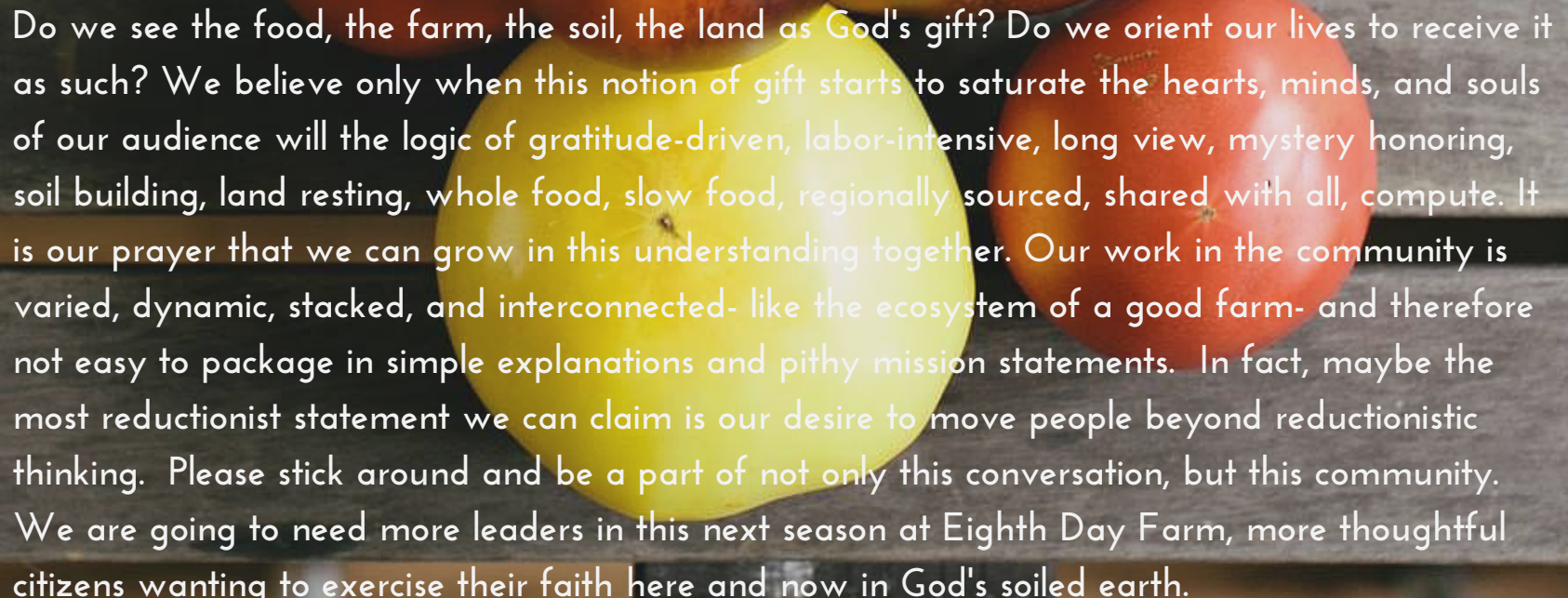




SELL ME SOME OF THAT

For those of you who are newer to Eighth Day Farm, the Fall newsletter is an act of anamnesis inherent to a rhythm of thanksgiving. We recall the many ways the good Lord sustained, carried, surprised, chastised, or maybe clearly blessed us in the year gone by. Certainly good food is among the blessings we appreciate at Eighth Day. Good food becomes even better when shared with others. We thank God for the potlucks and numerous gatherings where we were nourished in body and soul. We again were blessed with scores of volunteers, youth workers, 5 eager interns, new staff, a hungry CSA, various community partners, and a board of directors with deep hearts. The Backyard to Table project expanded from 6 to 18 families, more youth enjoyed field trips at the farm, the Growth Center building and fence received needed paint, a permaculture orchard was planted through a successful Kickstarter campaign, another fun Farm to Fork event was held at the Holland Town Center, a Hops yard was constructed and planted, lots of food was donated, lots of compost made, lots of time shared in urban fields.

Meanwhile, always wanting to be the best stewards not only of our land, but of our mission, we are growing in our realization that the selling of food too often takes front and center, and in our context obfuscating our deeper mission. More than the selling of food we desire to "sell," or better yet educate, the broader public on the idea that our interactions with food (and by extension all creation) are always spiritual.



Do we see the food, the farm, the soil, the land as God's gift? Do we orient our lives to receive it as such? We believe only when this notion of gift starts to saturate the hearts, minds, and souls of our audience will the logic of gratitude-driven, labor-intensive, long view, mystery honoring, soil building, land resting, whole food, slow food, regionally sourced, shared with all, compute. It is our prayer that we can grow in this understanding together. Our work in the community is varied, dynamic, stacked, and interconnected- like the ecosystem of a good farm- and therefore not easy to package in simple explanations and pithy mission statements. In fact, maybe the most reductionist statement we can claim is our desire to move people beyond reductionistic thinking. Please stick around and be a part of not only this conversation, but this community. We are going to need more leaders in this next season at Eighth Day Farm, more thoughtful citizens wanting to exercise their faith here and now in God's soiled earth.

JEFF ROESSING



THANKS FOR JOINING US IN THE FIELDS

We've recorded 988.5 hours of work completed by volunteers in 2015, including fourteen people who gave twenty or more hours of their time. What kind of work? Planning, digging, double-digging, constructing, photographing, planting, cleaning, painting, organizing, weeding, fixing, transporting, transplanting, web-designing, mulching, thinning, twining, picking, washing, hosting, and serving. Our deepest thanks for all who lended a hand this year. This work has been essential for supporting the operation of the farm. It's also been essential for building community as we get to know one another by learning and working together. Want to join the fun?

www.eighthdayfarm.org/volunteer-sign-up/



SCHOOL VISITS

In 2015 Eighth Day Farm was happy to host a number of students at the farm for field trips. Groups from First Presbyterian Preschool, Black River Charter School, Children's After School Achievement, and other schools and summer camps were able to tour the farm, see where food comes from, participate in farm scavenger hunts, plant seeds, harvest vegetables, and much more! Elyse Cisler, a teacher from Black River Charter School comments, "We had the privilege of visiting Eighth Day Farm for two field trips and enjoyed every minute. The children had a blast with all of the staff and volunteers on site! I look forward to more field trips to Eighth Day Farm in the future." Eighth Day Farm would love to host even more field trips in 2016.

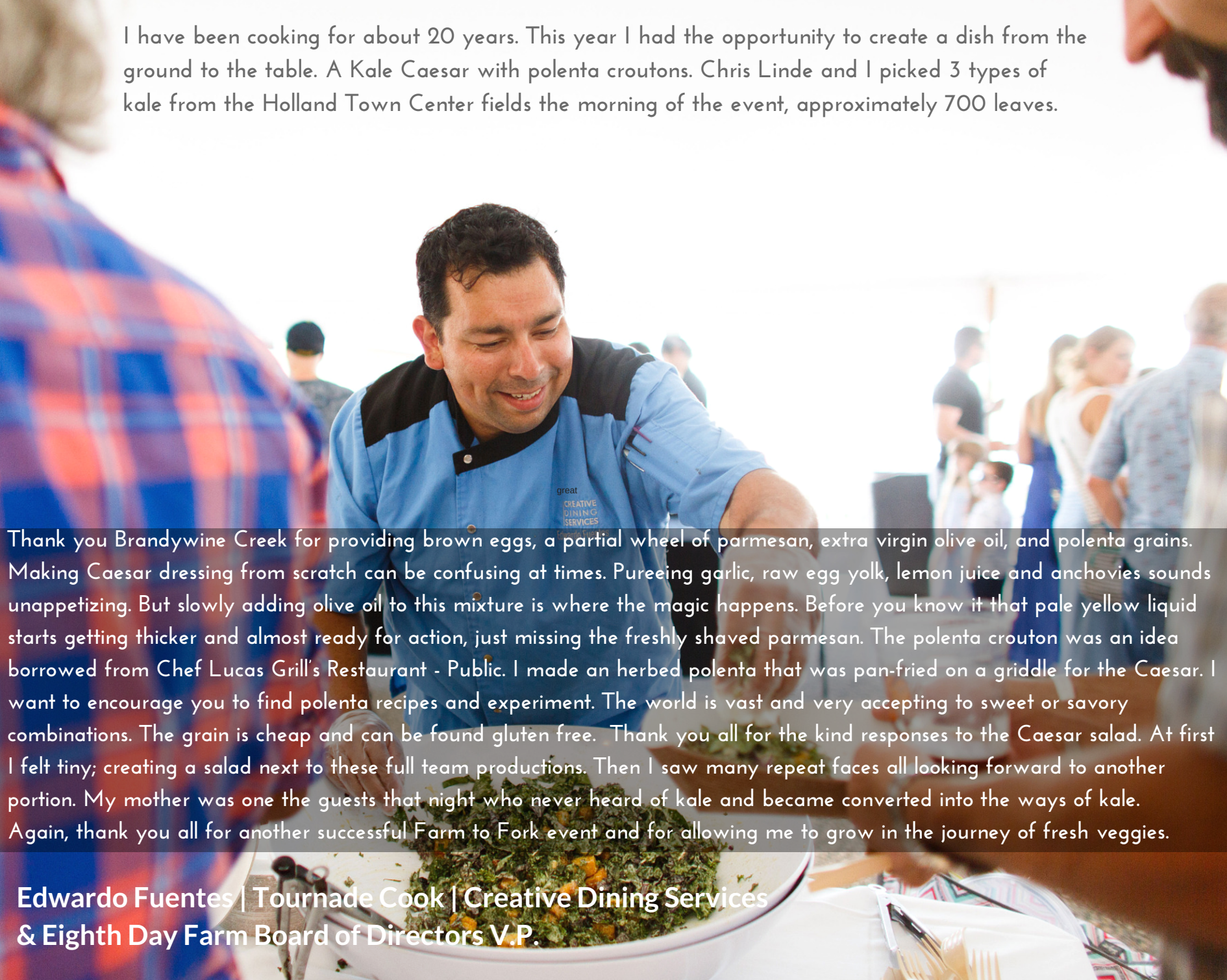
For more information please contact info@eighthdayfarm.org.

ENJOYING KALE AT THE FARM TO FORK EVENT

On top of the very visible participants there were numerous contributions to our event. We had so many behind the scenes collaborators supporting this event.

I personally thank our very own Karen Nordell Pearson - President of Eighth Day Farm Board of Directors. She helped organize marketing, printing, insurance coverage & alcohol licensing and any other items that kept us running smoothly.





I have been cooking for about 20 years. This year I had the opportunity to create a dish from the ground to the table. A Kale Caesar with polenta croutons. Chris Linde and I picked 3 types of kale from the Holland Town Center fields the morning of the event, approximately 700 leaves.

Thank you Brandywine Creek for providing brown eggs, a partial wheel of parmesan, extra virgin olive oil, and polenta grains. Making Caesar dressing from scratch can be confusing at times. Pureeing garlic, raw egg yolk, lemon juice and anchovies sounds unappetizing. But slowly adding olive oil to this mixture is where the magic happens. Before you know it that pale yellow liquid starts getting thicker and almost ready for action, just missing the freshly shaved parmesan. The polenta crouton was an idea borrowed from Chef Lucas Grill's Restaurant - Public. I made an herbed polenta that was pan-fried on a griddle for the Caesar. I want to encourage you to find polenta recipes and experiment. The world is vast and very accepting to sweet or savory combinations. The grain is cheap and can be found gluten free. Thank you all for the kind responses to the Caesar salad. At first I felt tiny; creating a salad next to these full team productions. Then I saw many repeat faces all looking forward to another portion. My mother was one the guests that night who never heard of kale and became converted into the ways of kale. Again, thank you all for another successful Farm to Fork event and for allowing me to grow in the journey of fresh veggies.

**Edwardo Fuentes | Tournade Cook | Creative Dining Services
& Eighth Day Farm Board of Directors V.P.**



LESSONS FROM THE SOIL & SUN



A prayer from Numbers 6:24-26 became the anthem of my summer at Eighth Day. I distinctly remember a moment when Jeff turned back toward the land, looking out over eight hours of labor sown into the fields of our winter squash. He stretched his hand out before him, and prayed, "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace." With a chuckle, we piled into the truck, covered in the rich black soil of Trillium Haven Farm. It was then and in several other distinct moments this summer I realized, agriculture is not the glorified career or "hobby" that many millennials exalt it to be. As my hands became more calloused and my knees more covered in dirt, my respect for food intensified. Agriculture demands faith-- faith in the land, the rain, the sun, and for some, faith in God--the sustainer and creator of everything that our hands worked this summer. It's faith that boldly declares we are not in control. We are merely participants in the work of the Creator, under the control of His sovereignty. Wendell Berry says, "The industrial eater is, in fact, one who does not know that eating is a agricultural act, who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land, and who is therefore necessarily passive and

ignorant to the farmer's battle with mice eating newly beds of kale, or the rain that pools in beds of tomatoes, drowning them early and yielding a low harvest later in the season, or when the wind breaks the small trunks of young apple trees. We are victims of industrial eating when we don't acknowledge the sixty-hour workweeks of farmers, making less income than 85% of Americans. Are you willing to become subservient to the land, eating what it produces in its season, rather than subjecting to the mainstream culture of eating what you want, when you want it? For our consumerist culture, it's a massive shift in thinking—one that I struggle to make, especially entering into a season of no farmer's markets and minimized crop diversity. I can't think of many people who want to go without fresh berries and salsa for six months out of the year, but that choice gives reverence to the Lord's creation and his intent for our stewardship on earth. It helps us to live a story of gratitude for what He's entrusted us with. I can't say I will make it through the winter without buying produce at Meijer, but I will do the best I can with what I have. Being an intern this summer has reminded me to think not only about how and where my food is grown, but also about what effect my choices have on underpaid farm workers thousands of miles away, and the effort that our local farmers are making to help our community better connect with their food.



JOY HARTMAN



Thanks to Josh Banner and New Holland Brewer Steve "Bert" Berthel for their inspired idea for a hops yard out at the Town Center. The trellis system went up in early June with a few rows of hops planted then and the rest of the full 1/4 acre, late this fall. Thanks to our generous sponsors New Holland Brewery and Mike Bocks and to the many volunteers that came and helped dig holes, plant hops and weed! New Holland has promised to buy all of the hops we grow to support their promise to brew all their pub beer with Michigan ingredients. Bert promises to use some of our hops in his special Farm to Fork ale in the coming summers. Cheers to that!



BACK YARD TO TABLE

The second year of our Backyard to Table program expanded to serve 18 families with 12 new raised beds installed in late spring. Sarah Hofman-Graham provided excellent leadership of this program working about 15 hours per week from June through October. Families in the program received personalized gardening support as well as invitations to a farmers market tour, a grocery store tour, a canning class and several community meals. Our goal is to have this program funded through grants and other donations in 2016.



HOLLAND YOUTH CONNECTION

Eighth Day Farm would like to thank The Holland Youth Connection for helping! They spent many hours watering plants, pulling weeds and maintaining healthy produce. It was a great opportunity to connect with local youth, while teaching them the importance of urban farming. You all worked so hard, thank you!

A MORNING WITH WENDELL BERRY



A contingent of Eighth Day Farm folk (Gary, Kyle, Josh and Susanna, Jeff and Melissa) joined up with various West Michigan organic farmers for a visit to the Berry Center in Kentucky to meet and talk with Wendell Berry. New Eighth Day Farm CSA members, Skip and Mary, were acquainted with Wendell and made the trip possible. Thank you again, Skip and Mary! The trip was bookended with great fellowship with fellow farmers (there and back in the van ride) and the crescendo was a three hour conversation with Wendell Berry. Berry touched on a number of themes near and dear to our hearts. He talked about the need for farmers, saying that "if the farmer is present there is the possibility of love for the land, but if the farmer is gone (because we have mechanized and turned to large scale monocultures) we are taking another path, away from love." He added,

"When you start with the idea that work is bad you've begun on a trajectory that will eliminate you." Wendell had a warm smile and easily strayed into storytelling. He shared how farmers used to help each other indiscriminately because it was a value woven into the fabric of that culture. No one sat around calculating who owed who what. There was no accounting. He mourned how this art of neighborliness is less and less practiced.



THANK YOU WENDELL BERRY



THANKS FOR ALL WHO
CONTRIBUTED TO THE
KICKSTARTER.



THIS WILL BE
THE HOME TO
EXCITING NEW
DEVELOPMENTS
IN 2016