

# Garden Variety

A Daily Lifestyle Blog | Gardening, Outdoor Spaces and Natural Living

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## Sprouting | SPE Certified Food

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*Sprouting reveals places—neighborhoods, communities and destinations—that are emerging and being reborn with gardens, green space and nature-focused amenities, as well as trends and movements springing up in the worlds of gardening, outdoor living and food and drink. In this inaugural column, meet the new darling of commercial food.*

There is one school of thought that says life is too short to scrutinize every single bite one takes, so please pass the salt, butter and cream. But in the face of growing obesity, heart disease, diabetes and cancer, many have embraced the old notion that you are what you eat.

Over the last decade, “locally produced” and “farm-to-table” have entered the vocabulary not only of professional cooks but everyday people concerned about eating healthier, more eco-friendly foods.

Now, a new buzzword (or more accurately, acronym) in culinary circles called S.P.E. (Sanitas per Escam), Latin for “health through food,” is destined to take the food world by storm. The brainchild of Belgian restaurateur Emmanuel Verstraeten, the SPE Certification puts other designations—like the American Heart Association’s Heart-Check mark—to shame. Conceived with expert guidance from nutritionists, doctors and disease researchers and honed over a decade by chefs at [Rouge Tomate](#), Verstraeten’s Michelin-starred New York City restaurant, [SPE certified](#) restaurant meals must meet a rigorous set of standards that take into account a holistic approach to eating well focused on nutritious, sustainably-sourced ingredients and healthy cooking methods. Diners can expect fare heavy on vitamins, minerals and antioxidants and light on salt, bad fats and environmental impact.

The certification, which officially launched last spring, is finding its way into an ever-growing number restaurants. In the coming years, look for the red and white cursive logo to start popping up on menus at gourmet, family and maybe even fast-food eateries near you.

<http://gardenvarietynews.wordpress.com/2013/11/07/sprouting-spe-certified-food/>