

Coast to Coast

Jewish group offers locally grown organic produce

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Torat HaTeva, an organization dedicated to promoting ecological awareness, has teamed up with Everdale Farm, in Hillsburgh, west of Toronto, to provide the Jewish community with locally and organically grown fruit and vegetables.

Ahuva Goldshmidt, Torat HaTeva's executive director, said the initiative is first of its kind for a Canadian Jewish community.

Consumers can buy a "vegetable share," ranging in price from \$14 to \$48 a box, depending on size. They can pick and choose the vegetables they want, and the box

size can be upgraded or downgraded as needed throughout the 20-week season, which begins in early June.

People interested in a "fruit share" must be part of the vegetable program, and they can expect to receive from four to seven types of fruit each week. In order to keep fruit prices low, there is no picking and choosing, Goldshmidt said.

All orders can be picked up Thursdays at the First Narayev-er Congregation, 187 Brunswick Ave., just north of Harbord Street.

Goldshmidt said that because the farmers come to the lepot, consumers can meet the people who harvest their food.

Buying local and organic food, said Goldshmidt, "makes us not just good people, but good Jews. In Genesis, humans are commanded to serve and protect our earth. By committing to local, organic produce with all its health, environmental and social justice advantages, we are helping to fulfil our divinely given role as stewards of the earth."

She said that by committing to purchase an entire season of produce, consumers are "putting their fate with the fate of the farm. They are sharing their burden."

Goldshmidt added that Torat HaTeva has received \$10,000 in grants from Evergreen, an organization whose mission is to bring communities and nature together, and the Shell Environmental fund to create its own organic garden next spring at the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan.

"Our mission is to create a strong connection to the idea of sustainability in the Jewish community."

For information or to order, visit Torat HaTeva website, www.torathateva.org.

**Consumers
can buy a
'vegetable
share'**