

Riordan Health Hunters

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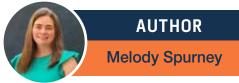
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Riordan Clinic is a world-renowned, academic medical center that has led the world in integrative oncology and complex chronic illness care since 1975. The Riordan Clinic was established as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization with missions in research, provider education, and patient education. The Health Hunter Newsletter has been published since 1986 as an educational resource to providers and patients.

Elderslie Farm Values Sustainability and Respect for Land and Animals





At Elderslie Farm, sustainable practices are rooted in respect - for the land, the animals, the people who care for both, and food itself.

The inspiration to build Elderslie Farm into the multi-faceted business it is today started early for both George and

Katharine Elder. George was born in the farmhouse that is now home to the restaurant, and he grew up watching his parents' affection for the land. Although it wasn't a working farm at the time, George's parents were dedicated to the land and stewardship, which influenced his perspective about what's important, how to care for the land, how to care for animals, and what to eat. Katharine said George went to college intending to return to the farm and earn a living there.

"He grew up on this land. He was taught to respect it. He very intentionally pursued a career making a life out of it," she said.

Katharine, who is the head chef and leads the hospitality portion of the business, found a passion for food as a child. She said she grew up in a very "culinary-interested" family that enjoyed cooking. She remembered having friends over to play and not having ready-made snacks to offer.

"There was nothing in our house that you could just eat. You had to make it all. There was no grab-and-go food in my upbringing - except maybe carrots," she said.

Katharine recalled not having much cash on hand in college, so she didn't buy much meat. As a result, her cooking became very "vegetable-centric," which continues to resonate on the restaurant menu today. During that time, she also learned how unifying food can be.

"When I was cooking on my own, my most natural way of connecting with people was at the table. Any augmented or pivotal moment of the human experience very often involves food. It is the great equalizer, and if you can provide substance behind that for people, I think it is really exciting," she said.

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Getting Started

George had already returned to the farm when he and Katharine married 11 years ago. He and his sister, Alexis, had planted a blackberry bramble and were anticipating their first good yield. When he asked Katharine to help check in guests for blackberry picking, she balked and expressed a desire for more to do. From that, the Bramble Cafe was born, which is still open seasonally.

George sensed that Katharine was perhaps unsettled on the farm at first. She had relatives in Milan, Italy, and had grown up visiting them a few times a year and still enjoyed traveling.

"Very early in our marriage, George said to me point blank, 'If you spent as much time and energy making this somewhere you would want to be, and somewhere other people want to be, as you do trying to get away, you might be surprised,'" Katharine said. She accepted the challenge.

Soon after, Alexis began growing seasonal vegetables on an acre nearby. Katharine started serving dinners at the farm to showcase the vegetables. Alexis eventually stopped growing vegetables, but the restaurant's philosophy to serve seasonal, locally-sourced ingredients remains the same.

"There was a sense of urgency to find growers. We had to make sure that this didn't end," she said.

Katharine settled in, appreciating the invitation to celebrate the farm that her in-laws had extended. In addition to the blackberries and restaurants, the farm also has woodworks and a sawmill where George continues to create furniture and other items from the local timber he harvests. It also has a small herd of goats. His mom was the original cheesemaker at Elderslie and specialized in rustic farmstead feta.

In the Neighborhood

The 160-acre farm is split between two 80-acre properties in the Sunnydale community between Valley Center and Kechi. After Alexis stopped growing vegetables, Katharine connected with other growers, including some nearby farmers such as Strong Roots Healthy Farming in Valley Center and Chisholm Creek Flowers, located virtually next door.

Katharine said she has close relationships with about 11 growers and uses others when the need for additional ingredients arises. She estimates that 80 percent of her food is sourced within a 50-mile radius of the farm. Although the farm isn't officially certified organic by the USDA, Katharine said they follow organic practices and choose food from growers that do the same.

"I watch my spouse day in and day out digging into the reality of land management and holistic living, treating animals with respect and dignity, and making sure that what the customer is getting actually matches the perception," she said.

That is why Katharine says she focuses on quality seasonal ingredients that are well-grown and well-cared for, not just local. "Seasonal and local does not necessarily imply carefully grown, organically grown, and well-tended," she said.

Katharine said there are biological factors at play regarding the seasonality of food. For example, butternut squash is in season in late fall and has a high sugar content that helps warm the body.

"That's why it's not ready until October. It's about to get cold. That's also why you want to eat a light, bright, watery tomato in the summer. In the same way, if you eat heavy food in the summer, it is miserable," she said.

The restaurant menu usually changes about every six weeks and is dictated by her core group of growers, including Strong Roots Healthy Farming, Orie's Farm Fresh, and Firefly Farm. She said there are a lot of back-and-forth conversations when it comes to menu planning. For example, a grower may have a crop come in and reach out to Katharine, or Katharine may have a seasonal dish in mind and reach out to a grower.

Despite being known as the Breadbasket of America, the weather in Kansas and other factors can make the state a challenging location for sustainable, seasonal farming.

"It is hard to grow good food in Kansas. Summers are hot, and winters are cold. Often the voice of the grower is just lost because we live life so fast," she said.

Katharine said it could be alarming to realize what goes on behind the scenes in the food industry.

"Traditional farming has succeeded in efficiently creating low-cost food. Creating a best-in-class food system substantially reduces chemical use, prioritizes soil health and nutrient density, preserves ecological diversity, and values animal and worker quality of life. And this requires that farmers be compensated on more than just bushels delivered. Farmers can do this, but consumers have to create the demand," she said.

Katharine said marketing is a significant part of why change may be so slow.

"In the dairy aisle, many brands use images of red barns, green pastures, animals frolicking in meadows, or stories of small family farms. These images and stories are often not entirely transparent since many of those animals live in facilities on concrete from birth to death. If marketing teams were asked to clearly state things like, 'Raised in a confined man-made environment,' it is possible consumers might be more dedicated to higher quality. This shift has begun in eggs very significantly because the confinement systems became so darkly brutal in a race to produce them cheaply. Cage-free eggs became viable even at 2 and 4 times the cost," she said.

"You have to do a lot of homework to know what you are putting in your body or what you are putting on your table. Part of my job as a chef is to disburden the customer from the obligation of trying to figure out what is in the food," she added.

Sense of Place

Katharine's experiences in Italy have helped influence her relationship with food and a sustainable future.

"In Northern Italy, an identity piece that necessitates care for one's body, the land, the ingredients, and these things are celebrated. It is just part of how they do life," she said.

By contrast, Katharine said Americans tend to live quickly in the moment without much of a sense of place or thought given to our long-term impact.

"As a culture, I think it is very easy to equate success with getting what you want all the time and instant gratification. In terms of what we are doing and why we are doing it, we care for the land and do not burden future generations with the residual effects of our selfishness. That is very important to practice. As Americans, we forget that we will be here for a significantly shorter period than our impact," she said.

Valuing the land, animals, and caring for self is something that George and Katharine are working to teach their children, Martha, 10, and Oliver, 7. Katharine said that generations could no longer assume they will do better than their parents, but she is noticing that consumer-driven culture may be starting to shift. Particularly post-COVID, she sees people more interested in slowing down for experiences.

"It won't be quite so hard if, as an adult culture, we can demonstrate to the next generation how to say, 'I don't actually need that. I have a sweater. I have a pair of shoes. I have eaten enough,'" she said.

Katharine sees inherent value in treating land and animals with respect and perpetuating that within society.

"It is way more expensive, and it does not make economic sense if you are just looking at a balance sheet within a business. But I think the very real, rooted, 'Why are we here, and what are we doing here?' is informed by living a life with animals," she said.

A Relationship with Food

Katharine learned as a child that food brought joy.

"It wasn't a stuffy elevation of the table, but it was a celebration of food culture and a dedication to presenting these

things well and a pride in where you are from, as well as a generational perception of yourself in time," she said of eating in Italy.

She carries this philosophy to her current work in the restaurants and on the farm.

"One of the most rewarding things for me is providing respite and peace in other people's lives and being able to do that while taking and synthesizing George's work and sharing it. I might be the chef, have the restaurant, and plate the food just so. But I'm also able to give a voice to George's work, and beyond him, each of the growers," she said.

Looking Ahead

Elderslie Farm continues to grow and widen its footprint in the Wichita community. The goat herd will expand early this spring with the anticipated arrival of more than 100 baby goats, which will keep the animal care team busy. The creamery and dairy have recently been renovated and support The Market Shop at the farm.

Elderslie, the farm's flagship restaurant, is open on Friday and Saturday evenings by reservation. Everyday by Elderslie recently opened in Bradley Fair, and Katharine expects to open a restaurant space in the Wichita Art Museum, 1400 by Elderslie, in March.

Traditional farm activities, including picking blackberries in the 1.5-acre bramble and the seasonal opening of the Bramble Cafe, will come in the summer.

Meanwhile, the Elders' children are getting used to helping on the farm.

"They are everywhere. Martha is chief baby goat catcher. She adores the animals. Her tenderness for the goats is unmatched. She can run the cafe cash register as well as any employee. And Oliver is very content to play with whoever shows up," Katharine said.

As the family and farm employees prepare for a busy growing season, Katharine said she is happy reflecting on the evolution of the farm to a place that brings joy not only to her family but others as well.

"If you focus too much on what's next, you don't settle in and hone what you are actually doing. If you're always looking to the next pasture, the next thing, you forget to take care of what's right here," she said.



Photos by Gavin Peters/Courtesy of Elderslie Farm

Assessing Health Risks Associated with CAFOs



The stereotypical image of a farm is a pleasant one: happy animals, well-cared-for land, and green spaces. In fact – the vision may mirror Elderslie Farm (just outside of Wichita, Kansas), which is also featured in this issue.

Unfortunately, this ideal "farm life" image is increasingly being changed – and not for the better. Today, most of the food that is easily available at the supermarket is produced from animals living in dirty, overcrowded conditions, eating food they would not find on a traditional farm, and being given doses of antibiotics that impact the resulting food supply.

Unless food is sourced carefully, there's a good chance it could be coming from a Concentrated Animal Farming Operation (CAFO). CAFOs are generally defined as agricultural meat, dairy, or egg facilities where animals are kept and raised in confined conditions. Food is brought to animals that have no access to grass or other vegetation for 45 or more days during the normal growing season. [1]

In 2020, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported more than 21,000 CAFOs, with at least one operation in all 50 states. [2] In addition to obvious concerns about food sourcing, loss of nutritional value, and respect for the animals, a significant health issue with CAFOs is manure and the resulting environmental pollution.

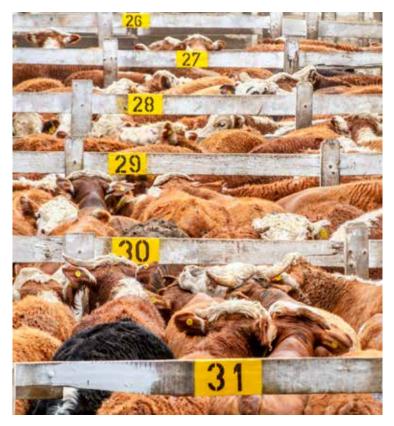
The number of CAFOs is multiplying, and the allowed capacity is also growing. A CAFO can house anywhere from hundreds to thousands of animals. For example, in Kansas, one cattle feedlot is permitted more than 150,000 cows. Another CAFO confines 198,000 mature hogs just miles from one holding 132,000 hogs. [3] This confined animal population produces a large amount of animal waste resulting in multiple impacts on health and the environment.

As far as health is concerned, the primary public health issue is manure. It's negative impacts include, but are not limited to, water, air quality, and universal health.

Water

Arguments for CAFOs include low-cost sources of meat, milk, and eggs due to increased facility size and animal specialization, help for the local economy, and an increase in employment. It can also be argued that the cost to the communities, surrounding land, and the population at large outweighs those benefits. [4]

Contaminants in manure produced by CAFOs are a pressing public health concern. Those include, but are not limited to, nitrogen and phosphorus, E. coli, growth hormones, antibiotics, chemicals used as additives to the manure or to clean equipment, and more. [4] Approximately 4,000 CAFOs operate in Iowa, and aforementioned contaminants or E. coli impair nearly every



mile of stream and acre of surface water in the state. [5] Nitrates in water can be a health threat to all people because they can lower oxygen in the blood, which has been linked to birth defects, miscarriages, poor general health, and "Blue Baby Syndrome."

The ecological impact to surface water is significant. Lakes, rivers, and reservoirs are often polluted in areas near CAFOs, which affects both people and animals. According to the Centers for Disease Control, aquatic animals and plants die due to the hormones that are leached into the water, which also results in a significant decline in the fertility of female fish. Nutrient overloads also cause algae blooms, which can become toxic and kill not only plants and aquatic life but also be dangerous for humans. [4] If you've ever shown up to your favorite lake on a hot summer afternoon ready for some fun in the water only to find access restricted due to an algae bloom, a CAFO may be the source of the bacteria.

In the past, farmers and livestock growers used ground application as a way to dispose of manure, and while this was a problem, it was at a much smaller scale. However, the much larger volume created by CAFOs vastly amplifies the problem. The soil is unable to absorb and use the micro- and macro-nutrients, which then leach into the groundwater. This groundwater is the primary water source for many Americans, especially in the rural areas where CAFOs exist.

While CAFOs are technically required to hold permits that restrict the amount of manure discharge, enforcement is lax. Of the more than 21,000 CAFOs recorded by the EPA in 2022, only 6,266 had wastewater discharge permits under the Clean Water Act. [5]

Air Quality

If you have spent any time near one of these factory farms, you know they stink. Feedlot odors can travel for miles. Some studies estimate the standard distance odors from CAFOs can travel is 5-6 miles. However, weather plays a factor. When I lived in Denver, a town 60 miles north housed a CAFO. It was our best predictor of snow because Denver would always smell like manure because of the south-facing winds when a storm was coming.

With or without odor, manure can pose additional health risks. Pollutants commonly associated with CAFOs are ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, methane, and particulate matter. Potential health risks include respiratory irritation, chronic lung disease, inflammation of the eyes and respiratory tract membranes, olfactory neuron loss, and asthma, especially in children. [4]

As an integrative oncologist, it is only logical to wonder about these pollutants and their effects on those who suffer from chronic allergies and, in turn, whether these odors increase risk of lung cancer. It is chronic irritation and inflammation in afflicted organs (and systemically) that have the potential to fuel tumor growth.

Insects and Antibiotics

Bugs are a nuisance, but beyond that, they spread disease. Flies are commonly associated with manure, and when produced in high volumes, that manure also attracts mosquitos and other insects. Flies can spread pathogens and other bacteria, including drug-resistant bacteria. Mosquitos are known to spread West Nile Virus, St. Louis Encephalitis, Equine Encephalitis, and other diseases. [4]

Diseases spread by these insects encourage the overuse of antibiotics and hormones. Animals in CAFOs are fed poor diets consisting heavily of grain and corn, which is a cheaper and easier way to encourage faster growth and higher meat production. These food sources alter an animal's pH, causing systematic inflammation, bloating, infections, and a compromised immune system. This can result in an imbalanced inflammatory fatty acid profile, not only for the animal but those who consume the meat.

Antibiotics are given to decrease the risk of disease in these animals of poor health. However, hundreds of studies have been published linking the negative health effects to antibiotics and hormones. Studies have also shown a link to cancer in animals and people. Antibiotics in general are overprescribed and overused for viral pathogens, which are not effectively destroyed with antibiotics. Bacteria are much more effectively treated with antibiotics. This is a prevalent issue not only in CAFOs but in mainstream medicine as a whole.

Antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria can be transferred to humans by handling or eating meat. Humans already experience overall health issues due to microbiome imbalance (dysbiosis) related to long-term overuse of antibiotics. This is a growing threat because fewer options exist to help people overcome antibiotic-resistant diseases. [4] Additionally, we know that microbiome disturbance is associated with disease and chronic illness.

Animal Welfare

Can you imagine being held in close confinement in a pen with 50 to as many as 200 other people for 45 days (or more!), surrounded by dozens – if not hundreds – of similar pens? This is what life looks like on a feedlot. These animals are living creatures, and many people, including myself, feel strongly that they have rights. To stay focused on health risks, I will leave the dialogue about animal welfare there.

In Conclusion

As a Naturopathic Doctor specializing in integrative oncology, I always look for the root cause of a "dis"-ease. It is difficult to argue that CAFOs do not have a negative impact on public health. I strongly believe that all animal products produced by CAFOs should be labeled in the same way that GMO products are labeled. However, that will not solve the entirety of the problem, as those living in communities close to a CAFO cannot escape the significant environmental health risks associated with these operations.

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LUNCH AND LEARN MICROGLIAL MADNESS: HOW STRESS, CONCUSSIONS, AND LIFE TRAUMAS CAN TRIGGER CHRONIC BRAIN INFLAMMATION



Presenter: Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ron Hunninghake, MD
Date: Thursday, March 9, 2023
Time: Lunch will be served from 11:30 am - Noon. Presentation will begin at Noon.
Where: In person at 3100 N Hillside, Wichita, Kansas 67219 and virtually on Riordan Clinic's social media channels.

Cost: Lunch is provided. Donations to support our educational programs are welcome. Space is limited. Register early.

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The Spring Check Your Health event offers five profiles designed for different health issues and goals at varying price points. Check Your Health lab draws will be done on weekdays from March 13-24. Call to schedule today at 800-447-7276 x1385 or x1302.

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- Are you a male experiencing hormone-related problems such as low libido, loss of energy, strength, and stamina, or a woman experiencing hot flashes, night sweats, or menopause discomfort?
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SCAN TO VIEW THE COMPARISON TABLE FOR LAB TEST.



Goat Cheese & Herb Omelet



INGREDIENTS

4 large eggs 2 Tbsp milk or water 1/4 tsp ground pepper 1/8 tsp salt 1/3 cup crumbled goat cheese 1 1/2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley, plus more for garnish
1 tsp chopped fresh chives, more for garnish
1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil

Total time: 10 minutes Servings: 2

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Whisk eggs, milk (or water), pepper, and salt in a medium bowl. Combine goat cheese, parsley, and chives in a small bowl.
- Heat oil in medium skillet over medium-low heat. Add eggs and let the mixture cook, undisturbed until set around the edges, about 3 minutes. With a rubber spatula, gently loosen an edge of the cooked egg, tipping the pan

SUPPLEMENTS!

to allow uncooked egg to run underneath. Repeat at various spots until almost no runny egg remains.

 Sprinkle goat cheese mixture evenly over the omelet. Cover and continue cooking until the eggs are set, 2 to 4 minutes more. Slip a spatula under one side, fold the omelet in half, and slide onto a plate. To serve, cut in half and garnish with more herbs, if desired.

& STORE HOURS!

Riordan Clinic NUTRIENT SALE



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Melody Spurney Editor

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EPISODE 54

REMISSION NUTRITION: USING FOOD AS MEDICINE

Jen Nolan, MS, BS, ONC

In this episode of the Real Health Podcast, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ron Hunninghake, MD, discusses using nutrition as medicine with Jen Nolan, MS, BS, ONC, owner and lead oncology consultant at Remission Nutrition. They talk about why food matters and how making nutritional changes is a powerful tool for cancer patients and others.



EPISODE 53 CARING FOR YOUR BONES

The Latest Information and Top Experts

in Functional and Integrative Medicine

Dr. John Neustadt, ND In this episode of the Real Health Podcast, Riordan Clinic's Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ron Hunninghake, MD, is joined by Dr. John Neustadt, ND. They discuss Dr. Neustadt's book "Fracture-Proof Your Bones: A Comprehensive Approach to Osteoporosis" and how to identify and correct the factors that contribute to osteoporosis and fractures.

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