

Thursday, July 15, 2004

Farmers' markets offer local flavor

Eugene residents can find farm-fresh food at four popular outdoor markets this season

JACKSON HOLTZ
FREELANCE REPORTER

Farmers' markets, where local growers come together to sell their bounty, are blooming like wild blackberries in Eugene. During the summer, people can shop for fresh, locally grown food at four different locations in downtown on practically any day of the week.

The Lane County Farmers' Market is the largest with more than 56 participating growers. Both the 5th Street Market and the Meridian Market also have smaller versions.

But shoppers don't seem to care where the markets are — just that they can buy fresh, mostly organic produce, flowers, plants, baked goods and other assorted items direct from growers and producers.

"I cook, so I'm always looking for things to create a delicious organic meal," Eugene resident Annie Greenberg said while picking out salad greens.

Greenberg comes to the market to supplement what isn't available from her own garden. But for those who don't have gardens, buying food at the market is the next best thing to growing it themselves.

What's best depends upon what's ripe. During mid-summer, farmers are harvesting green beans, berries, summer squash and garlic, and they're just bringing in the early crop of tomatoes — among other things. The result is a colorful cornucopia that delights sight, smell and taste.

Farmer Charles Duryea, whose Grateful Harvest Farm produces a variety of vegetables, herbs and berries, offers several tips for people unfamiliar with shopping at the market. He suggests scoping out all the vendors to see what people have, talking to the farmers to ask what's good at their stand, coming with a shopping list and bringing a sack to carry purchases home (although most stands will provide

a plastic bag). He also is mindful of proper food handling.

"We don't use pesticides, but we still encourage people to wash their produce," he said.

Other farmers point out that since the food is picked when it's ripe, it's best enjoyed on market day, or soon after — unlike commercial produce that is picked early so that it will travel, sometimes as far as 2,000 miles. In contrast, most food at the markets is picked that morning.

Prices are usually cheaper than grocery store

prices, but sometimes commercial growers flood the retail market and bring prices down below what a family farmer can offer, according to local farmers.

No matter what the cost, shopping at farmer's markets helps support local farmers and keeps them in business.

While direct-to-consumer markets make up only around one percent of the agricultural

Please see MARKET, page 8



Erik R. Bishoff Online & Photo Editor

Sweetleaf Organic Farm employees Jon Sciarra and 'Raychel' work the Farmers' Market in downtown Eugene Saturday afternoon.

'I, Robot' film doesn't equal novel

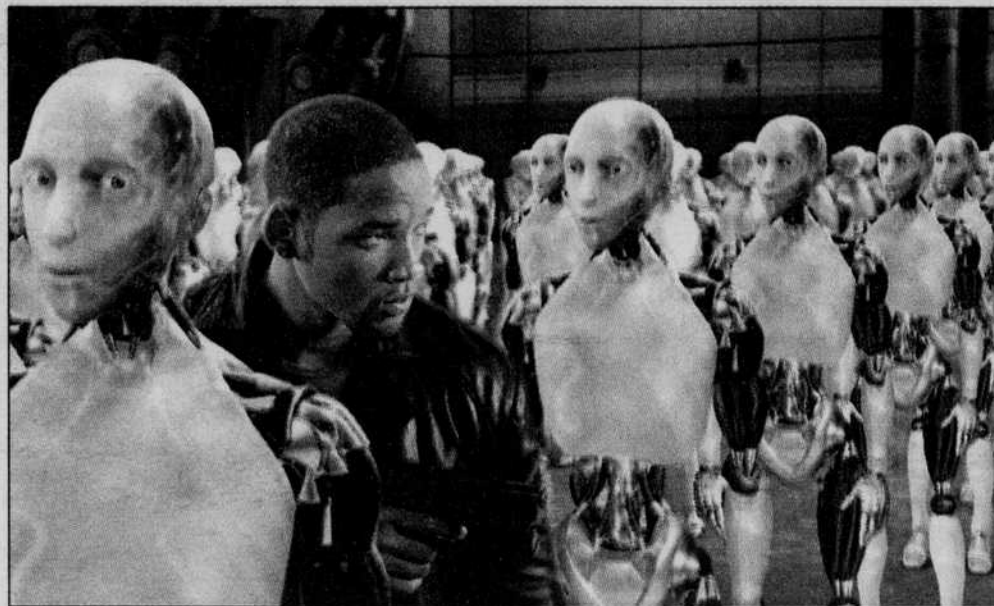
The film is action-packed, but misses the book's depth of plot and dilutes its themes

SARA BRICKNER
FREELANCE REPORTER

Here's a shocker: Will Smith stars in another macho action movie (a genre to which he seems to be drawn) as a detective with baggage and an attitude. "I, Robot" is slightly better than some of his previous efforts (remember "Wild Wild West"?), but most of the film's successes may be attributed to the classic upon which it was based. Director Alex Proyas ("Dark City") has once again created a compelling futuristic world using his prowess with special effects, but after films like "Lord of the Rings" and "The Matrix" redefined visuals, "I, Robot" is nothing moviegoers haven't seen before.

The film, "suggested" by the short story collection "I, Robot" by Isaac Asimov, makes several unwelcome changes to the original. However, in typical Hollywood fashion, the film gleans a few good ideas from a classic and then proceeds to homogenize the plot.

In the film, robots are the most obedient of slaves, doing chores and the dirty work without resentment or complaint because the Three Laws of Robotics (one of the few unchanged concepts to come from Asimov's work) ensure that robots follow human orders and prevents robots from causing harm to humans. Detective Del Spooner (Will Smith) is the only person who seems to be suspicious of the robots, and his suspicions are heightened when he is sent to investigate the mysterious suicide of Dr.



Courtesy

Will Smith stars in the science-fiction thriller 'I, Robot,' which opens Friday.

Alfred Lanning (James Cromwell), the founder of modern robotics and creator of the Three Laws. In the original novel, Dr. Susan Calvin is a 75-year-old robo-psychologist whose narrative is the basis for the story, but in the film Dr. Calvin (Bridget Moynahan) is a supporting character, becoming an attractive, young robo-psychologist who aids Spooner's investigation while Spooner is scoffed at by his peers and his lieutenant, John Bergin (Chi McBride).

"I, Robot" deals with the ethical issues surrounding artificial intelligence fairly successfully, but while the film conveys some interesting

concepts, they are still diluted from the novel. Despite the film's extreme departure from the story upon which it was based, "I, Robot" brings very few new ideas to the screen, except for those which make the film more like other Hollywood action/science fiction/detective films. Proyas' vision of a futuristic Chicago is neat, but while he includes economic inflation, hovering cars that drive themselves, and ID scanners in his futuristic world, he doesn't bother to upgrade current stereotypes or gender

Please see I, ROBOT, page 8



J. TOBIAS MONTRY
STOP BREEDING

From bad to worse

After 23 years — well, give or take — of an obsession with all things cinema, I realized the other day while browsing the video store that there was only one movie left that I hadn't seen.

One movie.

However, the movie was so god-awful, so hopelessly soulless, so incredibly Hollywood that even I, who will watch nearly anything to kill two hours, hadn't touched it. In fact the movie, a manifestation of the decay of American art, would walk the streets and eat small children if suddenly sprung to life. This is the kind of movie that I'd expect U.S. Rep. Rick Santorum — you know, the whack job who tried to talk to an AP reporter about man-on-dog sex — to recommend to his Bible study as a good example of benign tween fun.

The movie was "From Justin To Kelly," the pseudo-musical starring Justin Guarini and Kelly Clarkson of American Idol fame. Reluctantly, but with great pride in my journalistic responsibility, I thought of you, dear reader. For you, I would endure the closest thing to hell this side of Texas. And then I would spread the word that the Antichrist had indeed arrived in the form of accumulated second-rate hacks from American Idol.

After picking up the movie, the next stop was the store for, well, the alcohol. No man should be forced to succumb such a wrath without strong drink to cure his ills. My soul was prepared for the monstrosity, but was my tender nervous system? Nothing a half-rack couldn't help.

Back at home, DVD in hand, I knew I couldn't face this demon alone, so I consigned my roommate, Bob (name changed to protect him from the army of 14-year-olds who actually liked the movie), to face it with me. He was a Mick to my Rocky. I was Han, and he was Chewbacca. I was O.J., and he was Kato. I was ... well, you get the picture. Needless to say, he demanded strong drink as well.

Let me say first before I begin that Guarini has about as much stage presence as a barnyard animal. And I would warn you of spoilers, but I doubt it would really matter. In fact, here's the entire plot in four sentences: Kelly, a good Southern girl who hates those who objectify women, decides to go to Florida for spring break with her two friends, one who is an evil bitch who loves being objectified. When the evil bitch finds out Kelly likes Justin, an angst-ridden party boy who is, like, sooo misunderstood and just wants a nice girl like Kelly, who he meets and loses after evil bitch stabs Kelly in the back and tries to steal him. However, all ends well after Kelly finds out evil bitch betrayed her and swears her off as a friend but suddenly makes up with her shortly after evil bitch sets up a romantic outing for Justin and Kelly on the beach. After that, they all sing, flounce, and live happily ever after in a bleach-blond suckers paradise. Pause briefly for brain aneurysm.

First 10 minutes: The first scene places Kelly, played by Kelly Clarkson, pretty much where she belongs: In a Texas hick bar with a solitary sex-starved cowboy standing in the audience looking like he

Please see MONTRY, page 8