

schools, country clubs, corporate kitchens and retail stores based in the New York metro area. Once they sign up, buyers can browse by farm or by item and make arrangements for delivery or pick-up directly with the farm over the site.

It's all about enabling the connection between farm and buyer. "There seemed to be two groups that needed to connect and weren't," Ross says, "and that's what any good 'B2B' website does better than almost anything else." —DN

farmersweb.com

## JUST THE FACTS

For years, area farmers and home gardeners alike have turned to **Maire Ullrich**, vegetable specialist at **Orange County Cooperative Extension**, for answers to their most challenging vegetable quandaries. When it comes to livestock, it's **Audrey Reith** they turn to.

This fall, the two specialists will lead a four-part educational forum on food. Designed for consumers interested in knowing more about the food they eat, the program will give a brief history of agriculture in the Hudson Valley, then go beyond meat and potatoes to answer critical questions for consumers: What's the real meaning of "organic," "natural" and "free-range?" How to tell if a cereal contains GMO ingredients. How to make sense of food labels. And how to source and get the most out of locally raised products—even in winter. Participants will have the opportunity to meet local producers, as well.

The series of four 2-hour sessions will be held October 18 through 27, from 7 to 9 PM at Orange Ulster BOCES in Goshen. The fee is \$25; participants can sign up for one or all sessions. For details or to register, contact BOCES continuing education department, (845) 781-6715 or register on-line. —VT

ouboces.org

## GENDER SPECIFIC

Wine by consensus? A couple of enterprising women are all over the social media saying "Why not?" and on September 10 and 11 at the Hudson Valley Wine and Food Festival, **Happy Bitch Wines**, a new, female-



targeted wine company, will pour tastes of three different blends of a Frizzante Rosé. Festival goers will vote for their favorite, and the winner will become the first Happy Bitch wine.

"Why not give people exactly what they want by letting them choose it?" asks Keryl Pesce, author of *Happy Bitch: The girlfriend's straight-up guide to losing the baggage and finding the fun, fabulous you inside . . .* (Wheatmark, 2010; \$19.95 softcover). "We're past the information age—we're in the consumer age. With the power and reach of social media, consumers have more power than ever to not only influence the quality of a product, but to influence what even becomes a product."

When Pesce tweeted about possibly creating a Happy Bitch wine on Twitter, wine blogger Debbie Gioquindo tweeted back that she should make it a Hudson Valley Wine. Now business partners, the soon-to-be wine producers have already made their presence known.

"People are already searching us out," Gioquindo says. "They're asking where they can buy our wine before they know what the bottle looks like or what the wine tastes like. I think they sense our passion and excitement. It doesn't get much better than that."

The wine is aimed squarely at the female market. Every decision the two

have made—from taste, color, bottle, type of wine, function and design—has been done "with women and happiness" in mind.

"Keryl and I go through blending trials to get the base blend, but it's ultimately the consumer that will tell us what to produce," Gioquindo notes. "This is a great way to get everyone involved and let them be a part of the process. After all, they are the ones we want to make happy."

The wine is expected to be officially launched at a party on October 20, from 6–9 PM at the Grandview in Poughkeepsie. The event is open to the public; a portion of the proceeds from the launch will benefit the Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation.

For more information and to purchase tickets to the launch, visit [Facebook.com/HBWines](http://Facebook.com/HBWines). —VT

HappyBitchWines.com

## EAT MORE LOCAL

This September, Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) will sponsor the second **NY Locavore Challenge**, a month-long campaign aimed at educating consumers about healthy, ethical food choices and getting them to support local sustainable farms and food businesses by cooking and eating in-season, local organic foods.