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MEDIA CONTACT:

Kristin Kenney Williams

Commfluent Inc.

kristin@commfluent.com

970-390-0062

Knapp Ranch, Second Nature Gourmet come together to offer the best locally-sourced, gourmet foods

- *Knapp Harvest in Eagle, Colorado offers both Second Nature and Osage Gardens products*

EDWARDS, Colo. – August 3, 2022 – Earlier this month, Knapp Ranch, located in the greater upper West Lake Creek valley of Edwards, Colo., acquired Second Nature Gourmet, a perfect and natural alignment of values and commitment to quality standards, the respective proprietors say.

Chef Marla Leblow launched Second Nature Gourmet in the Vail Valley in 2016, a premier scratch-prepared catering company focusing on ingredient quality and using the best locally- and responsibly-sourced products. Leblow says she would not have sold Second Nature to anyone but the Knapp family and Knapp Ranch.

“Knapp Ranch has created a huge opportunity for me to share my love for innovative cuisine with many more locals and guests who are visiting our mountain region,” Leblow says. “It is so reassuring and nice to know that I have a family business supporting me.”

Second Nature operations will remain unchanged under Knapp Ranch ownership. Leblow will continue to cater events and deliver gourmet foods to customers’ doorsteps. She will also continue her Fly Away Gourmet division, a catering service that provides customized, in-flight dining.

Twenty-five years in the making, Knapp Ranch (- <https://knapp ranch.com/second-nature-gourmet>) is now a thriving working farm using sustainable practices; it is an exemplar for land management and water conservation, an inspiration for architectural design and traditional craftsmanship, a contributor to climate science studies, a lab for horticultural experimentation, a United States Forest Service partner, an educational center for environmental studies of all kinds as it continues to evolve.

Brian Knapp, Knapp Ranch’s CFO, recently relocated to Colorado to work alongside his father, Bud, who founded the working and high-altitude farm that practices sustainable farming and carries out water conservation and climate change research at 9,000 feet.

“Marla and her business are a natural fit for Knapp Ranch because of our mutual commitment to delivering high standards of quality foods,” Brian Knapp says. “When we started selling

Marla's premade meals at our Eagle store, they quickly became our biggest sellers. The ingredients Marla uses are organic and local – simple ingredients prepared with love.”

What is Marla's biggest seller at Knapp Harvest in Eagle? Her chicken pot pies. And then there are her salads, soups and casseroles.

Leblow hails from St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands. While still a child, her family relocated to western North Carolina and her passion for mountain living began. After attending Appalachian State University, where she studied photography, she pivoted professionally towards a culinary career.

Leblow attended culinary school at Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College in Asheville, N.C. with a focus on general savory foods. During her time in Asheville, she competed in culinary individual and team events raising her national profile. Leblow honed her skills in sous chef positions and ultimately landed in Seattle in 2010, where she began working for tech giant, Google, as an executive sous chef under the James Beard award-winning chef, Jason Wilson. In Washington, Leblow developed a passion equal to her love of the mountains: sustainable local foods.

In 2012, she relocated to the Vail Valley after being recruited as a personal chef. Here she began developing relationships with local farmers and specializing in foods that are gluten-free, clean and healthy.

The sale of organic-certified Osage Gardens to Knapp Ranch in 2020 also saw no significant operational shifts of the 20-acre Osage Gardens located in New Castle, Colo., but rather greater distribution of its culinary herbs and vegetables. Leblow says she has long been using Osage herbs and Knapp Ranch microgreens and mushrooms grown at the Edwards farm in her meal creations and looks forward to the expanded opportunities to work with Osage under the Knapp Ranch banner.

“We don't want to break up a company that we acquire but rather leave these quality brands as they are and support future growth mutually,” Brian Knapp explains. “Knapp Ranch embraces and builds upon the talent, quality, innovation and imagination that is already there.”

For those craving locally-sourced food, Knapp Harvest, located in Eagle, is a unique storefront making readily available Second Nature prepared meals, Osage herbs, as well as produce, microgreens and honey from Knapp Ranch. Products from these sustainable operations are also frequently donated to The Community Market located in Edwards and the Avon-based Salvation Army.

SIDE BAR:

White Balsamic Vinaigrette

Ingredients

! 4 tsp Sugar

- 1 Tbsp Dijon Mustard
- 3 Sprigs Fresh Thyme; picked & chopped
- 2 sprigs Fresh Dill Weed; picked & chopped
- 1 Cloves Garlic Chopped
- 1/2 small Shallot chopped
- 1/2 Cup white balsamic vinegar
- Dash Salt and Black Pepper
- 1.25 Cups Sunflower Oil (or light flavored oil)

Directions

- Combine sugar, Dijon, thyme, garlic, shallots, white balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper into the blender.
- Blend on medium-high in a blender and slowly drizzle oil in to emulsify. Or whisk in a bowl while slowly adding oil.
- Store in the refrigerator in a sealed container for up to 1 month.

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PHOTO CAPTIONS (links to images) [Marla Leblow](#)

[-https://app.box.com/s/6ynttgaua3swvdz2pyhp2xzuanazwgay](https://app.box.com/s/6ynttgaua3swvdz2pyhp2xzuanazwgay)

Brian Knapp - <https://app.box.com/s/hmexbde26w7v43hnztc95hm4q378uitq>

1. Chef Marla Leblow launched Second Nature Gourmet in the Vail Valley in 2016. She says she would not have sold Second Nature to anyone but the Knapp family and Knapp Ranch.
2. Brian Knapp is CFO of Knapp Ranch and describes the acquisition of Second Nature Gourmet as “a natural fit for Knapp Ranch because of our mutual commitment to delivering high standards of quality foods.”