

Workshop Offerings 2020 with Meredith Leigh

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The 21st Century Omnivore

What does it mean to be a conscientious eater in today's world? Between trade wars, climate change, label claims, local food, nutrition trends, and environmental justice issues, eaters are constantly bombarded with opinion and news surrounding personal food choice. For those identifying as omnivores, the global food debate is particularly chaotic. In this session, author and farmer Meredith Leigh will share expertise from her 17 years of deep study into the systems by which food and farming are made possible, to help you explore a firmer footing in your food choices, and also your food activism. From a holistic, climate-smart, and community-centered framework, this workshop can not only provide a jumping off place for eaters who are unsure of the best way to check in to mindful eating but can also provide insight into the most up-to-date information for the well-informed food activist.

Will Local Food Work?

Local food has been the leading paradigm for fixing problems with the food system for almost twenty years, but is it working? Join author, farmer, and expert Meredith Leigh for a discussion which reviews the strengths and challenges of the local food movement, brings applied systems thinking to food supply chains, and explores the possibilities and parameters for a viable food future.

Integrating Animals into Agriculture (this session can be an overview or can be species-specific, please indicate your preference)

For more than a century, commercial agriculture has favored the separation of plants and animals, and the reduction of dynamically managed ecosystems in the production of food and fiber. In this workshop, author, farmer, butcher, and food activist Meredith Leigh will provide information and options for re-integrating agriculture, from soil systems all the way up to the use of trees, water resources, and considerations for processing and distribution. Applying systems thinking to the prospect of farming and management, this workshop will bring the homesteader or commercial farmer face to face with the most cutting-edge options for holistic food production.

Livestock Farmers and Processors Forum

Author, Butcher, Farmer, and Food Activist Meredith Leigh is passionate about facilitating dialogue for modern livestock producers. Join this round table or auditorium session to discuss production, genetics, marketing, processing, butchery, supply chain dynamics, regulation, and/or consumer dynamics. This workshop can take the form of an open forum for the trading of ideas and experience, or it can include a portion of time wherein Meredith can provide a framework for well-designed regional meat supply chains, from production to marketing and distribution that support ethical meat products and profitable farmers.

Whole Animal Butchery (for best outcome, please select a species for focus)

Supporting small-scale livestock farmers and ensuring a supply of honest, affordable meat for consumers necessitates a revival of the art of butchery. Whether you are an aspiring professional or a home cook, this class can help you learn basic butchery technique for either beef, pork, poultry, rabbit, lamb, goat, wild game or even roadkill. Author, butcher, and farmer Meredith Leigh will cover knife holds, knife care, butchery technique and methods, as well as cooking tips, carcass economics, and whole animal utilization. This class can be arranged to be hands-on, or demo and discussion only.

How & Why to Create a Community Meat Buying Club

Barriers abound for the average consumer when it comes to sourcing and affording well-raised meat. One of the most viable solutions for communities and neighborhoods, especially in very urban or food apartheid areas is to cooperate, and develop a community meat buying club. In this workshop, author, farmer, butcher, and advocate Meredith Leigh will help interested individuals or groups with the design and maintenance of a buying club. We will cover sourcing, working with a butcher, working with farmers and processors, understanding carcass terminology, cut sheets, pricing, regulation, and cooking tips.

Introduction to Charcuterie

Charcuterie is a French term for all different types of preserved meats, from sausages to smoked hams to pates and salamis. In this workshop, author, butcher, and charcuterie expert Meredith Leigh will help students understand the many ways that humans have approached meat preservation since ancient times, the importance of the craft as it relates to modern day farming and cuisine, and get participants started on some easy home projects for producing quality cured meats with pure ingredients.

A Day of Charcuterie

In this session, author, butcher, and charcuterie expert Meredith Leigh will teach students how to make a diverse suite of cured meat products, from fresh sausage to bacon, and from pates to salamis. Students will walk away with the confidence to safely start curing meats in the home kitchen or restaurant, and with the tools and information they need to advance their education toward more advanced production.

Charcuterie Intensive: Two-Day Course

In this 2-day intensive, Author, butcher, farmer, and activist Meredith Leigh will teach you to confidently cure meats via salting, dehydration, smoking, and fermentation. We will begin with a half hog and complete a thorough butchery demo with discussion of methods from around the world, muscle science, carcass economy, and best use. Then, we will work together to turn every scrap of the carcass into charcuterie, from fresh sausages to smoked hams, pate, mortadella, salamis and more. In addition to learning the craft of charcuterie, you'll engage with the instructor, an internationally recognized expert in farming and food, about topics of resilient farming, climate change, mindful slaughter, artisan butchery, and inspired cookery.

You'll get to taste your creations in a culminating class feast, and you'll get to take home projects to finish on your own. Plus, you'll join a growing cohort of ethical meat practitioners in touch via social media, direct mail, and community gatherings, and have access to ongoing mentoring from Meredith and the ever-expanding family of people who have completed the same course.

From Soil to Salami: Fermentation, Life, and Health

In this workshop, author, farmer, and activist Meredith Leigh will take you on the incredible journey from the soil to kitchen to gut, drawing on science and poetry both to reveal the parallels between farming, cooking, food preservation, and even digestion, making the case for a reciprocal and vital relationship between humans and the earth. Through care of the soil, well-being in life, mindful death, and proper recycling, participants will journey through the cycles of farming and digestion to gain a deeper understanding of what nutritive, living food actually could be, and how to foster systems and cultural ethos to support its success.

Introduction to Koji: An Ancient Mold and it's Modern Renaissance (can include demo or be lecture only)

The mold *Aspergillus oryzae*, better known as koji, has been used for centuries to produce foods like sake, soy sauce, and miso, and is also experiencing a new understanding that is rippling through nearly every layer in the culinary world. Join author, farmer, fermentation expert, and food activist Meredith Leigh for a discussion of the power of koji. Participants will learn history, how koji works, how to produce it in the home kitchen, as well as how to use purchased koji products. The course will also include production and use of koji's secondary ferments, shio and amazake, and a discussion of the implications of koji's renaissance on the modern food system as a whole.