



GRIST FOR THE MILL

Dear Eater,

Wow, that was one long winter, wasn't it? But despite our wondering whether it ever would during April snowstorms, finally spring has returned to Iowa.

In gardens all over the state the harbingers of spring are starting to pop up, and Edible Iowa River Valley has the scoop. Criss Roberts will tell you all about how a good-natured garden grows in Burlington, while Michael Knock has the skinny on asparagus.

Things only get sweeter as Kristine Kopperud Jepsen tells us what a waggledance is after visiting with some beekeepers in Northeast Iowa. We had no idea how many different kinds of honey there are.

Some people who know a lot about food gathered in April for a symposium on food, culture and identity, and EIRV was there for the highlight as three of Eastern Iowa's best culinary teams competed for the title of "Iron Chef Iowa." See page 34 to find out who claimed the crown.

Brian Morelli's paid a visit to another Iowa town in search of more "Incredible Edibles," and he found them in Postville. No word on why he didn't bring us one of those pastrami sandwiches. Mallory Smith dropped a line to tell us what's the latest news from the statewide Buy Fresh — Buy Local campaign, including two new chapters.

The reason we have that image of the mother Jersey cow and her 4-hour-old calf is because we have three stories about small dairies. From Clarinda, Dave Murphy brings us a "message in a bottle" of sorts as Naturally Iowa Dairy has found a way to grow not just the cows that make the milk, but they grow the bottles too. Meanwhile Eugenia E. Gratto has the word on a "Cultural Revolution" at Kalona Organics, and Katie Roche visited Reichert's Dairy Air to learn about accidental goat cheese (really).

Cap it all off with a peek inside Iowa City Mayor Regenia Bailey's well-stocked fridge, and it's clear that all of Iowa is awakening from another long hard winter to the hopeful promise of spring.

With Relish,
Kurt & Wendy