

Old Bakery Beer Company operating garden plot at La Vista

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
July 13 2017 1:04 PM





ALTON - Old Bakery Beer Company is managing one of the plots at the LaVista Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm in order to provide fresh, healthy produce for their customers.

Rory Morse, a bartender and original staff member at Old Bakery Beer Company operates the plot. He said he began gardening with his grandfather, Allen Morse, with whom he lived and shared the work on a large garden plot. Rory Morse also has worked at LaVista CSA in the past under Eric and Crystal Stevens, alongside Phil Beille, who is now the head farmer at the sustainable agriculture farm. Currently, he operates the plot for Old Bakery Beer Company, which uses some of the produce in its dishes.

Currently, Rory Morse said the garden contains a variety of root vegetables, including beets, carrots and various onions. It also grows green beans, three types of tomatoes, cucumbers, sweet potatoes, both bell and jalapeno peppers and features an herb garden crafted from whiskey and wine barrels once used to age beer.

"One hundred percent of the produce that we harvest gets used in our kitchen," Rory Morse said via Facebook Messenger. "We have a 'farm pickle plate' that features various pickled veggies from our garden. We also serve a vegetable of the day, which we always look toward our garden first for options.

"This year was sort of a test run to see if it would be practical for us to start growing as much of our produce as we can. I've gardened for a long time, but there has been a lot of new things to learn trying to supply food every week for the kitchen. We're looking to get our model down by next year, and supply our customers with homegrown, organic delicious vegetables during the growing season."

The reception has been "amazing," Rory Morse said. He described people coming to the restaurant and brewery as "excited" when they hear what Old Bakery Beer Company is doing.

Owners James and Lauren Rogalsky are extremely supportive of it as well, Rory Morse said.

"We share a passion of providing healthy local food," Rory Morse said of the Rogalskies. "We're fortunate enough to be able to share that with customers at the brewery. They come out multiple times a week to help maintain the weeds and keep things looking great. We also have a weekly meeting at the farm to discuss tasks and expectations."