

Eating Green

The Northeast Organic Farming Association's annual benefit is educating New York families about healthier living. *by Deirdre Imus*

WE ARE WHAT WE EAT—it's as simple as that. In a world full of toxins and chemicals, we are facing more threats to our health than ever before, so it's incredibly important that we limit the amount of chemicals we knowingly put into our body. The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) is so important because of its dedication to keeping consumers informed about local, organic food choices, and providing opportunities to be part of the growing regional food and farm market.

My husband, Don, and I recognize the importance of adopting an organic diet, which is a key element of the program at the Imus Cattle Ranch for Kids with Cancer in Ribera, New Mexico. It's a 4,000-acre working cattle ranch where we teach children suffering from cancer and serious blood disorders how to raise all kinds of cattle and grow

fruits, vegetables, and herbs. The ultimate goal is to boost their self-esteem and to show them that they can do anything any other child can do.

We also recognize that many products used in our food chain, as well as everyday items like toys and personal-care products, commonly contain dangerous chemicals. That's why I started my center at Hackensack University Medical Center. Our mission is to identify, control, and ultimately prevent exposures to environmental factors that may cause cancer and other health problems.

On April 14, NOFA will hold its second-annual "Organic Food from Farm to Family" benefit with a panel discussion saluting those who make a difference. I will join Christie Brinkley, chairman of NOFA-NY; Bart Potenza and Joy A. Pierson, co-owners of Candle Café and Candle 79; and Elizabeth Henderson, lead author of *Sharing the*



Deirdre and Wyatt Imus.

Harvest: A Citizen's Guide to Community Supported Agriculture, to teach others how to go green and eat truly delicious, healthy food.

Contrary to what some people think, living organically doesn't require a drastic overhaul, and it doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. We all need to choose more fresh, organic fruits and vegetables, and fewer processed foods. NOFA-NY is a wonderful organization that promotes exactly that—affordable organic lifestyles.

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York's "Organic Food from Farm to Family" luncheon takes place April 14 at Guastavino's, 409 East 59th Street. For tickets, more information, or to make a donation, call 212-861-8690 or visit nofoany.org.

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