

READ *and* FEED

BY TERESE ALLEN

Long live the book—especially food-related books written by authors based in or connected to Wisconsin. Here are eleven titles published in 2011 that set to rest any fears that the book is dead. So go on: Fill in your holiday gift list, expand your foodie horizons and support a local author.

(Disclaimer: Madison is a city, but it isn't a big one, so it is inevitable that many of the area's food writers know each other. I'm on familiar terms with several of the following authors.)

CLUCK: FROM JUNGLE FOWL TO CITY CHICKS

by Susan Troller (Itchy Cat Press)

The tales herein are not so much about chicken as victuals, but chicken as fellow creature. You'll meet factory fowl rescued from the landfill and hens that swoon for a rooster named Big Tiny. You'll learn about heirloom breeds, poultry language and chicken jackets (yep, you read that right). You'll also get recipes for the perfect hard-boiled egg, essays by Jane Hamilton, Ben Logan and Michael Perry, and S.V. Medaris's arresting artwork. The *Capital Times'* Susan Troller pulls it all together with affection and humor, and with her own observations about the backyard chicken phenomenon and the pleasures of a life with laying hens.

THE FARMSTEAD CHEF

by John Ivanko and Lisa Kivirist (New Society Publishers)

In the acknowledgments of their new book about cooking sustainably, the authors thank dozens and dozens of kindred spirits who have influenced or partnered with them. My guess is that

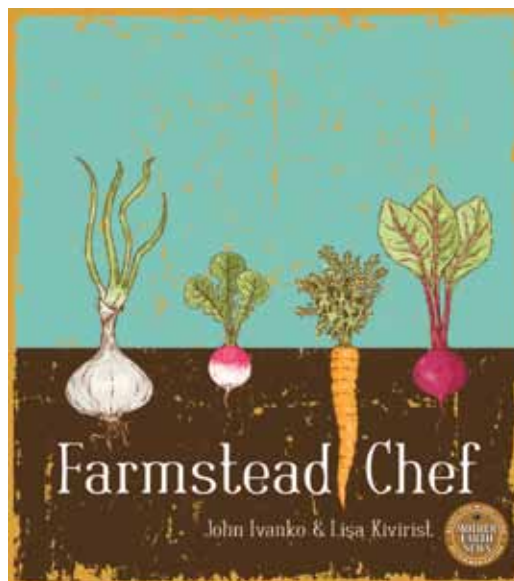
those same people are themselves thanking Ivanko and Kivirist for this proficient new cookbook-guide. Chock full of good cooking and good thinking, it blends inventive, low-on-the-food-chain recipes and preservation techniques with inspiring essays and portrayals of fellow visionaries. I don't think there's anyone writing about local foods these days with more open-heartedness and finesse.

CREATING DAIRYLAND

by Edward Janus (Wisconsin Historical Society Press)

Dairying gets its due from the man who started the Madison Muskies and Capital Brewery, who has worked for two decades as a radio journalist and who unequivocally loves cows. "I believe the dairy cow

created Wisconsin," he writes, and then proves it. Janus explores the industry's "big bang" creation in Wisconsin, the hard work and commitment of early dairy innovators and advocates, and the connections between our storied dairy heritage of past and present.



SIDETRACKED IN THE MIDWEST: A GREEN GUIDE FOR TRAVELERS

by **Mary Bergin (Itchy Cat Press)**

Bergin's latest book is not exclusively about culinary destinations; it also covers lodging, retreats, nature and wildlife. Her geographic focus is the Midwest, and she aims her signature bulls-eye focus on a diverse mix of community- and environment-minded businesses and initiatives. Bergin's other books feature Wisconsin, and her world-wide travels are chronicled at www.roadstraveled.com and elsewhere. At the Edgerton Book Festival last month, Bergin was introduced as Wisconsin's premier travel writer. I couldn't have put it better myself.

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS: GARDENING INSIGHTS FROM WISCONSIN'S EARLY SETTLERS

by **Marcia Carmichael (Wisconsin Historical Society Press)**

Imagine a time-traveling garden tour and you've just pictured *Putting Down Roots*. Carmichael is Old World Wisconsin's historical gardener and her book is as entrancing as a stroll through the immigrant plots she designs and nurtures there. This is real-life, everyday history—not dates and titles, but seeds, tools, recipes and meals that illustrate immigrant hopes, values and traditions. Carmichael's book is an heirloom feast for contemporary cooks, gardeners and food history buffs.

GUDRUN'S KITCHEN: RECIPES FROM A NORWEGIAN FAMILY

by **Irene O. Sandvold, Ingeborg Hydle Baugh, Edward O. Sandvold, and Quinn E. Sandvold (Wisconsin Historical Society Press)**

A family food memoir devoted to the life and cookery of immigrant Gudrun Thue Sandvold. Gifted in the kitchen, Gudrun blended traditional Norwegian fare with interpreted American dishes. She left a legacy of good eating that has been lovingly captured, along with Gudrun's life story, by four family members.

APPLE: A GLOBAL HISTORY

by **Erika Janik (Reaktion Books)**

Did you know that apples were considered a luxury by the Romans? Ever wonder why apples appealed to Protestants more than any other fruit? And just how did New York come to be called the "Big Apple," anyway? Apple history, folklore and legend are the stuff of this engaging, succinct book from Wisconsin Public Radio producer and freelance writer Erika Janik. She relays the story of cider and how the apple went from toxic threat to health hero, and from local specialty to global commodity. The book finishes with a selection guide and a dozen recipes that span time and international geography.

THE SECRET INGREDIENT

by **Laura Schaefer (Simon & Schuster)**

Aimed at teenage girls, this is a novel that will appeal to tea lovers and locavores of all ages. (And if you like to bake, get out your mixing bowls, for Schaefer intersperses pastry recipes throughout the chapters.) The story is based in Madison, so part of the fun is

recognizing local favorites like Mickey's Tavern, REAP Food Group and the Dane County Farmers' Market. Budding love, a scone contest and a little mystery—I enjoyed it all one sitting, and will now go back to read Schaefer's first book, *The Teashop Girls*.

SPAGHETTI CORNERS...AND ALL THAT SAUCE!

by **Catherine Tripalin Murray (Greenbush...remembered)**

The fourth and final self-published book about Madison's long-lost Greenbush neighborhood, this is a loving tribute and a substantial achievement. Murray's tome contains biographical sketches of the Italian and Sicilian men who lived in Madison's Little Italy between 1960 and 1990, before it was razed by urban planning. Each grandfather, father and son vignette includes a photo, intimate tidbits of oral history and gotta-try heritage recipes. A book that will make you wish you were Italian...and digging into a platter of *spiedini*.

EAT SMART IN NORWAY

by **Joan Peterson (Ginkgo Press)**

This is the tenth food travel guide penned or co-penned by Peterson, who just might be Madison's most well-fed traveler. I don't know how she keeps her *cochinita pibil*, *tamarrot* and *poriyal* straight, not to mention the *barbragrot* and *får-i-kål*. I bow down to her taste buds and to her talent for researching and clarifying foreign foods. *eM*



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