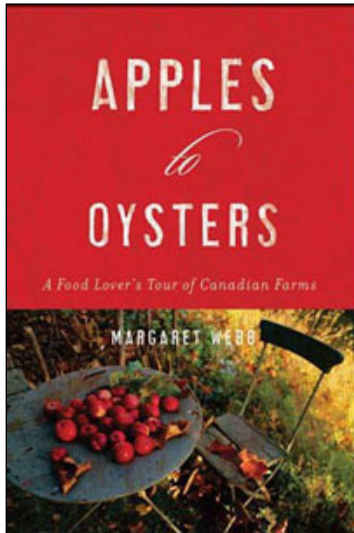




Book Review-Apples to Oysters by Margaret Webb



Review by Meghan Mast

It all started because she ate a carrot. Not a cardboard-like grocery store carrot, but a vibrant, pulsing carrot straight from the ground and into her mouth. Margaret Webb had sunk her teeth into pure earthly goodness and felt compelled to find out more about what makes food from the farm so darn good.

“Apples to Oysters” chronicles Webb’s expedition across Canada in pursuit of all things delicious. She journeys through wine fields and oyster farms, into pig pens and apple trees and onto a fishing boat on the Atlantic Ocean.

Although the topic is farming, an unusual abundance of sensuality runs through the narrative. Webb remains relevant and certainly hilarious as she observes the artificial insemination of pigs, contemplates the sex lives of apples and is baffled by the orgies of oysters.

Having grown up on a farm herself, Webb is able to relate to the trials and triumphs of the farmers in a way that provides a unique perspective and ultimately contributes to the warmth of her writing. Her memories of growing up on a farm reveal an abundance of fresh produce from the family garden, speckled trout from the pond and the choicest cow from the feedlot.

Webb also recounts the darker side to owning a farm—how her family’s first farm was sold to developers when she was a child, and how later on in life her father developed dementia. While the cause of her father’s deterioration is unknown, Webb hints that his health may have been influenced by the caustic chemicals he used while farming.

“Apples to Oysters” offers an intimate glimpse of the personal lives of farmers that reminds us the food we eat is brought to us by very real people. It is a powerful reminder that each time we purchase we are impacting the life of another.

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