Flavors of the Hudson Valley

Day One: The Hudson Valley

Learning Objectives

- Summarize the characteristics of the Hudson Valley.
- Identify seasonal produce and specialties local to the Hudson Valley.
- Define *terroir* and its relationship to taste.
- Understand the meaning of a food system.
- Explain why local sourcing is important.
- Produce various Hudson Valley dishes using standardized recipes.

The Hudson Valley

- Valley bisected by the Hudson River in New York state
- From Albany/ Troy in the north to Yonkers in the south
- Originally inhabited by Algonquin indigenous peoples
- Colonized by Dutch, British settlers
- Includes 10 counties with a population of about 3 million

The Hudson Valley

- **1677:** Oldest grape/ winemaking areas in US
- **1700s:** Breadbasket of colonial America: wheat, hops, maple syrup, honey, vegetables, dairy, tobacco
- **1800s:** grapes, berries, apples
- **1970s:** led the farm-to-table, local food, sustainable farm movements
- **Today:** 5,500 farms, most less than 50 acres, family owned

Local Produce

Vegetables

- Corn
- Beans
- Squash
- Greens
- Shoots/ stalks
- Tubers
- Roots, pods, seeds
- Onion family

Fruit

- Apples
- Pears
- Grapes
- Stone fruit
- Melons
- Berries

Local Specialties

- Meat: rabbit, cattle
- Poultry: quail, chicken, duck
- Fish: shad, trout, bass
- Foie gras
- Cheese
- Maple syrup
- Honey

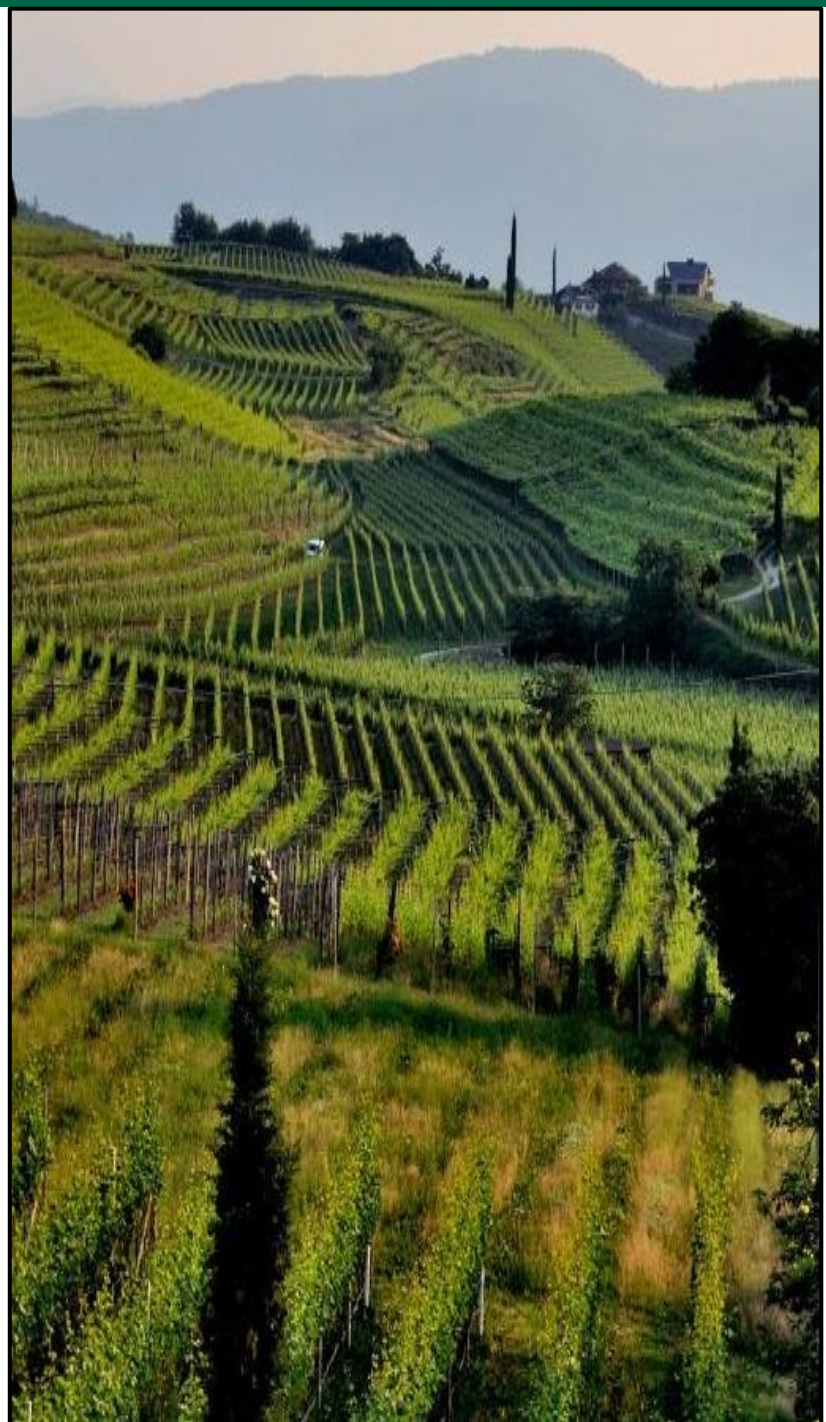
Craft Beverages

Home to over 100 wineries, breweries, cideries, and distilleries

Oldest Winery in the US: Brotherhood Winery, Washingtonville, NY

Terroir

- "Tare-wahr" French for "*sense of place*"
- Microclimates, animal feed, and soil makeup affect food grown in the region
- Influences:
  - Flavor
  - Texture
  - Color
  - Aroma



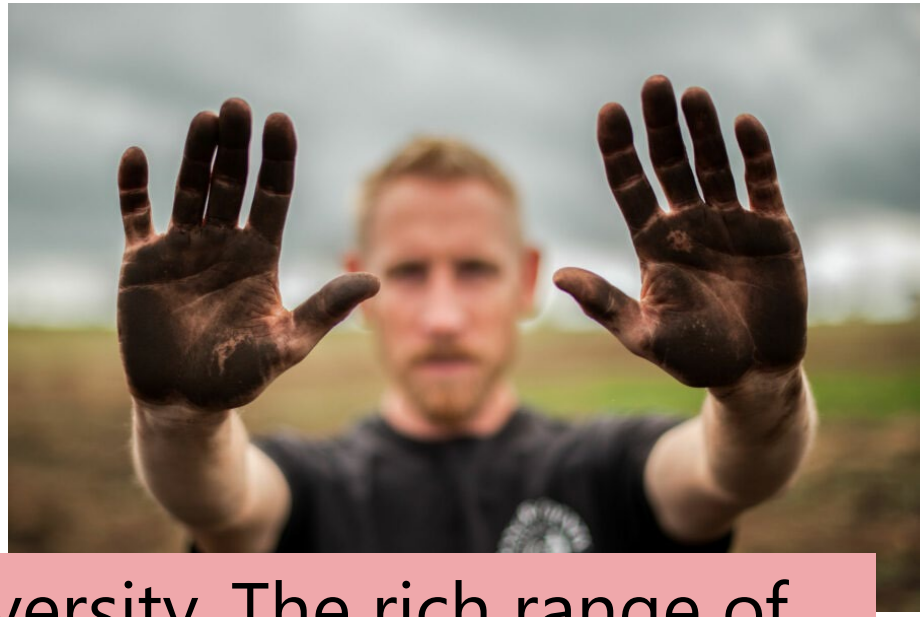
Hudson Valley Climate

- **Fall** (Sept-Oct): high of 76 - low 31
- **Winter** (Dec-Feb): high of 41 - low 18
- **Spring** (Mar-May): High of 71 - low 27
- **Summer** (Jun-Aug): High of 85 - low 47

Hudson Valley Ice Age

- 15,000 years ago: Hudson Valley was covered by a sheet of solid ice filled with boulders and sediment.
- Land below was scraped to the bedrock.
- As glacier melted, water carried the sediment away
- Created one of the most complex geological regions in the world, with wide soil diversity

Hudson Valley Soil



"We have wide soil diversity. The rich range of soil types across 10 counties contributes to the diversity in crops and livestock, which is also an enormous agricultural benefit, one which many regions don't have."

-Dave Llewellyn, Director of Farm Stewardship at Glynwood

Hudson Valley Soil

Valley lowlands: sandy, silty, loamy soils. Good for growing crops.

Highlands and slopes: covered by ablation till, the larger pieces that were left as the glacier melted. Best for grazing and pastures.

Orchard and vineyard crops: grown on very specific sites, require soil that maximizes water drainage and minimizes risk of frost damage

Black dirt: the remains of a glacial lake, is most fertile soil in the country, 30%-90% organic matter, high in nitrogen, sulfur, very absorbent

Hudson Valley Geography

The Hudson River

- River and network of creeks improves soil drainage, allowing for healthier root systems
- Moderates temp. and humidity benefiting crop growth

Hudson Highlands, Catskill Mountains

- Elevation creates climate diversity, allowing for the growth of crops suited to colder conditions
- Erosion from mountains contributes minerals to valley soils
- Contributes to steady rainfall, moderates temp.

Seasonal Produce

Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
beets, bush beans, carrots, cucumbers, kohlrabi, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard, zucchini, basil, arugula, cabbage, cilantro, lettuce, scallions, sweet corn, squash, pears, apples, raspberries, grapes	horseradish, leeks, onions, winter squash, cranberries, fennel, escarole, collard greens, shallots, pears, parsnips, apple, beans, beets	fiddleheads, scallions, spinach, lettuce, peas, radishes, asparagus, chards	broccoli, corn, kale, onions, peppers, tomatoes, honeycomb

Food Systems

- Complex networks delivering food from production to consumption
- Includes food loss, waste reduction, recovery
- 2 types:
  - **Global Industrial** (one)
  - **Local/ Regional** (many)

Global Industrial Food System

- High volume, high crop yields
- Minimized production cost
- Simplified farms specializing in specific crops
- Global distribution: 1,500-3,000 miles to consumer
- Coordinated through major agribusiness, food companies
- Goal is shareholder profit, return on investment
- Higher carbon footprint
- Environmentally harmful, unsustainable

Local/ Regional Food System

- Food travels the entire supply chain in same area
- Lower volume, yields
- Higher production costs
- Local distribution: 100- 400 miles to consumer
- Small/ medium-sized farms
- Goal is the economic health of community
- Environmentally sustainable

Local vs. Regional

- "Local" = food produced near consumer
- The ability to eat "locally" depends on the production capacity of region
- Arid/ colder regions with fewer food resources define "local" in a more regional context

Direct to Consumer Resources

- Farmer's markets
- Pick-your-own farms, roadside farmstands
- **Community Supported Agriculture** (CSA)**:** Subscribers buy shares, receive food each week during growing season
- **Gleaning Programs:** Public invited to pick crops left in fields after harvest

Benefits of Eating Local

- Sustainability
- Food safety, health and nutrition
- Fresher, more nutritious ingredients
- Food security
- Support local economies
- Protect local farms, farmland

Culinary Institute
of America

Any Questions?