

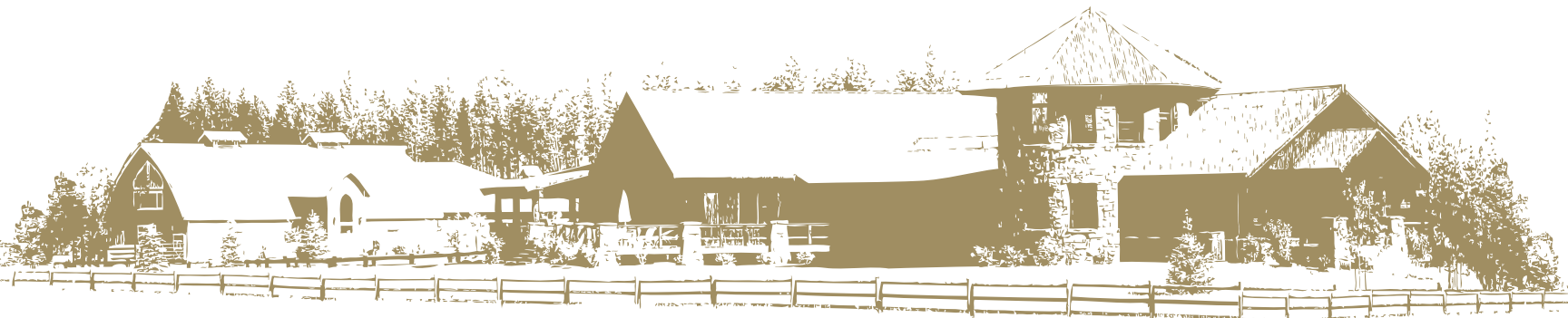
PAWS UP'S FOOD AND BEVERAGE SOURCING PRACTICES

by *Paws Up Executive Chef Ben Jones*



For years, The Resort has built close relationships with area ranchers, farmers, distillers, vintners and makers of specialty oils. Many times at farmers markets, I meet our standby growers and ranchers and introduce myself to new people. While I shop for our tomatoes, herbs, squashes, grass-fed beef, craft charcuterie and heirloom beans, my mind wanders into a space of complete wonderment. I want to give our guests that same wonderment when they eat our food. Our commitment to local growers is so much more than just a mission. It feels more like a duty. This duty is also to our guests, family and friends to serve the best possible food we can with the available resources. The Resort at Paws Up proudly supports local growers and ranchers. Here are a few of them, with notes on each purveyor:

- **Bitterroot Organics:** Mike D. is the tomato god. His tomatoes are the most amazing things on this planet! He is one of the only farmers around that grows fresh laurel.
- **Blue Willow Farm:** I have known Kevin at Blue Willow for 12 years. His microgreens and petite lettuces are beyond compare. His corn shoots are out of this world!
- **Cool Spring Hutterite Colony:** I have been buying produce, bacon, chicken, sausage, flowers, breads and pickles from Jake for four years! What a great thing they have going on at the colony! Very family-focused and quality-driven.
- **Deluge Farms:** Victoria is as passionate about her farm as I am about our food. She is one of a handful of farmers who brought back once-extinct beans, a yellow kidney-style bean with very similar texture and flavor.
- **Iverson Ranch:** Denny and Justin Iverson have been ranchers in the Blackfoot Valley for more than 50 years! Justin grows all of his winter feed and sells locally. The ranch has been focused on better ways to graze cattle across generations.
- **Paradise Gardens:** Angelique grows some of the most unique chilies, eggplant and heirloom tomatoes I have ever seen! She practices permaculture, which is the ultimate in sustainable farming.
- **County Rail Farm, Dixon Melons, Fat Robin Orchard and Farm, Harlequin Produce, Heritage Farms, Johnson Family Farms, Lisa's Eggs and Redneck Sausage** are also among our go-to folks! Every Saturday morning I buy as much as I can to offer the best to our guests!



STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND AT THE RESORT AT PAWS UP

by Paws Up Co-Ranch Manager Leigh Kelley



Paws Up participates in and supports a variety of conservation and land stewardship efforts. For example, the famous Blackfoot River has a substantial impact on the Blackfoot Valley. It affects how we grow food, how businesses survive and how animals move across the landscape and provides a place for a multitude of native fish species to thrive. Paws Up's drought management plan conserves 3,000 gallons of water per minute during low flows. As part of the plan, Paws Up carefully selects early maturing crops for underneath our irrigation pivots. This allows us to irrigate when flows are ample and to limit irrigation during the summer.

Elk Creek also meanders through our property. The creek provides vital spawning grounds for native fish. Elk Creek is also a prime corridor of connectivity that helps wildlife link up and move to other parts of the Blackfoot Valley. The corridor helps maintain genetic diversity and range health for wildlife in the valley, which includes black bears, mountain lions, occasional grizzly bears and daily sightings of white-tailed deer and elk. Paws Up participates in habitat improvement around Elk Creek for good soil health, ample residual forage and clean water for domestic livestock and wildlife use.

The Black Angus cows that roam our acreage are indeed easy on the eyes. However, their purpose is so much greater. They are a moving herd of organic fertilizer, they suppress fire danger and they keep grasses palatable for wildlife. The cows do all of this while providing clean, lean and delicious protein. Paws Up cows are managed under a program that promotes grass diversity and sustainability, because at Paws Up, our biggest asset is the grass we grow. Without this high-quality forage, we would have no way to provide food for the animals here.

An interesting but obscure fact about the Blackfoot Valley is that all 200 animals and birds identified here by Lewis & Clark are still on the landscape today. The farmers, ranchers, conservationists and loggers who call the valley home have worked side-by-side to protect the land, and we are proud to be a part of this effort.

PAWS UP CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP EFFORTS

- Strategically plant low-water-demand farm crops to conserve water.
- Conserve 3,000 gallons per minute of river water daily during drought restrictions.
- Work closely with the Blackfoot Challenge, the Nature Conservancy and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to manage our lands.
- Support local youth through 4H and FFA livestock auctions.
- Support the nonprofit Wild Skies Raptor Center for better bird habitats and raptor rehabilitation.
- Allow public access at designated Blackfoot River sites.
- Encourage healthy deer and elk populations with managed hunting for youth and disabled hunters.
- Participate in a program with Hellgate High School to decrease twine found in osprey nests.
- Encourage local youth horseback activities by allowing no-fee use of our arena for 4H clubs.
- Utilize our bovine herd to improve soil health and to distribute organic fertilizer.
- Implement cell-grazing programs for all livestock for healthy grass management.
- Participate in the Montana Tree Farm System to keep our forests healthy.
- Use biological controls for weed management.
- Practice catch-and-release-only fishing.
- Encourage outdoor youth education by hosting annual field days.
- 1,800 tons of hay produced annually.

