

# Hudson Valley

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## Goodbye Gill Farm, Hello Hudson Valley Farm Hub

The Farm Hub's farmstand in Hurley is open

BY LYNN HAZLEWOOD<sup>®</sup>        3

or decades now, the number of farms in the Valley has been steadily falling, with a lot of former farmland going to development. Those of us who are alarmed at this decline were sad to see Gill Farm in Hurley go out of business last year. The good news is that their land, 1,255 scenic acres bordering Route 209, was purchased by the NoVo Foundation, and is now being managed by the **Local Economies Project**, itself a project of the **New World Foundation**, whose optimistic names bode well. The Local Economies Project, based in Kingston, declares its mission is “to strengthen local agriculture and help build a more resilient food system in the Hudson Valley,” a plan that will benefit the environment, the economy and us, all at once.

Part of that mission will unfold on Gill's property, now called the **Hudson Valley Farm Hub**, where cover crops, barley, and wheat are already growing as part of a study in what's possible and most sustainable, especially given the changing climate. John Gill, whose family has farmed the land for the past 77 years, stayed on as farm manager. You can read more about the Farm Hub and LEP's aims and programs at their Web site: [www.localeconomiesproject.org](http://www.localeconomiesproject.org)



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Meanwhile, last weekend, Gill's farmstand on Route 209 in Hurley reopened as the Farm Hub's farmstand. It looks a little sparse from the road, mainly because the greenhouse and the benches outdoors, which in Gill's time were overflowing with potted herbs, vegetables and flowering plants, are empty so far. (There are plans for nursery plants for 2015.) But there's plenty of fresh produce: eggplant, pattypan and yellow squash, zucchini, beans, cucumbers (including the pickling ones), peppers, cauliflower, cabbages and collard greens. And three varieties of kale, still having its moment of stardom in the vegetable world, including the frilly regular one, Tuscan "dinosaur" kale, and my favorite, the tender Russian red. The corn and tomatoes are coming in, too.

There's also a selection of goodies in jars and packages, all made by small, local producers (or local-ish, at least). You'll find lemon curd, blackberry jam and chutney from Beth's Farms; Rick's Picks pickles; honey, maple syrup and jams from Westwind Orchards; curried sauerkraut and ginger carrots from Hawthorne Valley; coffee from Liquid Assets, and all like that.

The farmstand is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursday through Monday until the end of October. You can even get a nice canvas shopping bag with the Farm Hub logo.

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## The Accidental Foodie

Where to fill your plate and satisfy your palate

### About This Blog

Lynn Hazlewood is the former editor of *Hudson Valley Magazine* and a frequent restaurant reviewer. A shameless booster of local eateries and food producers, she cooks from scratch, makes a terrific risotto, and hopes to live long enough to



sample every good restaurant in the Valley.

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