



609 13th Ave NE, Door 8, Little Falls, MN 56345

NEWS RELEASE

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SPROUT TO SHOWCASE THE “CULTURE” IN AGRICULTURE – MARCH MARKET LIVE WITH HANS BLIX AND THE WEAPONS INSPECTORS, BEN PENNER FARMS COOKING DEMONSTRATION, LOCAL FOOD, ART

LITTLE FALLS, Minn. – MARCH 9, 2017 – The intersection of food, art, and culture will again be exhibited at the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace (609 13th Ave NE, Door 8, Little Falls, MN 56345) on Saturday, March 25th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. New this month, the event spotlights growers as a culture and explores the “culture” found within “agriculture.” Hans Blix and the Weapons Inspectors, a band whose members double as farmers, take the stage to perform live, and Ben Penner Farms will do a cooking demonstration in the kitchen. The performance and demonstration is free and open to the public as they come to the market to celebrate and shop local food and art.

Kristen Blann of Cookie & Vinny’s Grass-fed Lamb was a vendor at Sprout’s February market, and she is also the violinist for Hans Blix and the Weapons Inspectors, a five-member folk/Americana band who will play on the Sprout stage on March 25th. Other members of the band also produce their own food including Bob “Vinny” Gatts, Kent Montgomery (maple syrup), Laurence Chamberlain (garden vegetables and chickens) and Mike Duval (home-brewed beer). “I like the lifestyle of trying to produce your own food and own entertainment. And I want to support the development of markets that connect local growers to customers. It’s the old fashioned way and the right way,” Blann said of Sprout’s effort to connect local food and live music.

The guest chef demonstrating the grower’s culture through food in Sprout’s on-site kitchen will be Ben Penner, a local food entrepreneur and owner of Ben Penner Farms. Penner is a frequent vendor at the Marketplace and provides a unique organic heritage wheat flour which he grows on 36-acres of certified organic land near Bell Plaine, Minn., along with a variety of organic vegetable starter plants, cover crops, lentils, beans, and more. Penner will partner with Chef Matt Annand of Prairie Bay to showcase his product in a favorite recipe.

Lastly, Miguel Mahlich, artist, farm worker, and owner of Bare Bones Designs, will also be designing and constructing a harvest table as a functional art installation where customers can sit, relax, and watch cooking demonstrations while enjoying lunch, beverages, and entertainment. The harvest table will display Mahlich’s creativity and skill using a combination of metal and woodworking. The quality of craftsmanship is aimed at outliving us, Mahlich said. The table will be unveiled at its completion later this year.

RECAP OF LAST MONTH’S MARKET

At the February Marketplace, Annie Humphrey, Artist of the Year nominee at the 2016 Native American Music Awards, performed on the Sprout stage, while Linda Wilson of Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe demonstrated and explained in the Sprout kitchen the Native American history of fry bread. Documentation of these activities can be found in photo, video, and written form on Sprout’s Facebook page and website blog.

MARKETPLACE BACKGROUND

The community is invited to shop the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace vendors selling local food and art on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 25, October 28, November 18, and December 9. During these markets, through visual and performing art, culinary demonstrations, educational events and more, Sprout will showcase our community’s assets and talents found amongst the variety of cultures across the region, in which the public can participate or attend. In the months of April, May, June, July, and August, the Marketplace will host cultural exchange cooking classes, educational opportunities for growers and artists, and dinner events to support non-profit organizations.

The activities are funded through a grant awarded to the Region Five Development Commission by ArtPlace America’s National Creative Placemaking Fund. Arlene Jones, General Manager of Sprout, explained, “The ArtPlace funds will offer the Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace and our partners the support needed to host the expansion of economic opportunities, social cohesion, and learning for local growers, artists, makers, producers, chefs, and the public. Through a collection of culturally specific activities, we will establish Sprout as a destination where food, art, and culture meet.”

Additionally, as part of its placemaking strategy, Sprout and partners will build out the Marketplace’s physical space over the next three years using commissioned functional art from local artists, with priority granted to Latino, Somali, Amish, Grower, Youth and Tribal communities. These pieces will be revealed at monthly markets and events.

Interested shoppers, growers, artists, chefs, and educators who want to learn more, visit www.SproutMN.com and follow the [Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace](#) on Facebook. ###