

Jared Gardener, right, and his daughter, Gigi, at Nehalem River Ranch.



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He said hogs that can walk around have more hemoglobin in their meat, thus providing more flavor. "It really comes back to soil health," Gardner said, noting that better soil makes better plants for animals to eat.

Other local purveyors farm for their love of the land.

Kayleigh Hillert of Moon River Farm in Nehalem said she farms because she still has "wonder for the productivity of the land and the relationship that you can have with it."

She and her partner Lily Strauss's farm provides produce for the Salmonberry Saloon, Offshore Grill & Coffeehouse, Rising Star Café and Buttercup Ice Creams & Chowders. They also have a 42-family Community Support Agriculture program where people come to their farm each week to get food they invested in that was grown on the farm.

**A moral obligation**

Business owners also see importance in the local food movement.

At the Salmonberry Saloon, owner Chantelle Hylton said the restaurant purchases food from 20 local farmers, ranchers and cheese makers.

She said that while a burger at the restaurant costs \$16, if the customers knew that the greens came from Moon River Farm and the beef came from Nehalem River Ranch, they are supporting local farmers.

Bridgewater Bistro owners Ann and Tony Kischner see it as their moral obligation to support local farmers. The restaurant buys from six local farms and has its own garden.

After living in the area for more than 30 years, Ann says the number of farms has drastically increased over the last decade, allow-



MARY BLAKE PHOTOS

**ABOVE:** Lily Strauss, left, and Kayleigh Hillert, of Moon River Farm in Nehalem. **BELOW:** Scott Thompson, of Blackberry Bog Farm.



ing businesses to not have to purchase as much food from Portland.

"You have to appreciate it's very hard work to take care of a farm," Ann said. **CW**

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