



**Piedmont Culinary Guild founder and executive director Kris Reid, left, spoke recently to Belmont Rotarians about the importance of protecting farmland and eating healthy, locally produced food. With her is the program host Rotarian Ryan Murphy, director of sustainability at Heirloom Restaurant and Honeycomb Café, and founder of the Belmont Farmers Market.**

PROVIDED BY TED HALL

## Meet these champions of local-sourced food, farmers

**Ted Hall**

Special to The Gazette

Kris Reid, admittedly, is a bit of a local-food fanatic, devoting most of her time to fighting to preserve farmland and educating people about the importance of eating locally grown food.

When she blesses the food at her table, she gives thanks for the farmers who grew it.

As founder and executive director of the Piedmont Culinary Guild, Reid spoke to the Belmont Rotary Club recently about protecting food security by supporting local growers.

One way she does that is by encouraging local farmers markets. Reid has worked for more than a year to help establish the Belmont Farmers Market along with Rotarian Ryan Murphy, director of sustainability at Heirloom Restaurant and Honeycomb Café in Belmont. (The Belmont Farmers Market is open every other Thursday, 3:30 until 7 p.m., in Stowe Park.)

On a positive note, farmer's markets in the United States grew by 200% during the COVID pandemic, she said. But North Carolina has the second worst record in the nation, ahead only of Texas, in farm land lost to development.

"We must create a mindset of value around food," Reid said. "And we each must be the voice to help shift the mindset."

She urged Rotarians to ask ques-

tions when they shop for food.

"Ask stores where they source their food," she said. "What's missing in grocery stores is variety. Most stores are chasing profitability and efficiency and that results in a loss of food quality and variety."

Reid lamented that if we don't protect the important resource of local farms by patronizing them, outside interests, both foreign and domestic, will force them out.

**Farm To Fork Picnic:** Reid announced the annual "Farm To Fork Picnic" coming on Oct. 1, 4-7 p.m., at Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden. Chefs, and farmers will be paired and present about 30 tasting stations where participants can enjoy a wide variety of locally grown and prepared food. Tickets and sponsor opportunities are available, she said. Details here: <https://piedmontculinaryguild.com/f2f/>

For more information on the Piedmont Culinary Guild, go to [piedmontculinaryguild.com](https://piedmontculinaryguild.com).

Belmont Rotary Club, which will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2025, meets for lunch and a program on local topics each Wednesday, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church in Belmont.

Guests interested in learning more about local businesses and issues and how Rotary serves the community are welcome. For more information, go to [belmontrotaryclub.com](https://belmontrotaryclub.com).