the effort and challenges of six families who have dedicated themselves to producing quality locally grown food. Those who purchase local food and those who hope to grow clean healthy food whether in a home garden or for sale will find this book useful.

— Gene Branstool
Farmer, former Ohio State Representative and Senator,
and Assistant Secretary of Agriculture
in the Clinton Administration
Utica, OH

As Evelyn Frolking suggests in her book, farmers markets are the star attractions in towns and cities across the nation, and Granville's is no exception. Homegrown contains wonderful stories about relationships between small growers and local consumers that strengthen our neighborhoods and their economies.

— Board of Directors
Granville Area Chamber of Commerce
Granville, OH

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Preface

When the Granville Area Chamber of Commerce first decided to sponsor a farmers market some 20 years ago, I was among those who stepped up to be a market master. My childhood on the farm seemed adequate qualification to interact with farmers and manage the details of a Saturday sale of food from local gardens. And, truthfully, now that I was a townie, I was eager to feel the breeze of a farmer's life again. The market was a small, quiet affair then. Card tables, truck beds, folding chairs: the set was simple. The food set out on those surfaces was fresh and varied: the morning's garden harvest. People drifted in. They socialized, bought a little food and came back week after week, strengthening friendships and likely their health. Since then, farmers markets have grown up and now they are star attractions in towns and cities across the nation. As the demand for fresh, clean food soars nationwide in the face of a food system we no longer quite trust, farming is respected again, even admired, emulated. After years away from a childhood on the farm, I wanted to hear what life was like now on the other side of the market table.

My interest in food is rooted in my family and my daily life. My mother is German and she grew up in the family

bakery in German Village in Columbus, Ohio's capital city. At age 90, she still makes the best apple pie in town. Our son, a young college graduate with a successful new job in environmental geology, came home one day and told us he wanted to go to culinary school. Today, he is a passionate chef, living and working in Oregon, a state known and respected for culinary progressiveness and fine fresh food. When I was offered a position to teach essay writing at Denison University, the college on the hill in Granville, the content was mine to choose. I chose food, specifically, the issues surrounding the food industry that so increasingly unsettled me and were virtually unrecognized by my young students.

My husband, Tod Frolking, a professor at the college in the Geoscience Department, is a soil scientist and geographer. We talk a lot about food, where it comes from, what has been done to it and to the land, and the trajectory the country has been on. We travel frequently and the food is always something we enjoy and take note of as we walk among the locals in their markets. Tod has written several parts of this book, using his experience and knowledge to add insights and background. Without his contributions and his counsel, I believe the book would be less worthy and my deepest gratitude goes to him for his participation, encouragement, and support over the long months of writing, teaching my class, and conducting the small business I own and operate on the side.

Thanks also to photographer and friend Gary Chisolm, who traveled twisting country roads and long highways with me to let you see the farmers, face to face, and who became as taken by their stories as I was. And thanks, too, to the Harvey

family for sharing a photo of their daughter, Erin, in her sunflower patch.

And finally, and most appreciatively, I want to thank the families who sat with me at their kitchen tables, walked the fields, poked through the greenhouses, and told me their stories. It has been my honor to acknowledge and affirm them for the hard work they do from early mornings to late evenings, alone as they are in those moments on the land.

This hour in history needs a dedicated circle of transformed nonconformists. The saving of our world from pending doom will come not from the action of a conforming majority but from the creative maladjustment of a dedicated minority.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.
Strength to Love, 1963



