



by Daisy Pongrakthai

*Building Bridges through Good Food*

There's more than just 'where's the beef?' going on at Flat Creek Farm. Good 'ol home town classic relations are envisioned with an added tasty gourmet beef product on the table. Owners Chad and Julie Butorac have incorporated a built-in community ingredient to their farm endeavors, branding it *Building Bridges through Good Food*.

As new kids on the block, the Butorac's hope to fill this niche – this classic way to connect with the community, and in some ways even model what sustainable small businesses could look like, "We are really drawn to sharing life with people. The *Building Bridges through Good Food* not only denotes that good food is important for health, but also that building those bridges are augmented by good food. If you share a good meal with somebody, those relationships are that much easier to build."

The idea behind *Building Bridges through Good Food* is not just to sell local products but also to help build that closeness in communities that once existed in a lot of small towns. "For the most part, from what we've seen, that has left our community," Chad articulates. "We see relationships being established and tied in closer by the food we share. This means connecting back where food is grown, knowing the people you buy it from and having a relationship with each other on that level."

Once former teachers in Umatilla, Oregon, the Butoracs landed an opportunity in 2013 to return to Northeast Washington to start a farm. "My grandpa and dad originally farmed here in the Flat Creek area. They sold cattle and generated hay. We're excited to carry on a tradition that has lapsed for awhile," Chad expresses.

*Competition, Science and Big Ag*

"We're not concerned

about 'competition' because the market is far from being saturated for home-grown beef," Chad states. "We're going more toward a gourmet product with a unique taste and marbling that isn't common in markets and stores. We want to provide a quality, grass-finished, good tasting, tender, well-marbled product."

In producing that finished beef product, The Butoracs' focus is again twofold: "We are geared toward the science of what makes an animal gain and produce that inner-muscular fat (marbling) that people desire, but we also want to reinforce the grass-fed push for moral reasons. For instance, cows weren't created to eat grain. It destroys their natural biological digestive system. If you take a cow off grain and put them on grass, it takes them a long time to recover and readjust. Sure, it fattens them up very quickly, but that also comes out in the product and affects the taste."

The big ag techniques

also raise questions of using GMO feed because corn is the number one GM product used today. Also in question by the public is the use of hormones and vaccines to regulate growth and to offset the ill effects of the high concentration of animals, all of which take the cow out of its natural state. Chad reflects, "It's sort of sad when you look at this 'efficiency model,' and 'how the animals are grown – how can it be done the cheapest and in the most bulk fashion?' is their number one question and concern. I think you can't replace a lot of small farmers in the way they care for the animals. As such, smaller farmers are producing a superior product because they have healthy, happy animals. That's just common sense."

*More Plans to Build*

A significant highlight of Flat Creek Farm's plans include providing meat to local restaurants and stores. "Most people don't know what they're eating at restaurants, so with our mission of Building Bridges through Good Food, this will be something that we'll pursue."

For this year, the start-up ranchers are beefing up their herd, "We have a number of steers and are focusing heavily to grow that part of

the business this year. On the side, we are featuring some organic garden products – various potatoes, vegetables and getting started with some honey production. Then last year we planted about 50 fruit trees, mostly apples, and we should be getting some fruit within the next few years."

Flat Creek Farm debuts at the Wynne Street Market in Spokane on Fridays from 3:00-5:30PM starting in September and farm visits are welcome. They are located 33 miles out of Kettle Falls,

close to China Bend Winery, at 3323 Northport Flat Creek Road. By September of this year, Flat Creek Farm will start taking beef orders. They are contracted with Smokey Ridge Meats out of Chewelah for the USDA processing of the cuts. More information and a price list can be viewed online at [www.flatcreekfarm.org](http://www.flatcreekfarm.org), or call Chad Butorac at 509-675-4434.

[www.flatcreekfarm.org](http://www.flatcreekfarm.org)



Julie's garlic harvest

**COWBOY CAFE**  
~Restaurant Closed~

The Cowboy Café in Davenport will be closing on September 30. We have appreciated the support from our customers and all the new friends we have made. Thank you! Mark & Kim Elwood

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