



# GROWING GREENER ACRES

Virginia farmer and activist Joel Salatin and his Corvallis protégé come together to show that responsible stewardship of land and animals can also pay off with a healthy profit

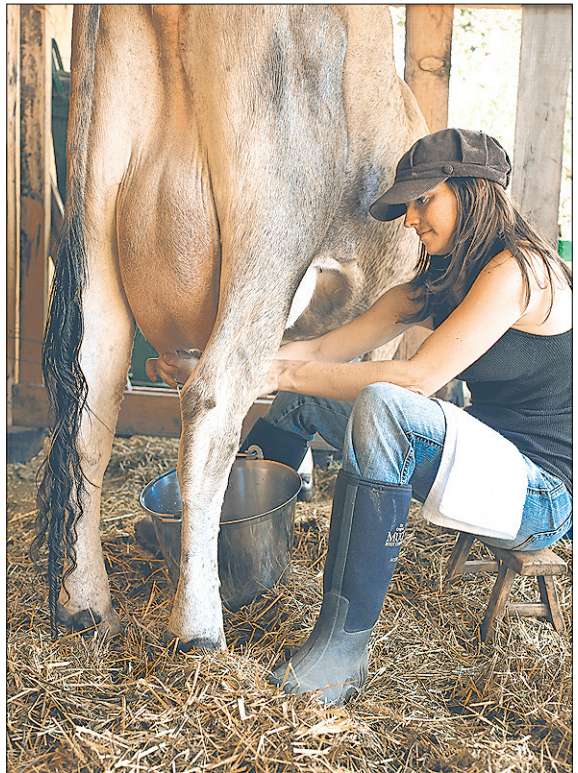
By **LAURA McCANDLISH**  
SPECIAL TO THE OREGONIAN

Joel Salatin is a farmer with a message for the masses: You, too, can earn a living off the land without selling out. Pastured poultry, he says, yields greater profits and less pollution than standard methods. For Salatin, farming is above all a spiritual calling, and his charisma and evangelical zeal have turned him into something of a celebrity-prophet for the sustainable agriculture movement.

The owner of Polyface Farm in Virginia, which raises pastured chickens and other animals with what he calls “beyond organic” methods, Salatin and his mission are squarely in the locavore limelight.

He is the hero of Michael Pollan’s best-selling book “The Omnivore’s Dilemma” and stars in two food documentaries that hit the screens this summer: the muck-raking “Food, Inc.” and the slightly cheerier “Fresh.” He has the ear of members of Congress and even new access to the White House.

The effusive, conservative Christian/libertarian/agrarian from Virginia found his eco-animal husbandry enthusiastically received when he traveled to Oregon last month. The reason for his visit? A rural revival in Corvallis at Afton Field Farm, run by Tyler Jones, an Oregon State



*“Our land-healing ministry really is about cultivating relationships: between the people, the loving stewards, and the ecology of a place.”* **Joel Salatin**

At Afton Field Farm outside Corvallis, Joel Salatin (in red) leads a workshop on rotational farming practices. Tyler Jones (in white), Salatin’s former protégé, owns Afton Field along with his wife and resident dairy maid, Alicia. **Recipes | FD4** Photos by MIKE DAVIS/THE OREGONIAN

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## The art of sandwich making: what the pros know

When done right, the bread, fillings and condiments combine for a thing of tactile beauty

By **GRANT BUTLER**  
THE OREGONIAN

When you look around your workplace at lunchtime, no doubt you’ve noticed that a lot more people are brown-bagging it these days, a nod to tough times and people watching

their wallets.

One of the staples of lunch bag fare is the humble sandwich, which in its most-simple incarnations can be as basic as a little meat and cheese between two slices of bread.

It’s such a simple concept that when chef John Stewart decided he wanted to open his own sandwich-focused spot in Southeast Portland a year ago, he opted to call it Meat Cheese Bread. But when you survey his chalkboard menu, there’s nothing that comes even close to that simplicity.

Instead, there are things like a Cuban pulled pork sandwich with a jicama slaw. The pork braises for hours in sauce that’s loaded with peppers, tomatoes and citrus juice, so every bite has layers of savory richness, orange and lime tang, as well as textural crunch from the slaw.

The fare at Meat Cheese Bread shows how sandwich making can be an art, and how when you use top-grade ingredients, you can come

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**2** **Gonzo for gyoza**  
Frozen Asian pot stickers make a luscious soup

**4** **Meatless *banh mi***  
Mushrooms star in this Vietnamese sandwich



# Land healing: Methods aim to maximize productivity

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University graduate who apprenticed with Salatin during the 2002-03 school year. Jones, 29, has since worked to implement Polyface's famous rotational grazing techniques here. With his new wife, Northeast Portland native Alicia Jones (formerly Donaldson), Jones just purchased a 106-acre homestead where they raise a circus of chickens, turkeys, pigs, cows and honeybees.

### Moved to tears

So that sunny Saturday felt like a housewarming and a homecoming. Witnessing his protégé following his example moved Salatin to tears. "When you've slept with the chickens with a baseball bat and stayed on a cot in the brooder to keep the rats away, and you tote the buckets and pull the guts, and you knock on doors to make markets, then to actually have a young person come and cross that bridge with you: It's just powerful," said the 52-year-old farmer. "Our land-healing ministry really is about cultivating relationships: between the people, the loving stewards, and the ecology of a place, what I call the environmental umbilical that we're nurturing here."

Now constantly traveling on the speaking circuit, Salatin has handed over to his son, Daniel, day-to-day operations of their farm.

At least 150 followers came from near and far to hear the pioneer and activist preach. In the crowd: a home-schooled 16-year-old raising his own 200 chickens in Brownsville. A laid-off sawmill worker, his wife and baby, from Montana, looking now to live off their land. A retiring Southern California engineer who hopes to transform the monoculture family citrus farm. They were among the faithful who paid \$100 each to commune with this conductor of insect-pecking chickens, grass-fattened cows and acorn-foraging pigs.

### The centerpiece

Raising chickens — both Cornish cross broilers and eggs from far prettier free-range hens — is the centerpiece of Polyface's (and Afton Field Farm's) enterprise. "It's fast cash turnaround," Salatin said. "Eight weeks; 500 in a crack. The neat thing is that you get a chick, and then in eight weeks, you get your money out of it. That's as fast as a radish!"

Both Salatin and Jones would rather slaughter meatier, older birds (which take no longer to eviscerate), but most restaurants prefer younger roasters. For feed, Polyface custom-mills grain from neighboring farms. It's local, but not necessarily organic or GMO-free. In fact, Salatin eschews organic certification, though Polyface uses no pesticides, antibiotics or chemical fertilizers. Several farmers with that approach — from Abundant Life Farm in Dallas, Champoeg Farm near Dundee and Norton Creek Farm near Blodgett — came to hold forth with him.

For Salatin, the creation of a government-backed national organic standard has polluted the term. Wouldn't that put him at odds with otherwise like-minded locavores in Oregon Tilth country? Not really.

"Joel Salatin is an organic farmer; he's just not a certified organic farmer," said Kristy Korb, certification director for Oregon Tilth. "Many farmers don't need the organic marketing tool, because they already have their little local niche."

Salatin doesn't mince words, criticizing bureaucracy, agribusiness and the natural grocer Whole Foods with equal candor. Polyface used



Photos by MIKE DAVIS/THE OREGONIAN

After transferring his chickens from the pasture to holding crates, Tyler Jones begins butchering. He says that raising the birds on grass gives them better flavor with less saturated fat and bacteria.



### Q&A with Joel Salatin

Read about his vision for Polyface Inc., his eco-friendly — and expanding — livestock operation in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley | [foodday.com](#)

to sell eggs to the Whole Foods store in Charlottesville, Va., until the chain asked him to upgrade his unadorned packaging. He refused. But Salatin still agreed to appear at the Whole Foods Market at Bridgeport Village during his visit. Megan and Nathan Hornbeak, a couple that work at the store (he heads the meat department), also came out to see him in Corvallis.

At a private meeting with former Oregon Farm Bureau lobbyist Tim Bernasek, Salatin debated land-use policy. He met Mayor Sam Adams, giving him a signed copy of his book, "Everything I Want to Do Is Illegal." Patrick Donaldson, a former Oregon Republican operative and leader of the Hollywood Boosters neighborhood coalition, coordinated Salatin's Portland engagements. He happens to be the father of Alicia Jones, Tyler's wife.

Out in Jones' rye grass fields, Salatin envisioned chickens scratching in cow patties to wake up the sterile land. The fledgling Afton Field Farm had just two cows then, but its heifer was due to give birth any day.

### Mimicking herbivores

Salatin explained his use of portable electric fencing to daily herd cattle onto new plots of fresh grass. His goal is to mimic the behavior of herbivores in nature.

"If you look at wildebeest on the Serengeti, American bison, Cape buffalo in Botswana, there are three things that they exhibit," Salatin said. "They're always moving. They don't stay in the same spot. They're always mobbed up, for predator protection. And they're always mowing. So what we want to do is take that pattern and lay it down on a commercial industrial production model."

What Salatin can't do is slaughter his own cows or pigs. So he did the next best thing: purchased with a partner a USDA-inspected abattoir in nearby Harrisonburg, Va. There, 300 to 500 pounds of his pork is butchered and packaged each week for burrito chain Chipotle, which slow-roasts it as carnitas for its Charlottesville location. He's in negotiations to also sell

Chipotle his beef.

But Polyface chickens are slaughtered on the farm, in an open-air facility. He has a USDA custom exemption to process fewer than 20,000 birds. But Tyler Jones has struggled to gain that same ability here. The Oregon Department of Agriculture approved but then revoked his poultry license, deeming his on-farm slaughter shed (built according to Salatin's model) unsanitary, because it lacked separate toilets, walls and screened windows to guard against contaminants.

### Food safety

"All the things we require slaughterhouses to have is to keep the dust, dogs and birds out," said Jim Postlewait, who oversees meat processing for the Oregon Department of Agriculture's food-safety division. "Everyone wants these laws to apply to everyone but them."

These USDA regulations, geared toward preventing food-borne illness tied to industrial farms, threaten to put small sustainable ones out of business, Salatin and Jones said. As a compromise, Oregon is considering a special exemption for the open-air slaughter of fewer than 1,000 birds a year, which Washington state allows. But most commercial farms, including Afton Field, handle more. So Jones and his father had to build a new slaughterhouse, with features such as tall sliding glass "windows," only the bare minimum needed to appease state and federal inspectors.

Judge them not on where or how they kill their poultry (with a humane quick slit of the throat), Salatin and Jones beg. Let the finished product speak for itself. Yes, you'll pay more for pastured chicken, in exchange for lower saturated fat and bacteria counts (and better flavor), they say. Establish a threshold for pathogens, Jones and Salatin advocate. Then any birds well under that limit, regardless of how they were slaughtered, should be cleared for sale.

"By any standard you want to measure this: the number of jobs we create, from an environmental air or water pollution standpoint, pathogenicity, nutrition," an impassioned Salatin said near the day's close.

"That's the thing that's maddening: By any measure, we beat the competition hands down. And yet this is what is vilified and demonized by the powers that be."

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Laura McCandlish is a writer in Corvallis who blogs at [baltimoregon.com](#). She co-hosts a food show on KBOO 90.7 FM the third Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m. ([kboo.fm/foodshow](#)).

### Saving Summer

## Here's relief for zucchini-afflicted: 'zuke marmalade

This orange-ginger recipe is great, and you hardly taste the squash

By DANIELLE CENTONI  
THE OREGONIAN

Zucchini is wonderfully versatile, but its tendency to be unmanageably prolific almost overshadows its charms. Just one plant can be a borderline burden, so most backyard gardeners are forever on the lookout for new ways to deal with all that squash.

That's how we found this recipe for zucchini marmalade. It sounded crazy, but desperate times call for desperate measures. We just had to give it a try. It turns out, zucchini makes delicious marmalade.

To be honest, the squash is barely noticeable. In fact, most people might think it's simply orange-ginger marmalade, which is why we like the recipe so much. No one really wants to spread squash on their toast every morning.

But we also like this recipe because it's so much easier than traditional marmalade recipes. The zucchini takes the place of some of the citrus, which means there's less peeling, seedling and segmenting to do. Besides, it's an ingenious way to use up a bumper crop. Next time, we'll have to try making zucchini jam. (And for zucchini recipes from readers, read the Extra Helpings blog at [foodday.com](#).)

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### Gingered Zucchini Marmalade

Makes about 4 half-pint jars

If you use large zucchini you may want to remove the seeds first. The larger the zucchini the larger the seeds, and they'll be visible in the finished product.

- 2 oranges
- 2 lemons
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger
- 5 cups peeled and shredded zucchini
- 1 tart apple, peeled, cored and shredded
- 4 cups granulated sugar

Using a vegetable peeler, remove zest from both oranges in one long strip, leaving behind white pith on the orange. Cut orange zest across into short, thin strips and place in a large, deep stainless steel saucepan. Cut pith from oranges and set aside. Use a vegetable peeler to remove the zest from both lemons (do not julienne and do not add to saucepan yet). Cut pith from lemon. Using a square of cheesecloth, create a large spice bag containing the lemon zest, the orange and lemon pith, and the ginger. Add bag to the saucepan.

Working over the saucepan to catch the juice and using a small, sharp knife, separate orange and lemon segments from membranes. Place segments in the saucepan and squeeze membrane to remove as much juice as possible, collecting it in the saucepan. Discard membrane and seeds.

Add zucchini, apple and sugar to saucepan and mix well. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring to dissolve sugar. Boil hard, stirring frequently, for 45 minutes, until mixture reaches gel stage (see note). Remove from heat and test gel. If gel stage has been reached, skim off foam. Discard spice bag. If mixture has not reached the gel stage, return the pan to medium-high heat and cook, stirring constantly, for an additional 5 minutes. Be careful not to let it burn on the bottom.

Meanwhile, prepare a boiling-water canner. Wash 4 half-pint jars and fill with hot water until needed. Prepare lids as manufacturer directs.

Ladle hot marmalade into one hot jar at a time, leaving ¼-inch head space. Wipe jar rim with a clean, damp cloth. Attach lid. Fill and close remaining jars. Process for 10 minutes (15 minutes at 1,000 to 6,000 feet; 20 minutes above 6,000 feet).

**Note:** Gel stage is 220 degrees (or 8 degrees above the boiling point of water if you're at higher elevations). If you don't have a thermometer, use the cold saucer test: Remove pan from heat and place a spoonful of hot marmalade on a chilled plate. Place in freezer for 1 minute; draw finger through jam on saucer. If jam does not flow back and fill in path, it is thick enough.

— From *Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving*

### Afton Field Farm's Herb-Roasted Chicken With White Wine Gravy

Makes 4 servings

- 1 3- to 4-pound whole chicken
- 2 tablespoons chopped mixed fresh herbs, such as parsley, tarragon, dill, basil or chives
- 3 tablespoons butter, softened
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 3/4 cup chicken broth or water

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Pat chicken dry and place in a roasting pan. Mix herbs with the butter. Gently loosen the skin on the

breast and spread 1 tablespoon of the herb butter underneath. Rub the remaining herb butter all over the chicken. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Tie the legs together and tuck the wing tips underneath the bird.

Roast, basting once or twice, for 1 to 1½ hours or until a thermometer inserted into the meatiest part of the thigh reaches 170 degrees. Take the chicken out of the oven; transfer to a carving platter. Set the roasting pan on two burners of the stovetop set to low-medium heat. Whisk the flour into the roasting pan, and then add the wine and broth/water, stirring and scraping to release any bits of food stuck to the bottom of the pan. Cook until smooth and thick. Taste and adjust for salt and pepper. Carve the chicken and serve with the gravy.

— From *Afton Field Farm*

### Classic Pound Cake

Makes one 10-inch pound cake

To make this cake, the Salatins use their pastured eggs, which have especially orange yolks due to the plentiful protein (grubs) and grass the hens consume. They also use raw milk and butter from their grass-fed cows.

- 1 1/2 cups butter (3 sticks), softened
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 5 eggs
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream butter and sugar thoroughly. Beat in eggs until lemon colored and then add the dry ingredients alternately with combined milk and vanilla. Very gently push the batter into greased 10-inch (12-cup) tube pan. Bake for about 1¼ hours or until a toothpick or skewer inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool cake in pan for about 10 minutes and then remove it from the pan and let it cool on a wire rack.

— Rachel Salatin  
(Joel Salatin's daughter)

### Vegetarian Flavors

## Portobello mushroom Vietnamese sandwich banishes hunger

By IVY MANNING  
SPECIAL TO THE OREGONIAN

*Banh mi* are hot right now. Asian grocery stores, trendy sandwich shops and even upscale lunch spots are putting the hearty, herby Vietnamese sandwiches on their menus.

They start with light-as-air baguette rolls smeared with mayonnaise. Then the rolls are piled high with pickled carrot and daikon salad, sliced cucumbers, jalapeños and fresh cilantro. The results are a hand-held meal that fuses French and Vietnamese cuisine deliciously.

Sounds great, but vegetarians can seldom partake in *banh mi* because the sandwiches also feature meat — either pâté, cold cuts or both. But this recipe relies on meaty broiled portobello mushrooms instead. A simple marinade of Bragg Liquid Aminos (a soybean-based condiment available from health food stores), minced gar-

lic and vegetable oil adds savor and juiciness to the mushrooms, which are set under a broiler to quickly cook.

The rest of the sandwich is the same as traditional *banh mi*. I use baguette rolls from my local Vietnamese market because they're made with a blend of wheat and rice flour, which gives them a delicate crumb and airy texture. But any hoagie-type roll will work. A quick pickle of grated or julienned daikon radish and carrots adds a sweet-salty crunch, while mayonnaise mixed with finely chopped cilantro moistens the bread. I also add thinly sliced cucumber and jalapeño chiles to garnish the sandwich, though the jalapeños can be left out if you don't like spicy foods.

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Ivy Manning is an author and cooking instructor. Visit her at [www.ivymanning.com](#).

### Mushroom *Banh Mi*

Makes 4 sandwiches

- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup distilled white vinegar
- 5 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 4 ounces daikon radish, peeled and julienned or grated
- 4 ounces carrots, peeled and julienned or grated
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons Bragg Liquid Aminos, or soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic (divided)
- 4 large (6-inch-diameter) portobello mushrooms, stems removed, dark gills scraped away with a spoon (about 1½ pounds)
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons finely minced fresh cilantro leaves

- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- Four 8-inch-long baguette rolls
- 1/2 cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 1/2 cucumber, thinly sliced
- 1 large jalapeño chile, thinly sliced

Combine the salt, water, vinegar and sugar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil and stir to dissolve sugar and salt. Remove from heat. Combine the vinegar mixture, daikon and carrots in a medium, nonreactive bowl. Allow vegetables to marinate for at least 30 minutes in refrigerator.

Preheat the broiler and line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. Whisk the oil, Bragg Liquid Aminos and 1½ teaspoons of the garlic together in a small bowl. Brush the mushrooms on both sides with the mixture and place on baking sheet. Broil, scraped side up, until the mushrooms are sizzling, about 3 minutes. Flip the caps and

broil on second side until the mushrooms are tender when pierced with a fork, about 4 minutes. Thinly slice and set aside.

Combine the remaining garlic, mayonnaise, minced cilantro and lime juice in a small bowl. Split the rolls in half horizontally, leaving the last bit of roll intact to create a hinge. Spread the cut sides of each roll with the mayonnaise mixture. Divide the mushrooms, cilantro leaves, cucumber and jalapeños among the rolls evenly. Drain about 1 cup of the daikon-carrot pickle and place ¼ cup on top of each sandwich and serve. (Remaining daikon-carrot pickle can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.)

PER SERVING: **calories:** 506 (29% from fat); **protein:** 12.3 grams; **total fat:** 16.3 grams; **saturated fat:** 2.3 grams; **cholesterol:** 7.6 mg; **sodium:** 1,528 mg; **carbohydrate:** 80.7 grams; **dietary fiber:** 5.9 grams