

# Five Ways to Support Sustainable Food

By: [GREENWICHFREEPRESS](#) | 1 HOUR AGO



*The panel included three dynamic and eloquent practitioners of sustainable farming: Sam Garwin, CEO of Fleishers; Jason Grauer, Farmer, Stone Barns; and Alexis Barbalinardo, Farm Manager, Back 40 Farm. Discussion was moderated by Bre Sliker of Patagonia Westport.*

Greenwich Community Gardens recently hosted an evening of education and discussion about sustainable food at the Greenwich Public Library.

Patagonia Provisions, Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture, Back 40 Farm Group, and Fleishers Craft Butchery are leading the way in the Sustainable Food movement, nationally and regionally.

In the documentary *Unbroken Ground*, Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard described sustainable food as his next and greatest challenge. The film features stories of various sustainable farms, including a salmon fishery, buffalo farm, and a farm dedicated to creating diversified and perennial wheat crops. The salmon fishery uses Native American techniques of humanely netting individual fish, while releasing the “non-target” fish.

The buffalo farmers (formerly cow farmers) had learned the hard way that cows destroyed the land by eating grass to the ground, which caused topsoil erosion and overall destruction.

By switching to buffalo, an animal native to the plains, the entire ecosystem was restored. Buffalo eat the grass to a level at which it can keep growing, and the soil becomes richer because of it.



*Sam Garwin, CEO of Fleishers; Jason Grauer, Farmer, Stone Barns. contributed photo*

Wheat farmers spoke about deep-root wheat that captures carbon from the air and channels it back into the soil to replenish nutrients there.

The common theme in all these stories is: *Soil is sacred.*

Soil can easily be destroyed. And since soil is the basis for life, it must be protected. Adopting sustainable farming techniques (no chemicals) naturally replenishes the soil so it can keep producing again and again.

All three panelists were pursuing careers in other areas – software, finance and neuroscience – when they eventually realized their passion was food and farming, and chose to pursue this instead. First, they volunteered in their free time, or sought out mentors to train them, but eventually took the leap and made farming and food their professions.

Mr. Grauer said he felt that despite all of his academic learning, he hadn't learned "how to be fully human" until he started growing food. Since most farmers today are near retirement age, we should encourage young people to consider this profession and way of life.

There are many ways to support sustainable food:

1. Visit Farmers' Markets and ask the farmers questions about how they grow, restaurants they supply, etc. so that you become more knowledgeable and grow your own network.
2. Shop at local purveyors of Sustainable Food including Fleisher's Craft Butchery (<https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=f0c16569ee&e=84de622a93>), Fairfield-Greenwich Cheese Company (<https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=2b6b6dbd5f&e=84de622a93>), and Mike's Organic Delivery (<https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=9d29624b38&e=84de622a93>).

3. Visit a farm with your kids. Stone Barns

([https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?](https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=ef32629123&e=84de622a93)

[u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=ef32629123&e=84de622a93](https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=ef32629123&e=84de622a93)) is only 30 minutes from Greenwich and is open 7 days a week. There's always something interesting happening, in every season.

4. If you have some free time (or have teenagers with free time), volunteer for a few hours (or weeks) on a farm. Back40 Farm welcomes volunteers at harvest and other times. It's an incredible experience!

Contact [alexis@back40farmgroup.com](mailto:alexis@back40farmgroup.com) (<mailto:alexis@back40farmgroup.com>)

5. Visit Patagonia Provisions ([https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?](https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=9199b08698&e=84de622a93)

[u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=9199b08698&e=84de622a93](https://greenwichcommunitygardens.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=22f93doce360e001df26805ed&id=9199b08698&e=84de622a93)) online to order their sustainable food and learn about the incredible work they're doing.