

Smart Farm Is Growing!

From a small garden plot at Ron Beese Park, to multi-acre farming space at Advocate Good Shepherd's property, Smart Farm has sustained its mission and keeps growing



Kathy Gabelman is the founder of Smart Farm.

by **LISA STAMOS** ■ photography by **ARIEL MAJEWSKI**

Quintessential Barrington recently caught up with Kathy Gabelman, who founded Smart Farm with just a small plot of land on loan from the Barrington Park District at the periphery of Ron Beese Park in Barrington. “Lots has changed in the last year,” Gabelman said. “The construction has stopped at Advocate Good Shepherd and we are growing. Our newer garden plot is becoming more productive and thanks to Advocate Good Shepherd we have added an additional 10 acres. We are committed to growing more food and working with Mindful Waste to create a Vermiculture Learning Center on our new land.”

Last year, the team of leaders and volunteers working at Smart Farm grew more than 8,000 pound of fresh produce and they plan to increase the level of food production this year. This season, plans include amending the

soil on the new land to prepare for new crops to grow.

Smart Farm members load up their vehicles to haul vegetables to local food banks. “We have met with the Northern Illinois Food Bank and Lake County Cares, and look forward to working with them to help us with additional volunteers and distribution of our food as we expand,” Gabelman says of the farm-to-table partnerships.

Currently, Smart Farm provides food to the immediate Barrington area, Carpentersville, Elgin, Lake Zurich, and Wauconda. The Smart Farm is a great place for an individual, corporate, school, or any team building activity. While Gabelman mentions having had many successful volunteers and work groups this year, she’s ready for more. “We need your help as expand,” she said. “Come grow with us!”





Eating Smart

Smart Farm's Annual Farm-to-Table Dinner
Connects Farm, Food, and Community

SMART FARM CELEBRATES its mission and delicious produce with the community by creating a delightful dinner event for its guests each fall. The dinner this year will be held on Saturday, September 16, at the Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital white barns as it was last year. Smart Farm provides live music, local chefs, and a robust menu of locally-grown fresh food. Proceeds from this event will benefit the Smart Farm (501c3). Tickets for this event always go fast.

Last year, nature-made decorations from the farm dressed up the barn and guests enjoyed a variety of cocktails and appetizers while Beamish, an Irish American Rock and Folk band played music outside the barn. Dinner was served inside the barn at long tables for a sit-down family style meal of locally grown and produced meat, fish, vegetables, and fruits that were prepared by local chefs.

Tickets will be available after July 1, 2017 online at www.smartfarms.org.

This year, the Smart Farm dinner will feature these exceptional, local farm-to-table chefs and restaurant proprietors.

Duke's Alehouse and Kitchen: Head Chef Zak Dolezal

Uses sustainable practices featuring locally, organically grown ingredients. A Zero Waste Restaurant. Believes in Good Food for a Good Earth. www.thedukeabides.com

Farmhouse On North: Meghan McGinty

Uses delicious local, organically grown Ingredients. Uses produce from Smart Farm plants. A terrific local Barrington restaurant. www.farmhouseonnorth.com

Bleuroot: Tammy Coakley and Kathy Dwyer

Exciting new farm-to-table restaurant run by a mother-daughter team. Located in downtown Dundee. Their motto is, "Create, Serve, and Celebrate". www.bleuroot.com

Pure Organic Juicery: Alina Yaccino

Creates delicious organic juices, tonics, soups, snacks, and desserts. Soon to offer even more food. Composts their organic waste at the Smart Farm. www.pureorganicjuicery.com

Enjoy these images from last year's Smart Farm-to-Table Dinner! 



 Kathy Gabelman
(right) and family.



 Renne Blue and
Jennifer Kainz of
Mindful Waste.