



## from THE HARVEST



### From Farm to Table: Harvest Celebrations

Jefferson did not celebrate Thanksgiving as we know it today, but he and his neighbors did host and attend harvest celebrations. One famous example is Jefferson's annual neighborhood spring pea-growing competition; whoever could bring the first peas "to table" would host the other contestants at a dinner that included the peas. As Jefferson's grandson recalled, "A wealthy neighbor [George Divers], without children, and fond of horticulture, generally triumphed. Mr. Jefferson, on one occasion had them first, and when his family reminded him that it was his right to invite the company, he replied, 'No, say nothing about it, it will be more agreeable to our friend to think that he never fails.'"

Although Thanksgiving is considered the quintessential American holiday today, the tradition predates the European colonization of America. Libby O'Connell, chief historian emeritus at the History Channel, author of *The American Plate* and

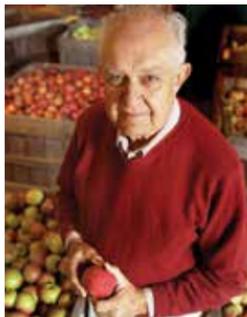
Monticello trustee, notes, "The idea of Thanksgiving is based in part upon the natural inclination of agrarian groups of people to hold a festival in thanks for the harvest ... humans have been celebrating the gathering-in of crops for millennia."

Observed in different times and places during the Colonial period, the Thanksgiving tradition grew significantly in cultural importance just before the Civil War. Sarah Josepha Hale, the Martha Stewart of her day, wrote editorials championing the creation of a new national holiday and published recipes for roast turkey, stuffing and pumpkin pie. At her urging, several state governors declared Thanksgiving a fall holiday.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving an official national holiday. The iconic 1621 harvest feast with American Indians and colonists in Massachusetts became visually identified as the "first Thanksgiving" in the years after the

Civil War. Popular artworks featured images of New England forefathers gathered around a table, instead of one of the earlier documented gatherings in St. Augustine, Florida, or Jamestown, Virginia.

Today, Monticello celebrates American harvest traditions and Jefferson's legacy as a revolutionary gardener and founding foodie with a festival every September. The Heritage Harvest Festival, co-hosted by Monticello and Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, brings more than 100 educational programs, hands-on workshops, a bounty of heirloom fruit and vegetable tastings, lessons on seed saving and gardening, kids' activities, and more to the iconic West Lawn of Monticello. The ninth annual Heritage Harvest Festival took place on September 12, with pre-festival programming on the 10th and 11th, and it included more foodie programming than ever before.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT Paula Marcoux; Ian Glomski; Michah LeMon; The Fabulous Beekman Boys, Dr. Brent Ridge and Josh Kilmer-Purcell; Tom Burford; Gabriele Rausse; Sandor Katz

**PAULA MARCOUX**, author of *Cooking with Fire*, turned up the heat in the historic Monticello kitchen with a workshop and tasting exploring the French cooking techniques of enslaved chef James Hemings, whom Jefferson brought to France in 1784 to learn the art of French cookery.

Charlottesville's **IAN GLOMSKI** and **MICAH LEMON** went from "farm to bar" with "Harvest Mixology," a workshop on using fresh garden produce in homemade cocktails. Vegetable samples were sourced from Monticello's garden.

Monticello welcomed **DR. BRENT RIDGE** and **JOSH KILMER-PURCELL** – known best as "The Fabulous Beekman Boys" – as the festival's keynote speakers. Their talk, "10 Things We Learned About Life by Becoming Goat Farmers" was held at the Paramount Theater and was followed by a reception featuring cocktails made with fruits and vegetables from the Monticello gardens.

"Professor Apple," **TOM BURFORD**, paired up with Caromont Farm's **GAIL HOBBS PAGE** for a delicious heirloom apple and artisanal cheese tasting.

Monticello's director of gardens and grounds and winemaker extraordinaire **GABRIELE RAUSSE** presented two cooking workshops: one on cooking with wine, and another on an essential ingredient in many Jefferson family recipes – vinegar.

**SANDOR KATZ**, heralded as "one of the unlikely rock stars of the American food scene" by *The New York Times*, taught a workshop on kraut, kimchi and other fermented delicacies.

JOIN US SEPTEMBER 10, 2016, for the 10th Annual Heritage Harvest Festival!