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# North Fork bounty delivered to your door

Originally published: June 11, 2013 4:10 PM

Updated: June 12, 2013 7:47 AM

By ERICA MARCUS erica.marcus@newsday.com



Photo credit: Rande Daddona | Kassata Bollman, owner of Farm2Kitchen Long Island, sits with all her offerings in her truck in the field at Schmitt Family Farm in Riverhead. (May 28, 2013)

## Galleries

The idea was simple: Bring the bounty of the North Fork's farms to home kitchens all over Long Island and New York City.

The execution: not so simple. To launch the website

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Farm 2 Kitchen delivers farm fresh produce to you

Farm2KitchenLongIsland.com, Kassata Bollman has had to marshal all her dedication, imagination and charm. She has tested her Internet savvy, her rush-hour driving and her upper-arm strength.

She's also had some explaining to do. Farm 2 Kitchen is a hybrid of farmers market and supermarket delivery service that's new to Long Island. Like a farmers market, it features the wares of many farms, dairies, bakeries and other local producers. Like supermarket

delivery -- such as Fresh Direct or Peapod -- you peruse the merchandise online, then order whatever you like. There's a \$40 minimum per order, and delivery charges range from \$10.95 to \$14.95, depending on where your home (or office) is.

### STARTING SMALL

On the morning of May 1, Bollman, 30, climbed into her SUV and made her first deliveries to 25 customers in Suffolk, Nassau, Queens and Manhattan. "We started even before the asparagus was up," she said. "That first week it was herbs, mesclun, spinach and pantry items like fresh milk from Goodale Farms and bread from Blue Duck Bakery."

The second week, she made 65 deliveries. On June 12, it was up to 82. Bollman is now selling more than 120 items. Her original plan was to make the deliveries herself; by week five, she had hired a local service to help deliver items to the five boroughs. When her mother announced her retirement last week, Bollman immediately put her to work.

### EXTENDING THE NORTH FORK'S REACH

Almost everything at Farm 2 Kitchen is grown or produced on the North Fork. Bollman spends Monday and Tuesday driving from East Marion to Calverton, making her purchases and hauling them into her SUV, a task she is reluctant to delegate. Talking to her vendors not only brings her closer to what she is selling, it sparks inspiration for new products.

In late May, Bollman stopped by The Giving Room yoga studio in Southold to discuss pricing the organic juices and cleanses from the studio's juice bar, The Giving Juice. Owner Paula DiDonato was making a batch of almond milk -- grinding the raw nuts in a blender, then pressing the slurry through a cheesecloth bag. Bollman had never tasted fresh-pressed almond milk and was duly impressed. Within minutes, she and DiDonato had agreed that Farm 2 Kitchen would offer The Giving Juice's almond milk, both plain and sweetened, for delivery the following week.

"This relationship gives me access to homes I'd never be in otherwise," DiDonato said. "A woman in Long Beach found my juice cleanse online. Without Kassata, I wouldn't be able to extend my reach beyond the North Fork."

Although Farm 2 Kitchen delivers locally to the North Fork, it's the customers west of Riverhead who are most enthusiastic. Lauren Emr of Huntington Bay has been ordering from Farm 2 Kitchen since May 22 and said, "It's just great to have access to all this great stuff from the North Fork. I get the pastured eggs," she said, "the North Fork bacon, the homemade root beer for my son, gluten-free baked goods for me." Because it's still early in the season, Emr's produce orders have been limited to asparagus, mint and, starting last week, early cherry tomatoes from Wickham's farm in Cutchogue, but "as more produce comes into season, I'll be ordering more."

Emr likes to support local agriculture, and she's also sold on the convenience of Farm 2 Kitchen. "I'm busy, I have work and I have kids. For \$10, to have all this great stuff from the North Fork dropped off at my house, it's an incredible value."

The one exception to Bollman's hyperlocal rule is the beef that she gets from Slope Farms in the Catskills, which she sells ground and as steaks (for \$8.75 to \$10.95 a pound). "There's no beef raised on the North Fork," she said, "and from the beginning, it's been one of our best sellers." But ducks from Crescent in Aquebogue, turkeys and chickens from Miloski's in Calverton and fish from Southold

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### **FROM ON AIR TO ON THE FARM**

Bollman developed a connection to the North Fork in a very short time; she moved to Southold in 2012, when she married Scott Bollman, a chef whose family has owned Bruce's Cheese Emporium in Greenport since 1974. Kassata graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson with a degree in communications in 2005 and went on to a string of on-air reporter assignments in Las Vegas, Reno, Fresno, Buffalo and Albany. "Wherever I went," she said, "I was always into the farmers markets. In Fresno, I did a story on raw milk, and the crew could barely drag me away."

Bollman's last broadcasting job was in Albany, where she learned about FarmieMarket, a self-described online farmers market that delivers the wares of about 40 farms to homes and offices in the Capital Region and Hudson Valley. The idea stuck in her head, and, when she moved to the North Fork to start a life with her new husband, everything came together in Farm 2 Kitchen.

"I feel like I've found the job for the rest of my life," she said.

### **A WEEK'S WORK**

Bollman's weeks have taken on a cyclical relentlessness. Monday and Tuesday she gathers from vendors, bringing everything back to a garage equipped with freezers and refrigerators. On Monday nights, she looks over the orders and figures out the delivery routes for later in the week. On Tuesday nights, she starts packing the orders that will go out on Wednesday, placing the nonperishable items in special insulated bags. On Wednesday morning, she adds the fresh produce and dairy as well as cooler packs to the bags. Once they are sealed, the bags stay cold for hours.

Deliveries are made Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, depending on location. On Thursday night, Bollman sends a newsletter out to all registered customers, previewing that week's products. Over the weekend, she'll update the website and answer emails from customers; 10 p.m. Sunday is the cutoff for orders, and Monday morning, Bollman heads out to gather again.

### **FILLING YOUR CART**

Farm 2 Kitchen offers more than 120 items in 17 categories.

Here are some current highlights:

#### **Produce**

Wickham Fruit Farm strawberries: \$6.30 a quart

Schmitt's Farm spinach: \$2.99 for 12 ounces

Long Island Mushroom shiitake mushrooms: \$10.99 for 8 ounces

Garden Fusion certified organic oregano: \$3 a bunch

Koppert Cress popcorn shoots (micro greens): \$15.95 for 4 ounces

#### **Dairy**

Goodale Farms cow milk: \$5.50 a quart

Catapano Dairy Farm fresh chèvre cheese: \$9.50 for a 5-ounce tub

North Fork Egg Farm chicken eggs: \$5.95 a dozen

Miloski duck eggs: \$2.50 each

#### **Seafood**

Southold Fish Market North Fork fluke: \$13.95 a pound

**Meat**

Slope Farms (Catskills) grass-fed ground beef: \$10.95 a pound

North Fork Bacon: \$9.95 for 12 ounces

**Poultry**

Miloski's Poultry Farm free-range whole chicken: \$14.99 for 31 / 2 pounds

Crescent Farm whole duck: \$27.99 for 41 / 2 pounds

**Pantry & Specialty Items**

Spy Coast Bee Farm raw honey: \$9.95 for 8 ounces

North Fork Sea Salt Co. salt: \$9 for 4 ounces

**Baked Goods**

Junda's Pastry apple strudel: \$21.99 for half a strudel

Rachel Lu gluten-free cookies: \$7.50 for 12 cookies

**Beverages**

Giving Juice organic almond milk (plain or agave-sweetened vanilla): \$13.99 for 16 ounces

Giving Juice "What's Up Doc" (carrot, apple and ginger) organic juice: \$11.50 for 16 ounces

**HOW TO PLACE AN ORDER**

--Once you register online at [Farm2KitchenLongIsland.com](http://Farm2KitchenLongIsland.com), you will receive a weekly email highlighting new items.

--The web "market" opens on Thursday and closes at 10 p.m. Sunday. Minimum order is \$40.

--Depending on location, orders will be delivered on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. Delivery costs \$10.95 for Suffolk, \$12.95 for Nassau, \$14.95 for New York City.

**DELIVERY**

--Food is delivered in insulated totes and pouches with a dry ice pack to stay cool for 4 hours. All of this is reusable and you will be charged \$10 for each unreturned bag and \$5 for each unreturned ice pack.

--For apartment dwellers, there must be someone home to accept the order (a doorman or a neighbor is fine), or you must give Farm 2 Kitchen access to a secure location.

--For more information, email [farm2kitchenlongisland@gmail.com](mailto:farm2kitchenlongisland@gmail.com)

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