

WinterFresh is an evening of fun that will foster fresh food programs in Aurora, beyond

When you think of fresh food, the Canadian winter isn't often the first season that comes to mind ? but the seeds set to be sown by the community at WinterFresh next Friday, February 2, will come into full bloom later this year.

WinterFresh, a Trivia Night Extravaganza hosted by the York Region Food Network at the Stonehaven Banquet Hall on Eric T. Smith Way, will be a fun way for residents to ?test their knowledge for a cause.?

Proceeds from the event will benefit food security programs spearheaded by the York Region Food Network (YRFN), including expanding its Affordable Fresh Food Market to all nine York Region municipalities, including Aurora.

?One of our new programs that has been incredibly successful is the Affordable Fresh Food Market, and the funds from WinterFresh will be going to food markets that we're hosting in York Region in some of the communities that are identified as lower-income communities,? says YRFN's Joanne Witt. ?We are taking these Affordable Fresh Food Markets right to the community so they can come to it; it's pay-what-you-can but, if they can't, we're not letting anyone leave empty-handed! It's an opportunity for people to come and get fresh produce right in their neighbourhood, right in their community, to be able to use for dinners with their families.

?The Affordable Fresh Food Markets are currently in Newmarket, Stouffville, Georgina, Markham and Richmond Hill and we have received some seed money from the Region of York to get them going and we're hoping by the end of 2024 we'll have the Affordable Fresh Food Markets in all nine municipalities in York Region.?

This year's WinterFresh is the ninth such event hosted by the YRFN and is the first to be held since 2020.

As a trivia fundraiser, ticket-holding individuals, couples, teams and tables have the opportunity to test their skills in a variety of areas, including food. There will be a three-course dinner as well, followed by raffles, prizes, and a booze pull, where each ticket-purchaser will receive a mystery tippie with a value of at least \$20 ? determined by the number on the ticket.

?It's a lot of fun and you know you're going to get at least the value of what you've paid,? says Witt. ?You might get lucky and get something of an even higher value!? In addition, we're having a live auction ? we have a donation from Costco of a \$500 gift card, an amazing hand-made acoustic guitar-shaped fire pit that was created and donated by a gentleman, and we also have our cake auction. We're looking forward to it being another great event for us. We're still looking for sponsors and live auction prize donors. We have some people who aren't able to attend who have either donated to the event or purchased tickets that can be used? maybe by some of our volunteers or people that we support who would love to be at the event but maybe it is not within their budget to be able to do so.?

All money raised from WinterFresh will go back into the Affordable Fresh Food Market and will be used to secure fresh produce, ?especially at this time of year when our farmer partners don't really have much to give us because it is the winter, but we have local businesses, restaurants and grocery stores that, during the winter months, we can buy produce from them either at cost or at a really discounted rate to make sure we have lots to take to the markets.

?It's a fun night for people who like trivia or just spending some time with friends and family at an event ? and it just supports a great cause!?

For more information on WinterFresh 2024, including tickets and sponsorship information, or for any other York Region Food Network programs, visit www.yrfn.ca.

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