

**Marion Kane:**

You're the answer to the Jolly Green Giant.

**Kenny Kenny:**

(Laughs). Or the little green giant that could I guess.

*Theme Music*

**Marion Kane:**

Locally sourced. Sustainable. These are not words that say university dining hall. Well think again. In Guelph, Ontario, campus chefs are cooking up a food revolution. I'm Marion Kane, Food Sleuth®, and welcome to "Sittin' in the Kitchen®." Mark Kenny is the food procurement manager at the University of Guelph and he's on a mission to put delicious nutritious foods on thousands of students' plates. He's setting a new standard for campus cooking by working with chefs and local suppliers. In 2012 a local group called Taste Real named him their first local food ambassador. I met with Mark at the University of Guelph.

*Theme Music*

**Marion Kane:**

I'm visiting Mark Kenny. Where are we going to go?

**Mark Kenny:**

We're going to first go to Creelman Hall which is our largest dining facility on campus. That's where we've done specialty things like the 100 Mile Grill which we'll talk about as far as local food goes.

**Marion Kane:**

Local is a key word with you.

**Mark Kenny:**

Local is a huge word with me personally. It's a really big part of what we do because of where we are and because of what the university started as. It was the agricultural university. We have a lot of suppliers who just happen to be alumni of the university because no matter who you talk to in the food world somebody that they know or in their family has gone to this school.

**Marion Kane:**

Well it's lunchtime.

**Mark Kenny:**

So this is Creelman Hall.

**Marion Kane:**

It's not like a cafeteria at all. It's like a restaurant.

**Mark Kenny:**

It is.

**Marion Kane:**

They didn't have that when I was going to university.

**Mark Kenny:**

This is our 100 Mile Grill restaurant here, mostly burgers but some of the really important things to look at here is we do a goat cheese roasted red pepper tomato relish pea sprout burger. It's called Get Your Goat. One of my other favourite sandwiches is called Breakfast in Bread.

**Marion Kane:**

(Laughs).

**Mark Kenny:**

We do a Griffin burger which is smoked bacon, cheddar, sautéed mushrooms and 100 Mile barbecue sauce we make here.

**Marion Kane:**

I see a huge tray of chips.

**Mark Kenny:**

We do them all fresh by hand every day. The regular fries come from about 70km away from here.

**Marion Kane:**

Mark is showing me the preserved pickles and baby dills and peppers.

**Mark Kenny:**

Jalapeño peppers, local. Spicy green beans. Zucchini relish. This is a batch of the ghost peppers that we purchased just last week and pickled so we're going to make a super super super hot sauce out of that. We also have up here a very very unique piece. It is the University of Guelph summer blossom honey. We have our own apiary on campus so all the honey we use here it's exclusively made by bees on campus.

**Marion Kane:**

How many stations are there in this restaurant?

**Mark Kenny:**

There's nine. So we do a Mongolian-style grill, brick oven pizza, paninis. We have a deli, then we have Exhibition Stadium. Then we have Nature's Best which is our vegetarian counter and then Mom's is that homestyle cooking and then the 100 Mile Grill. And actually we have 11 because I forgot to mention the salad bar which goes the entire length of the serverly basically. Then we do homemade soups on either end as well. We make all of our soups here from scratch.

**Marion Kane:**

If it was convenient I would eat here. Yum. Delicious. Now we're in the subterranean fridge locker area.

**Mark Kenny:**

This is our small freezer.

**Marion Kane:**

Oh, it's a small freezer? It's the size of a large room.

**Mark Kenny:**

If we're trying to bring five or six skids of cauliflower in to process we need somewhere to put it when

it's all done. That's why we have these. Now we just walked into our produce processing facility. What we have here which is unique... I think it's one of the only ones in Canada... I call it the produce Jacuzzi. Basically we bring in the raw produce, it goes into a big water bath, it tumbles to get the dirt and any sediment off and clean it. Then it goes to be either chopped up by hand, which we do a lot of hand work, or by machine. Then it gets sanitized and then it goes off to be blanched and then vacuum packed. The next little room down there is going to be our next little facility that we're working on - our own bakery so that we can do fresh baked goods here.

**Marion Kane:**

It's amazing. You're putting your money where your mouth is.

**Mark Kenny:**

It is amazing. Even more importantly than that is the fact that we buy it whole so our apprentices get to learn how to fillet fish which is maybe not something they would normally learn at a restaurant because normally you would buy it already filleted. That's something that we can teach them and char is a very hard fish to do so it's a great learning experience for them.

**Marion Kane:**

It's a very fashionable thing to say we believe in farm to table but you are actually doing it.

**Mark Kenny:**

And we call it our campus food revolution because we really think that the state of food in universities, although very very good across the country, can be better. We think that by going locally and using the tremendous abilities of chefs on campus because I think that's sometimes an overlooked thing that students and faculty and staff may not realize that we actually have Red Sealed chefs that work here on campus that make their food for them. I think it's a great story to tell because everybody else talks about chefs out in the restaurant world and the Food Network and all that kind of thing but I think it's something that's overlooked that we have chefs on campus. They are extremely talented. They are from all different nationalities. They have really great expertise in their own fields.

**Marion Kane:**

It's a survival skill that people don't have.

**Mark Kenny:**

No. I think more people need that skill and I think especially kids need to learn that earlier on in life. If you don't cook you can't have a connection to food. We need more kids to learn how to cook. We need more kids to visit farms. We need them to understand where their food comes from. That it doesn't come from a package in a store. It actually comes from an animal or the earth. They need to understand those concepts. It can be in a very simple way. I think the underlying concept of food and where it comes from they need to know that and they need to know once they have that food how to make it presentable and how to make it taste good. People eat because they have to eat but they should eat because they enjoy it.

**Marion Kane:**

Thank you very much Mark Kenny.

*Theme Music*

**Marion Kane:**

That was my conversation with Mark Kenny, Procurement Manager of Hospitality Services at the University of Guelph. Follow him on Twitter @100MileMark. I'm Marion Kane, Food Sleuth®. You can find more stories like this one at [marionkane.com](http://marionkane.com) and in iTunes. Thank you for listening.

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