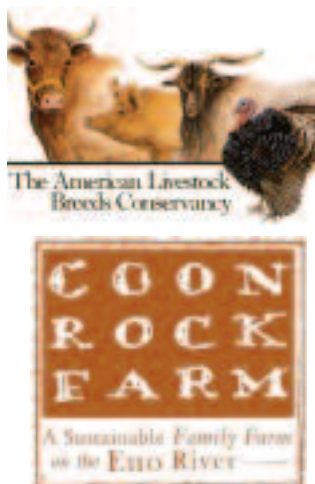


Edible Piedmont's Local Heroes

Did you cast your vote? Each fall, all of the Edible Communities' magazines ask for your input to recognize neighborhood folk who impact our celebration of local foods. We appreciate each of you who took the time last fall to let us know your favorites, and hope even more of you will chime in this year. Check our Harvest issue for details.



ANDREA REUSING, chef/restaurant. This was a tight category with a mix of votes between some of the founding folks of eating local, like Ben and Karen Barker and Arthur Gordon, and the great pool of new talent manning stoves across the area. However, Andrea does stand out. Having made a reputation for herself in Raleigh before opening Lantern in Chapel Hill to accolades and a tremendous amount of national press, her hand at fusing local and seasonal ingredients with Asian sensibilities is well documented. She has become a driving force within Slow Food and is a stalwart of local farms and the foods they produce. Look for EP's interview with Andrea in an upcoming issue.

RICHARD HOLCOMB, farmer, Coon Rock Farm. Here's another close decision, with Alex Hitt and Eliza MacClean very much in contention for this award. Richard's intensity for sustainable agriculture is certainly one we hope is catching. This ex-software entrepreneur bought Coon Rock Farm in 2004 and, in the same year, he partnered with the Agasi family to start Raleigh's Zely and Ritz restaurant. The restaurant became the outlet for his first crops. Now he looks forward to a new venture in Durham—Eno Restaurant and Market—an interesting combination of farm to restaurant. With his partner Jamie DeMent, Richard has nurtured Coon Rock Farm into one of the best-known, sustainable, organic farms in the area. EP is working with Coon Rock's Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) on a series of articles to cook through your CSA box at home.

LIONEL VATINET, artisan, La Farm Bakery. Master Baker Lionel Valinet has delighted the Triangle area with his crusty, European style breads and delicate pastries. We believe that we would lose weight save his white chocolate bread. Here is a man with respect for tradition, food made from scratch, without chemicals or preservatives, and in his words, "that you use your hands." Lionel is constantly seeking local farmers and millers who can provide the raw ingredients that become La Farm's breads. We hope you caught our profile on Vatinet in our Autumn issue. It's still online at www.ediblepiedmont.com. EP also congratulates Lionel and his wife and business partner, Missy, on the recent birth of their first child, and hopefully, the next generation of bakers.

SEAN WILSON, artisan beverage, Fullsteam Brewery. Sean is a young man with an infectious personality who is on a mission to craft local beers (using local and regional ingredients) and to put a twist on Southern beer. Sean lobbied successfully in 2005 to change the legal definition of beer, striking down a 70 year old law that had hampered beer production in North Carolina. His "plow to pint" mantra and determination for Southern beer to take its rightful place among the beverages of the world, has gained him many converts. Look for Sean testing his ideas around the state. Hopefully, his brewery will be up and running soon. Keep up with Sean's adventures at www.fullsteam.ag.

AMERICAN BREEDS LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY, nonprofit. This category was wide open but the American Breeds Livestock Conservancy won by a nose. This national organization, based in Pittsboro, NC, are the guardians and promoters of farm animals' genetic diversity and of rare breeds. If you have enjoyed heritage turkey, pork or chicken, then you have these folks to thank, as well as the farmers and ranchers that took on the task of saving some endangered breeds. Through the work of ABLC, diversity of genetic material is growing, with the added benefit for consumers being better flavor profiles and a wider variety of tastes. To learn more, go to ablc-usa.org and support this group and the farmers committed to their cause.