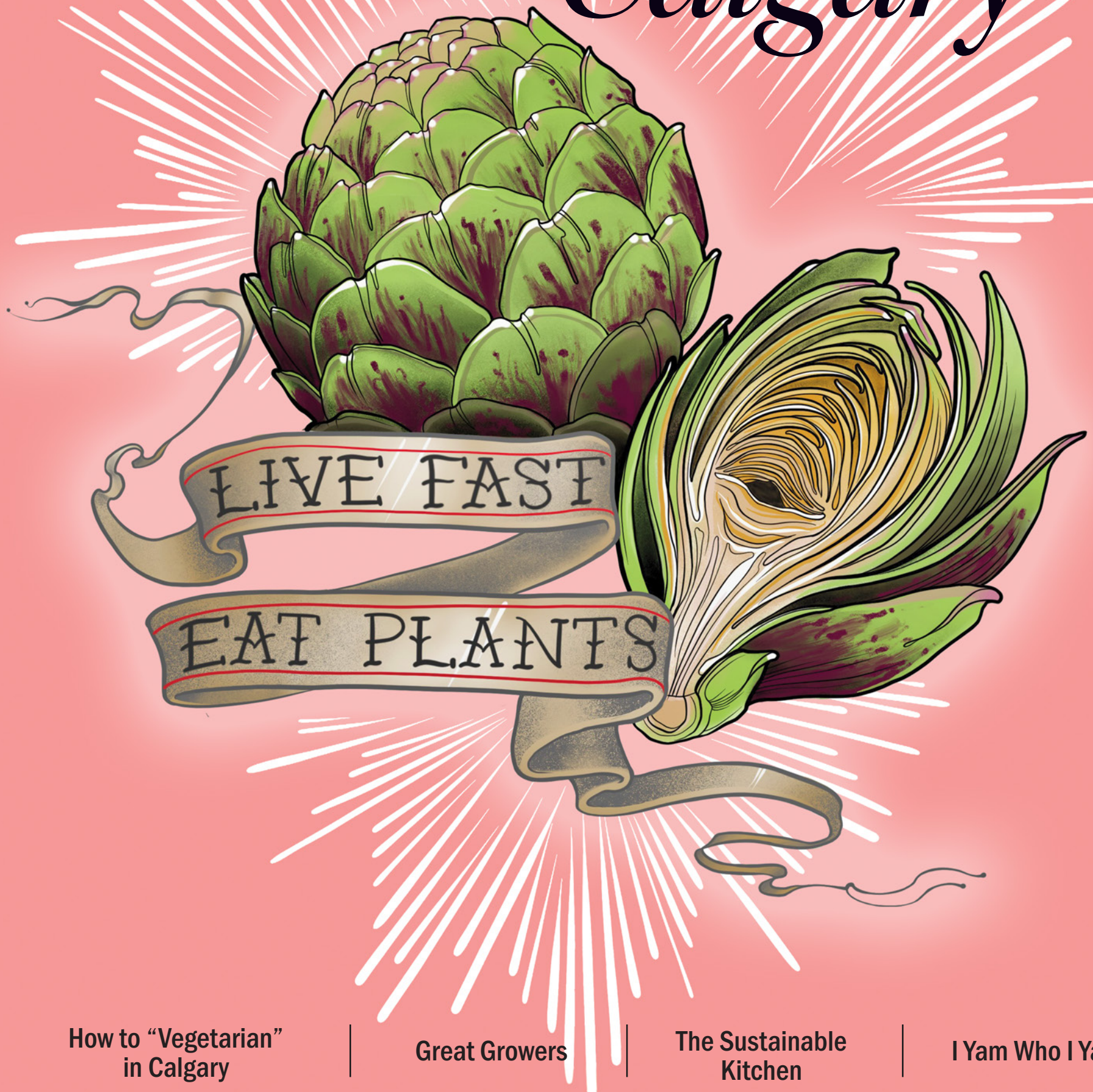


MAY » JUNE 2021

FRESH. LOCAL. STORIES FOR FOOD LOVERS.

Savour *Calgary*



How to “Vegetarian”
in Calgary

Great Growers

The Sustainable
Kitchen

I Yam Who I Yam

By CATHERINE VAN BRUNSCHOT

GREAT GROWERS

As Savour Calgary celebrates spring with an ode to plant-based food, we'd also like to celebrate the people who grow it! So many great growers call this region home. Here's just a few on our radar right now:

SOLSTICE BERRY FARM

It may have been a penchant for “getting dirt under their fingernails” that got IT professionals, **Rick** and **Marsha Gelowitz**, out on the land raising sheep and hay in 1994. But it was the view outside their kitchen window that directed the change they were looking for nine years later. There in the garden, three saskatoon plants thrived in the prairie soil. Marsha had the lightbulb moment; in a heartbeat, Rick was all in. Five years on, Marsha had a horticultural certificate under her belt, Rick had planted 40,000 saskatoon bushes in a forty-acre orchard, and **Solstice Berry Farm** was born.

Fast-forward to today's annual production of 100,000 pounds of fruit, a ten-acre U-pick garden, and an extensive line of artisanal products including jams, sauces, juice, and vinaigrette. The couple handles every detail from start to finish on their farm northwest of Calgary: nurturing and harvesting the orchard; sorting fruit with state-of-the-art equipment; cooking and bottling in their commercial kitchen; and handcrafting some 5,000(!) pies per year.

Everything is made from scratch using high quality simple ingredients. “Number one,” says Rick, “Whatever we do – from the berries themselves to any of the products we make – it's got to taste good.” “There's this huge nostalgia and family history thing regionally with saskatoons,” says Marsha. “And you have to live up to that.” The food connection runs deep for those who grew up eating their grandmother's pies, and for the First Nations customers sharing ancestral traditions with their youth. That legacy informs the Gelowitz's strong sense of responsibility to community, from answering farmers' market patrons' questions around food security, to hiring local students, to supporting research into the fibre and anti-oxidant health benefits of this heritage fruit.

Look for Solstice products at farmers' markets and retailers throughout **Rocky View** and **Mountain View** counties, as well as **Canmore** and Calgary. Check the website for an up-to-date list of locations, or buy directly through their online store at solsticeberryfarm.com.

RED FOX FUNGI

She's a born entrepreneur with an enthusiasm for farm-to-table eating. He's a mechanic/electrician and hobby farmer who can create anything seemingly from nothing. And together, friends **Janine Aubé** and **Brad Wandzura** have been growing **Red Fox Fungi** on Wandzura's property outside **Strathmore** since December 2018.

But theirs are no ordinary mushrooms. They're sculptural and colourful tree species, with evocative names like phoenix tail, chestnut and lion's mane; mushrooms in shades of yellow, blue and orange, with the kind of flavour profiles chefs and food lovers crave.

“Unless you have a local grower, you just can't find these mushrooms,” says Aubé. “They don't ship well.”

“We've got a 1,600-square-foot building, purpose-built with two indoor greenhouses and full climate control,” says Wandzura. “We built it as efficiently and ‘green’ as possible.” He's fabricated almost everything himself, right down to the natural culture solution for the mushroom mycelium, made with honey from their neighbour's bees.

A concern about waste means the mushroom detritus goes to animal feed or compost. Heat from the sterilizing equipment is recycled to keep the building warm. To deal with any excess crop, Aubé turned early to dehydration. Those dehydrated mushrooms became the foundation for the company's line of umami-rich seasoning blends, made preservative- and MSG-free.



Marsha & Rick Gelowitz with “Lucy” the fruit sorter



Red Fox Families



The partners are big fans of collaboration and have created joint products with brewers to kimchi-makers. They've also teamed up with area growers on **Open Farm Days** events and fundraising for Kids Cancer Care. Expect other new products and collaborations in the coming months.

In the meantime, you'll find their fresh mushrooms at **Community Natural Foods**, **Blush Lane Organic Markets**, **Okotoks Natural Foods** and **cultivatr.ca**, and on the menus of **The Coup**, **Allium**, **Tapas Canmore**, and others. Look for their seasoning blends at retailers throughout the region or buy them (and mushroom grow kits too!) at Red Fox Fungi's online store at redfoxfungi.ca.

ALLPA VERTICAL FARMS

If you see three workers in a Calgary hardware store huddled in intense conversation, you might want to lean in. They could be planning to change the world.

Or at least change the way we look at farming.

That was the story in 2018, when students and coworkers **Andrey Salazar**, **Guillermo Borges**, and **Zakk Tambasco** met and discovered a mutual passion for technology and sustainability. From that passion emerged **Allpa Vertical Farms**, an urban producer of microgreens.

Salazar, a Colombian refugee from a coffee farming family, was studying electronics engineering and physics in Calgary. He saw vertical farming as a way to reduce the water and space demands of traditional farming as well as tackle global food insecurity. "With this technology, we can grow 365 days a year, regardless of the weather," he says - and in his basement had started doing exactly that.

Borges, a new Canadian from Venezuela, was studying marketing and entrepreneurship at MRU. "I saw a legitimate opportunity from a business perspective [and] that we could have a real impact," he says.

They pulled Tambasco into the mix, a Strathcona County-raised kid whose farming background, he says, "provides the bridge between science and business." Together, they outfitted an



Allpa Vertical Farms team

1,100-square-foot facility in Foothills Industrial Park to grow nutrient-dense microgreens under LED lights in a vertically-stacked and closely-controlled hydroponic system.

The trio is committed to local sourcing, from seeds to compostable packaging to labels. They're also serious about giving back to the community, donating any excess crop to the Calgary Community Fridge and contributing five per cent of their net proceeds to charities chosen by their Instagram followers in monthly polls.

Borges sums it up for the team: "We want to transcend what it means to be a company that sells produce. To have an actual impact beyond the nutrition, beyond the environmental value - and to share our success."

Look for Allpa's microgreens at **Sunterra Market** locations and the **Italian Centre Shop**. allpaverticalfarms.ca

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We work with people of all shapes and sizes but we love working with clients who want to fight ageing every step of the way," says One on One owner Sandra Bueckert (pictured below). "Age is the great equalizer and at 54, I'm a part of the resistance."

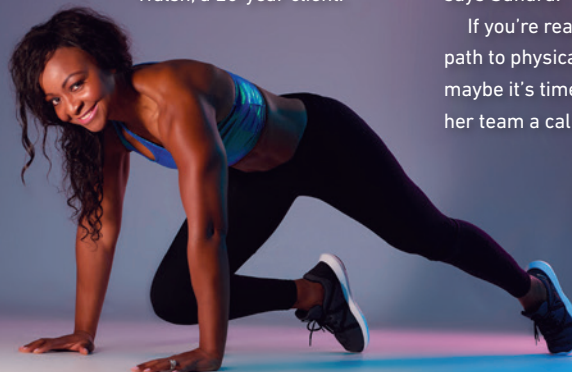
"I chose One on One many years ago as I wanted to gain muscle and become stronger," says Elizabeth Walsh, a 20-year client.

"I knew the best way for me was to be with experts and to have appointments I would not miss."

There are no fads or gimmicks at One on One. It's the home of sweat equity. Workouts for clients looking to reach their goals online or in-person are by appointment only.

"Every client has different goals and different issues to consider. We get it. We understand," says Sandra.

If you're ready to expand your path to physical and mental health, maybe it's time to give Sandra and her team a call at One on One. ■



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