

Beckwith to create an edible legacy for 150th

Beckwith Township has found a delicious way to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary! It is planning to build an "edible park" of heritage apples, plum trees, cherry trees, butternut trees and currants within Beckwith Park as a legacy project.

A plot of over one-acre in size will be cultured to grow nine varieties of apples, three types of plums and three kinds of cherry trees that local historians say were known to grow in the area. Species were selected from a list of more than 50 heritage trees in an effort to appropriately represent life in Beckwith 150 years ago.

The edible park project will serve the community for generations to come. "It's part of our culture in Beckwith," Reeve Richard Kidd says "...every homestead had an orchard. This new Edible Park is a reflection of our heritage".

A small mixed plantation provided multiple harvests that served a family throughout the year. In late July, Yellow Transparent apples would be the first crop harvested to make applesauce. Later, Northern Spy apples were collected for cooking and baking. In fall, McIntosh apples were gathered to store over the colder months. Lastly, butternuts and currants would be saved for Christmas dinner.

"With the excitement around local food, the Edible Park will bring new interest to the Lanark County Harvest Festival held annually at Beckwith Park," says Marie White, Lanark County Tourism Manager.

The apple varieties for the Edible Park include McIntosh, Northern Spy, Duchess, Fameuse (Snow), Golden Russet, Lobo, Spartan, Wolf River and Yellow Transparent. Plum trees will include Green Gage, Ontario Plum and Damson, and the cherry varieties are Montmorency, Elegant and Galaxy. Special thanks to John Kidd and Dorothy Lewis for their historical input into the variety selection.

The township is also planning to construct a replica 1800s one-room schoolhouse as part of the enhancements to Beckwith Park in 2017. Events planned to celebrate Canada's 150th in Beckwith Township include a heritage parade during the Heritage Days event in June, a new splash pad and playground opening on July 1 with a seniors' breakfast and family picnic, the Paddle the Jock event, a Canadian History Trivia Night at the Ashton Pub, a rural school fair and New Year's Eve fireworks.

For more information, please contact Lanark County Tourism at 1-888-452-6275 or consult www.LanarkCountyTourism.ca

– 30 –

For more information, contact:
Marie White
Tourism Manager
Lanark County
1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1530