

# Oral Histories of Tompkins County

## *Archival Finding Aid*

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### **2021 - Food and Foodways in Tompkins County - Oral History Project**

The ‘*Food and Foodways in Tompkins County*’ project was part of a three year collaboration between The History Center in Tompkins County and the Public History Initiative (PHI) at Cornell University resulting in the ‘Tompkins County Oral History Undergraduate Fellowship’ funded by a Engaged Cornell grant.

The Fall 2021 PHI project chose the theme “Food and Foodways.” Eleven interview participants include restaurant owners, farm workers, and community organizers. Topics include food as a form of family-and community-building, commerce, labor, and mutual aid. In alignment with the Public History Initiative’s commitment to antiracist practice and pedagogy, there was special attention focused on preserving local stories from communities of color and immigrants.

Interviews were conducted over Zoom and other virtual conferencing software due to social distancing mandates. Interviews were conducted by the undergraduate fellowship students between October 2021-December 2021.

The project was supervised by Professor Stephen Vider, Assistant Professor of History, and Director of the Public History Initiative at Cornell University. From summer 2019 to summer 2020, Julia Taylor (Youth Education Director at The History Center in Tompkins County) was the staff contact and coordinator from The History Center; from summer 2020 to 2022 The History Center staff lead on the project was Benjamin Sandberg (Executive Director at The History Center in Tompkins County).

#### ***Interviews with:***

##### **Peggy Aker (*Macro Mama’s*) - Interviewer: Katherine Esterl (63 minutes)**

Peggy Aker, founder of Macro Mamas, discusses the creation of Macro Mamas at the Ithaca Farmers Market ca. 1992, the role of macrobiotics, and working with local farmers.

*Trigger Warnings: illness, parental death*

- Recorded: 12/8/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-12-8\_Aker-Peggy (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-12-8\_Aker-Peggy\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

##### **David Hirsch (*Moosewood*) - Interviewer: Abraham Moss (65 minutes)**

David Hirsch discusses the history of Moosewood, touching on themes related to the restaurant industry, cookbooks, the role of Moosewood in Tompkins county and global politics, food sourcing, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Trigger Warnings:*

- Recorded: 11/10/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-10-29\_Hirsch-David (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-10-29\_Hirsch-David\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Natalie Hughes (*Groundswell*) - Interviewer: Pilar Nieves (56 minutes)**

Natalie Hughes, Interim Executive Director of Groundswell, discusses the nonprofit which seeks to aid underprivileged populations start their own farm through incubator farms, networking, and a new Farmer Training Program.

*Trigger Warnings: systemic racism*

- Recorded: 11/19/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-11-19\_Hughes-Natalie (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-11-19\_Hughes-Natalie\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Christa Núñez (*The Learning Farm*) - Interviewer: Bianca Garcia (62 minutes)**

Christa Núñez, co-founder of The Learning Farm, discusses finding personal connection to ancestry through growing food and helping families of Tompkins County develop their own connection to the land through the Learning Farm. Núñez also reflects on food systems, food insecurity, and future aspirations.

*Trigger Warnings: recount of anti-Black racism*

- Recorded: 11/5/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-11-5\_Núñez-Christa (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-11-5\_Núñez-Christa\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Justin Paterson (*Hazelnut Kitchen*) - Interviewer: Katherine Esterl (50 minutes)**

Justin Paterson, former owner and chef of Hazelnut Kitchen (from 2012 until 2022), discusses growing up in nearby Oswego, the restaurant's commitment to locally sourced ingredients, and close relationships with farmers and community members.

*Trigger Warnings:*

- Recorded: 11/15/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-11-15\_Paterson-Justin (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-11-15\_Paterson-Justin\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Adam Potenza (*Ithaca Soy*) - Interviewer: Alejandra R. Gonzalez (46 minutes)**

Adam Potenza, owner of Ithaca Soy, discusses growing up on the family farm, a lifelong connection and passion for supporting and producing local food, and leading Ithaca Soy into the future as the new owner.

*Trigger Warnings:*

- Recorded: 11/24/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-11-24\_Potenza-Adam (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-11-24\_Potenza-Adam\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Juliana Quaresma (*Groundswell*) - Interviewer: Pilar Nieves (48 minutes)**

Juliana Quaresma reflects on the duties of Incubator Farm Manager for Groundswell, developing connections with the farmers within the organization, and living on one of the farms with her flock of sheep.

*Trigger Warnings:*

- Recorded: 12/15/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-12-15\_Quaresma-Juliana (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-12-15\_Quaresma-Juliana\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Wendy Rizzo (*Blue Oyster Cultivation*) - Interviewer: Isaac Salazar (43 minutes)**

Wendy Rizzo, co-owner of Blue Oyster Cultivation, talks about cultivating mushrooms, relationships developed through the Ithaca's Farmers Market, various mushroom recipes, and the new business, Mushroom Spirits Distillery.  
*Trigger Warnings:*

- Recorded: 12/2/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-12-2\_Rizzo-Wendy (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-12-2\_Rizzo-Wendy\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Hiroko Takashima (*Mama Said Hand Pies*) - Interviewer: Alejandra R. Gonzalez (68 minutes)**

Hiroko Takashima, co-owner of Mama Said Hand Pies, discusses growing up Asain American in Ithaca, the values and goals behind Mama Said Hand Pies, its humble beginnings and challenges, and the relationships both with local farmers and hand pie loving customers.

*Trigger Warnings:*

- Recorded: 11/29/2021
- Audio File: OHTC\_2021-11-29\_Takashima-Hiroko (MP4 & WAV)
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-11-29\_Takashima-Hiroko\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

**Sarah van Orden Morrow (*Crosswinds Farm & Creamery*) - Interviewer: Abraham Moss (58 minutes)**

Sarah van Orden Morrow, co-owner of Crosswinds Farm & Creamery, discusses being an 11th generation farmer, the challenges of farming, building relationships with consumers, and the importance of purchasing local produce and ensuring local farms live on.

*Trigger Warnings:*

- Recorded: 11/11/2021
- Audio File: \*\*Audio files unable to be re-labeled\*\*
  - MP4: Cornell\_Oral\_History\_Interview\_with\_Sarah\_van\_Orden\_Morrow\_2021-11-11\_19-06-23
  - WAV: OHTC\_2021-11-11\_van Orden-Morro
- Transcript File: OHTC\_2021-11-11\_van Orden-Morrow-Sarah\_Transcript (DocX & PDF)

*CITATION FOR THE COLLECTION*

“Food and Foodways in Tompkins County” Oral History Project, eleven oral histories recorded between October 2021-December 2021 by the Public History Initiative Oral History Fellowship at Cornell University, The History Center in Tompkins County. Oral Histories of Tompkins County Audio Archives, Ithaca, NY, 2021.

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*This project was a collaboration of the Public History Initiative Oral History Fellowship at Cornell University and The History Center in Tompkins County..*



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