

## YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS FARM-TO-TABLE

May 17, 2023

### Sharing Our Knowledge of the Farm-to-Table Industry

Spring has brought a new season of fresh produce and farmers markets. With more farm-to-table options at the ready this time of year, you might be wondering what the industry's lingo really means, and how to take part in making more sustainable food choices.

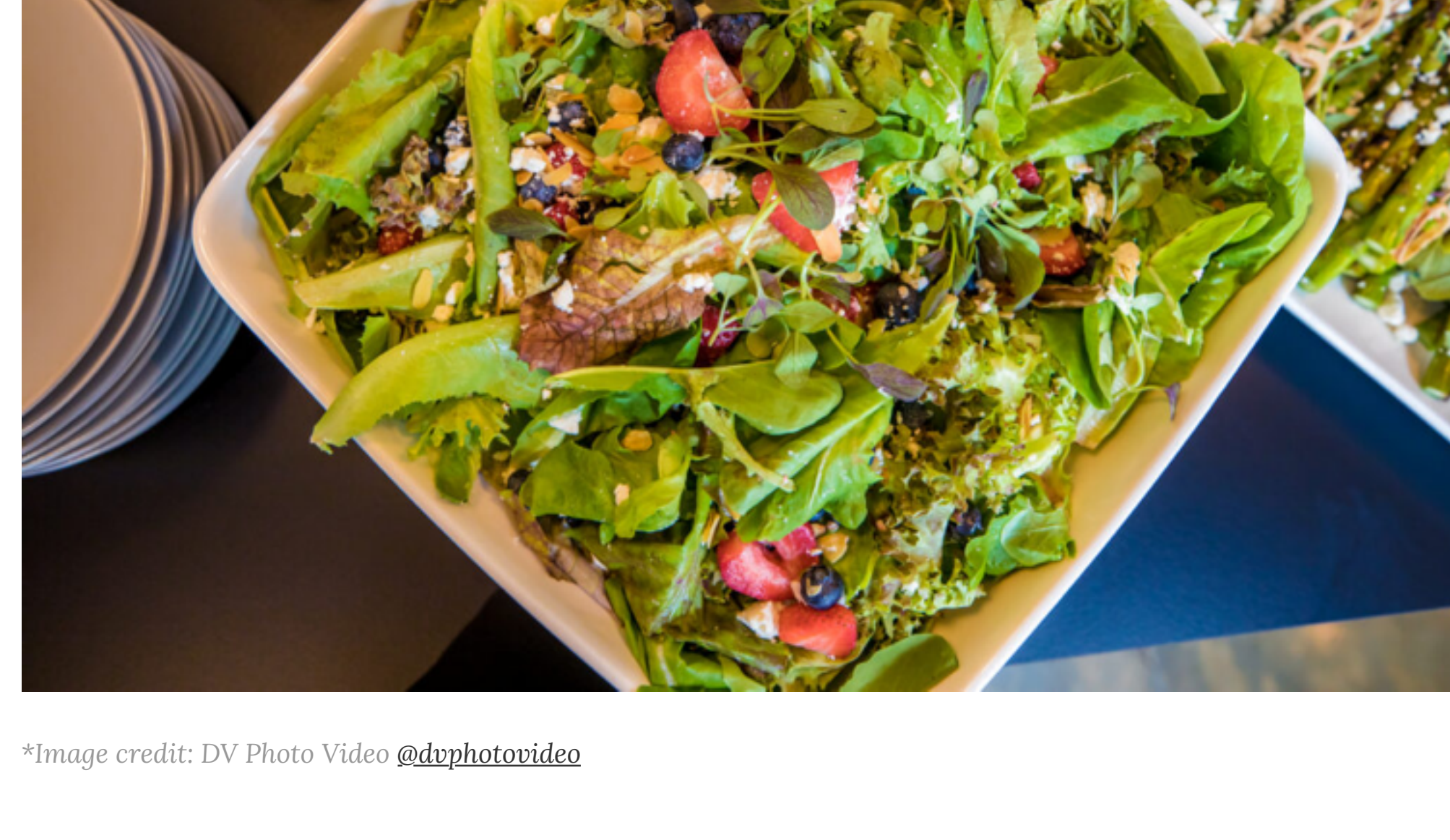
With over 30 years of service in the sustainable farm-to-table industry, we've got you covered! In this post, you'll find a glossary of farm-to-table terms, what to expect and ask for when working with a farm-to-table caterer, resources to keep learning, and more!

Featured image (above) by Greg Mooney Photography Studio @atphoto1

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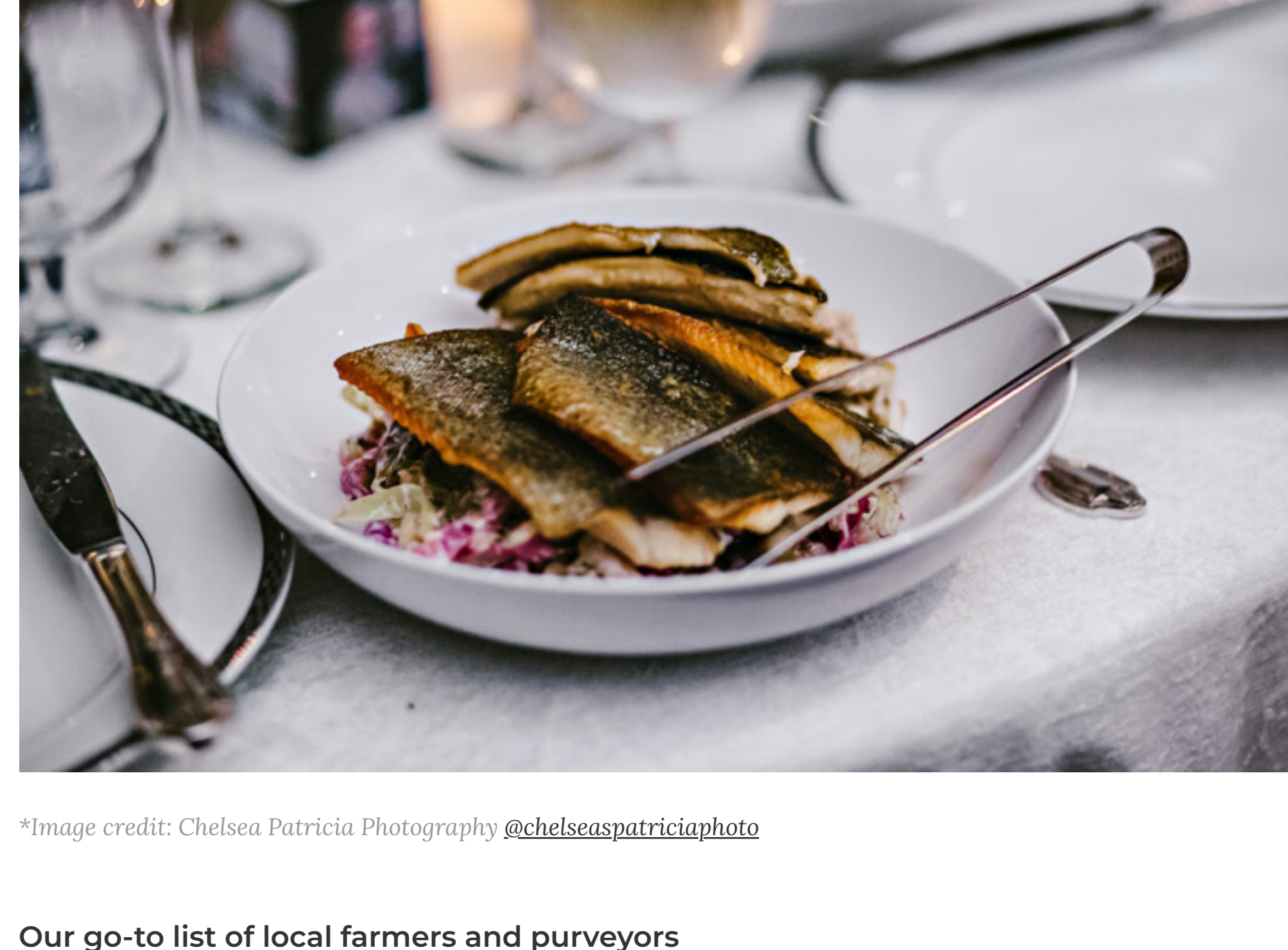
### Common Farm-to-Table Industry Terms



\*Image credit: DV Photo Video @dphotovideo

1. **Farm-to-table:** the process of sourcing ingredients straight from local farms rather than distribution companies. The farm-to-table process aims to serve food directly from its source throughout the entire food cycle, from pick up to preparation.
2. **Local food:** a reference to the distance between where food items were grown or produced in relation to where they are being sold for consumption. Distance can vary depending on the source, so always feel free to ask when purchasing locally sourced items.
3. **Locavore:** a term referring to a person who aims to eat food within a local radius of where they live. Just as an omnivore eats plants and meat, locavore refers to one who eats food local to them.
4. **Organic:** a type of agricultural approach that omits the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or other artificial agents.
5. **Sustainably-grown:** a growing technique that does not deplete the natural resources of the area.
6. **CSA:** standing for Community Supported Agriculture, this term refers to a partnership between farmers and consumers in which consumers pay upfront for regular shares of a farm's produce or other agricultural products. In return, farmers receive up-front economic support to pay for products and equipment needs.
7. **CSF:** standing for Community Supported Fishery, this term is very similar to a CSA. Customers pay local fisheries up-front for direct catch of fish or other seafood products. Products available from both CSAs and CSFs range, dependent upon what items are harvestable at the time of pick-up.
8. **Slow Food:** an homage to sustaining the opposite of "fast food." Slow Food has become a world-wide movement to preserve local food traditions and the biodiversity of food.
9. **Heritage/Heirloom:** a term referring to fruits, vegetables, and meats that have not become commercialized crops. Heritage and heirloom foods, such as tomatoes or pork, are lineages of stock that have been preserved by generations of farmers.

### Resources To Be Part of The Farm-to-Table Movement



\*Image credit: Chelsea Patricia Photography @chelseaspatriaphoto

#### Our go-to list of local farmers and purveyors

- **Woodland Garden Farms** – USDA Certified Organic farm growing over 50 different types of fruits and vegetables annually, located in Winterville, GA.
- **Cafe Campesino** – Georgia's first and only 100% fair trade, organic specialty coffee company, located in Americus, GA.
- **Sweet Grass Dairy** – Handcrafted, high-quality cheese products, located in Thomasville, GA.
- **Springer Mountain Chicken** – American Humane Certified chicken farm, located in Baldwin, GA.
- **Riverview Farms** – Raises heritage breed pork and grassfed beef, along with certified organic row crops and heirloom corn, located in Ranger, GA.
- **Ellijay Mushrooms** – Sustainable mushroom farm cultivating gourmet shiitake & oyster mushrooms, located in Ellijay, GA.
- **Anson Mills** – Produces mill grains from organic heirloom grains, located in Columbia, SC.

#### Use technology to make sustainable food choices

- **Happy Cow** – Use this phone app to find restaurants near you serving vegan and vegetarian options.
- **How Good** – Make more informed choices at the grocery store with this phone app ranking product sustainability.
- **Good Guide** – Utilize this tech tool that rates products on safety, health, and ethics.
- **EWG Food Scores** – Tap into this nutrition database of over 80,000 items to support you in making healthier food choices.
- **Seafood Watch** – Learn which types of fish are sustainable and how to purchase seafood with the least amount of environmental impact.
- **ShareWaste** – This app connects you with composting neighbors in your area to help reduce food waste in landfills.

### What To Expect When Working With A Farm-to-Table Caterer



\*Image credit: Chelsea Patricia Photography @chelseaspatriaphoto

1. **Fresh ingredients sourced in real time**  
Farm-to-table caterers source as many ingredients as possible from local vendors. That means you can expect freshness in every bite! From the first course to the last, farm-to-table caterers pride our menus on the best ingredients we can purchase close to your event day.
2. **Local food from your area**  
You can expect to support your local food movement when working with a farm-to-table caterer. By doing so, you'll also enjoy many of the health benefits of eating locally. A few benefits include eating nutrient-dense foods, less chemically altered produce, and enjoying food at its most flavorful time, due to shorter supply chains! By eating locally, you and your guests can dine on the best flavors your region has to offer!
3. **Seasonal menus**  
Menus change seasonally, or more frequently, to incorporate crops ready at that time. Menus are often a direct reflection of the products being grown during a certain season. Enjoy a variety of ever-changing menus with farm-to-table caterers to enjoy classic favorites and new tastes. You may even find yourself enjoying ingredients you've never eaten before!
4. **Positive environmental impact**  
Farm-to-table caterers tend to value sustainability-minded processes and products. Not only can you expect eco-friendly food choices, but also ask your caterer about sustainable tableware, decor, transportation, and composting options. In support of the slow food movement, farm-to-table caterers typically want to make as little negative impact on the environment as possible to sustain natural resources!

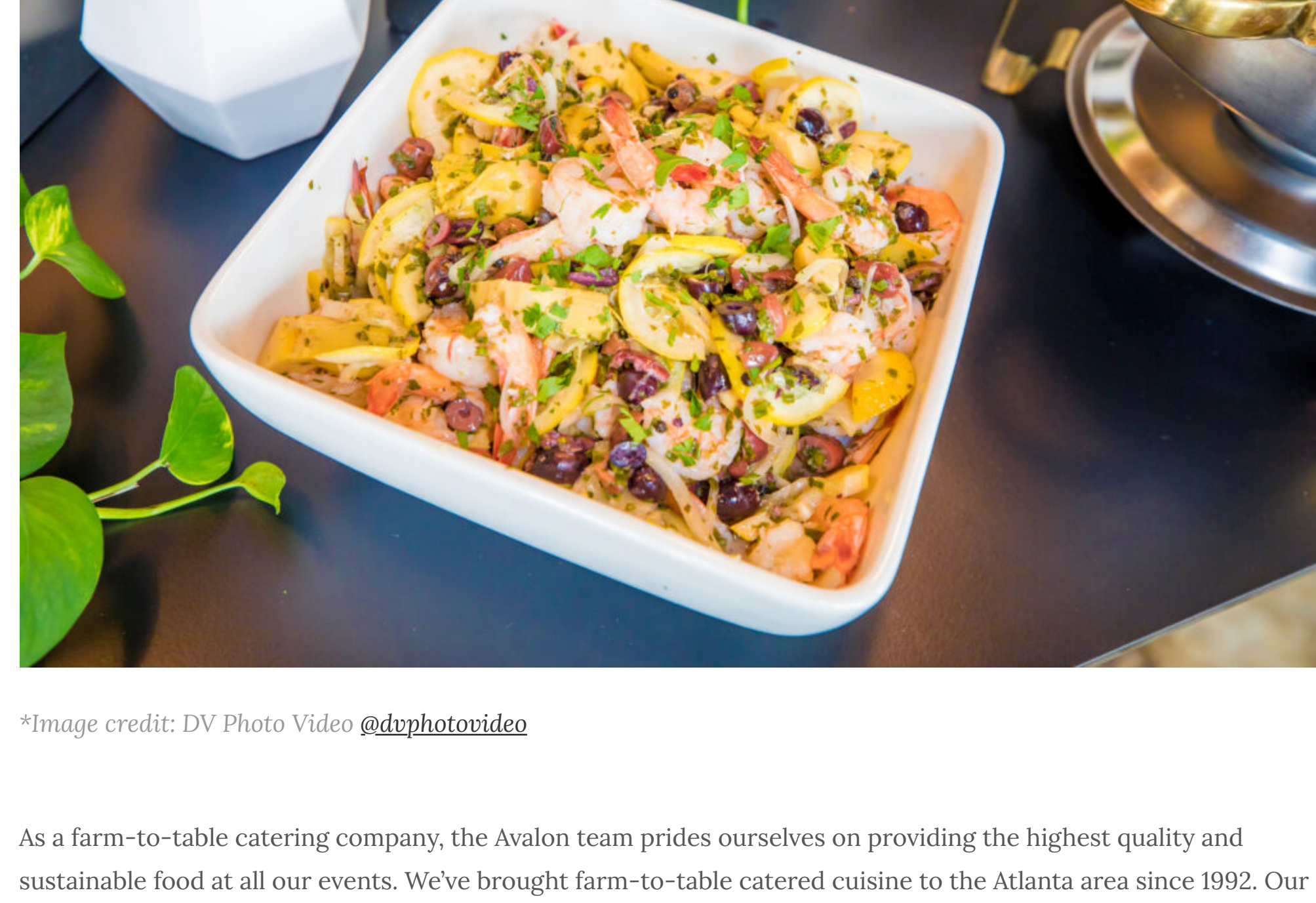
### Questions To Ask When Working With A Farm-to-Table Caterer



\*Image credit: Chelsea Patricia Photography @chelseaspatriaphoto

1. **What partnerships with local farmers and purveyors do you have?**  
Farm-to-table caterers have go-to local farmers and purveyors they frequently work with to source menu ingredients. Ask your caterer which local businesses they work with to know where your food will be coming from. Plus, knowing the source of your plate's ingredients is fun information to share with your event guests!
2. **What sustainable catering options do you offer?**  
Be sure to ask your farm-to-table caterer what environmentally sustainable options they provide. This can include ingredient options to tableware, and more! Make your event as sustainable as possible by working with your caterer to determine the best options for your event needs. Plus, your caterer can share local businesses to assist the event with composting, recycling, and more.
3. **What kind of menu can I expect during my event's month?**  
With farm-to-table catering menus changing seasonally, be encouraged to ask your caterer what ingredients you can expect during certain times of the year. Caterers will be able to share what is seasonally grown and accessible. As you build a menu with your farm-to-table caterer, don't hesitate to ask what you should expect, no matter how far in advance your planning starts!

### Avalon's Farm-to-Table Standard



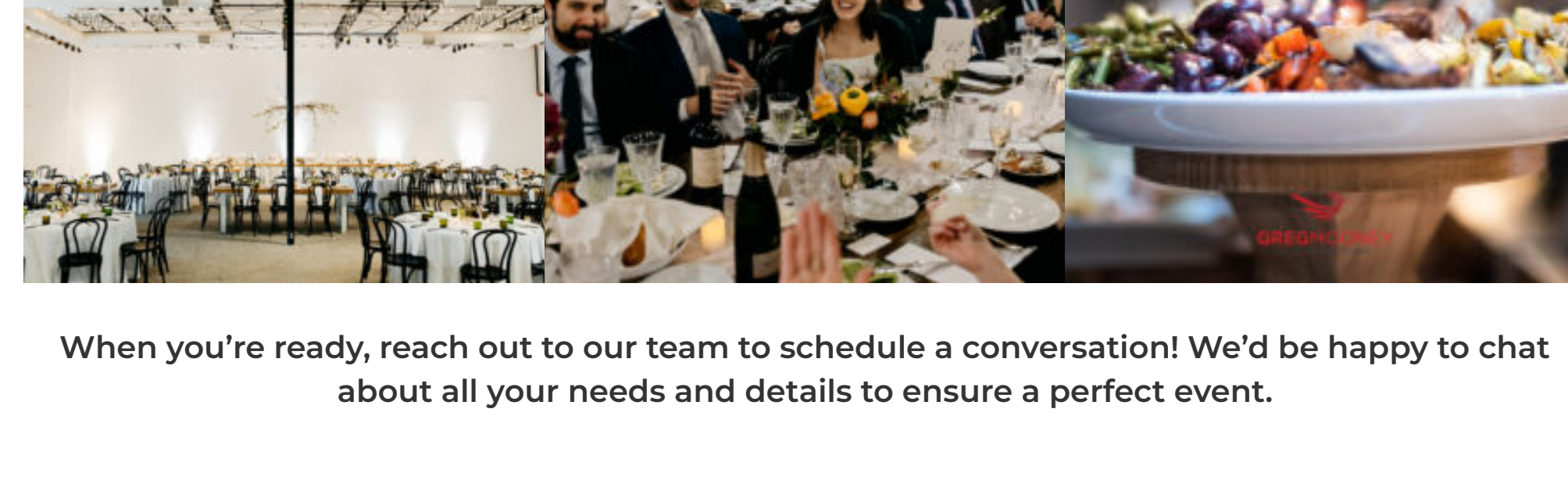
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As a farm-to-table catering company, the Avalon team prides ourselves on providing the highest quality and sustainable food at all our events. We've brought farm-to-table catered cuisine to the Atlanta area since 1992. Our relationships with farmers and purveyors throughout the Southeast provide us with the freshest ingredients available for creating innovative, personalized menus year-round.

We believe farm-to-table is the best way to eat, and we want to create access to the incredible tastes of fresh food for all our clients. Whether it's a breakfast buffet, wedding, corporate event, or private party, we promise to bring the best of farm-to-table experiences to you and your guests!

#### We are here to help!

Check out Avalon's full list of blogs to learn more from our farm-to-table catering team about the industry and event tips.



When you're ready, reach out to our team to schedule a conversation! We'd be happy to chat about all your needs and details to ensure a perfect event.

REACH OUT

