



Dartmouth Week

First-ever Garlic and Arts Festival spices up Round the Bend

Kate Robinson
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Garlic was, of course, one of the highlights of the festival. Garlic and other produce from Round the Bend. Photos by: Kate Robinson

Calum, 4, and Scarlett Walker, 1, play their own version of c
Fiona McGrath, 6, hugs her sister Faye, 9, who is dressed as
Kaysen Morin, 5, shows off his cookies on a stick made from
Otis Gerrior, 1, from Swansea, pushes a toy tractor.
Philip Cook of Westport's Quintessential Gardens stretches ou

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Everyone's heard of arts festivals, and even garlic festivals have recently been gaining in popularity.

But on Saturday, Round the Bend farm combined the two for its own unique twist: A garlic and arts festival, which saw scores of people come out to the South Dartmouth farm to celebrate creativity alongside their favorite flavorful bulb.

Stalls for local artisans selling watercolors, quilts and stained glass ornaments were set up on the lawn next to a wood-fired pizza oven and tables full of produce, jars of jam, pickled veggies and condiments, and — of course — boxes full of different varieties of garlic.

Games were provided for the kids by farm-affiliated educational program Elements Learning Collaborative, and included sack races, corn hole, make-your-own sculpture with sustainable items like homemade play dough and stalks of grass, and a toss-a-garlic-bulb game with buckets of varying sizes.

There was even a garlic bulb costume made by the organization of garlic costuming Laura Killingbeck.

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An art exhibit with paintings, photographs, and sculptures made by local farmer-artists was set up inside the big barn for people to look at while nibbling pizza and Round the Bend's own grass-fed beef burgers and pork sausage sandwiches.

"It's great! I have no idea what's going on, meaning there's so many people here, we're all kind of running around," said Desa Van Laarhoven, fresh from leading a tour of the farm.

"There's a lot of excitement...the kids are loving it. And we're trying to do it as low waste as possible," she said.

"We're just trying to do our part and get people together, and celebrate garlic," she added with a smile. "Garlic is one of those sacred plants...Garlic festivals are everywhere, all around the country."

Van Laarhoven touted the many health benefits of garlic, noting that farm co-founder Geoff Kinder has planted about 3,000 cloves of the plant per year. "He's always been passionate about garlic...He's always like 'Food is medicine,'" she said.

The Garlic and Arts festival was Round the Bend 'Agripreneur' Garcia-Rey's idea, as the former executive director of non-profit arts cooperative Gallery X in New Bedford.

She brought fellow artist Nate Sander on board and the two worked hard to get it all together.

And for the visitors, it all seemed worth it.

"I love garlic," said Claudette Cahill of Dighton.

"The inside of the building is spectacular," said Marty Pride, also of Dighton, who said he enjoyed both the recently built barn as well as the teepee on the lawn.

"I'm glad for the privilege to be in this environment, because the quality of workmanship and the casualness of the show make it a very nice experience."

"You could ask all you want, but you're not gonna find a better day than right now," he added.

"It's fabulous," said Diane Maynard of Fairhaven, who was visiting the farm for the first time. "It's very very nice. And very informative."

Her husband Stephen was carrying a new garlic chive plant, which they planned to add to their herb garden.

"They told me what to do with it," Diane said. "You trim it off just like regular chives, and you can put it in salads, and mix it in with your hamburger to make a nice garlic chive burger. She gave me a couple of ideas."

Stephen said his favorite part of the visit was the architecture.

"The barn there, it's beautiful," he said. "The buildings, they're just gorgeous," his wife agreed.

"But the educational part of it, coming here and seeing what they're doing, and learning about how we have to take better care of the planet," she said, adding with a laugh, "It makes you want to go back and be better at home!"

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