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# ARTS | LIFE

F O O D

## Dip

Homemade dips can make a quick and easy tailgate meal. **PAGE D3**



PHOTOS COURTESY LAURIE RHODES

New York City-based photographer Laurie Rhodes began capturing images from Washington County while working on a project for the Farm to Chef organization in 2008.

# Photographing the farm

# New York City photographer finds rural inspiration

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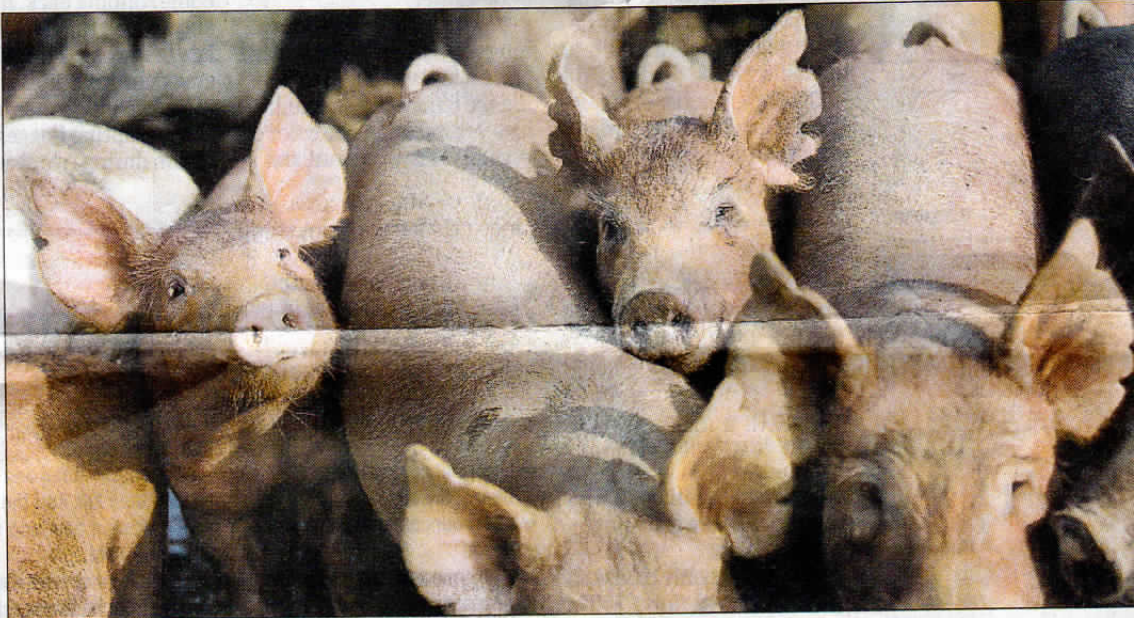
**T**hrough the lens of her camera, photographer Laurie Rhodes can find elegance in tomatoes ripening on the vine or a wilting zucchini blossom.

The beauty of the rolling hills and lush fields of Washington County often fades into the background during the hectic day for local farmers, but Rhodes, who lives in New York City, finds inspiration in the sometimes overlooked splendor of agricultural life in upstate New York.

"I love the fact that Washington County is mostly farmland. It's very rural. It reminded me of my childhood," said Rhodes, who moved to Manhattan from Kittery, Maine, when she was 18.

An award-winning photographer with a reputation for artistic wedding photojournalism, Rhodes first came to the region in 2005 while working on a project with the Farm to Chef organization. She felt an immediate connection.

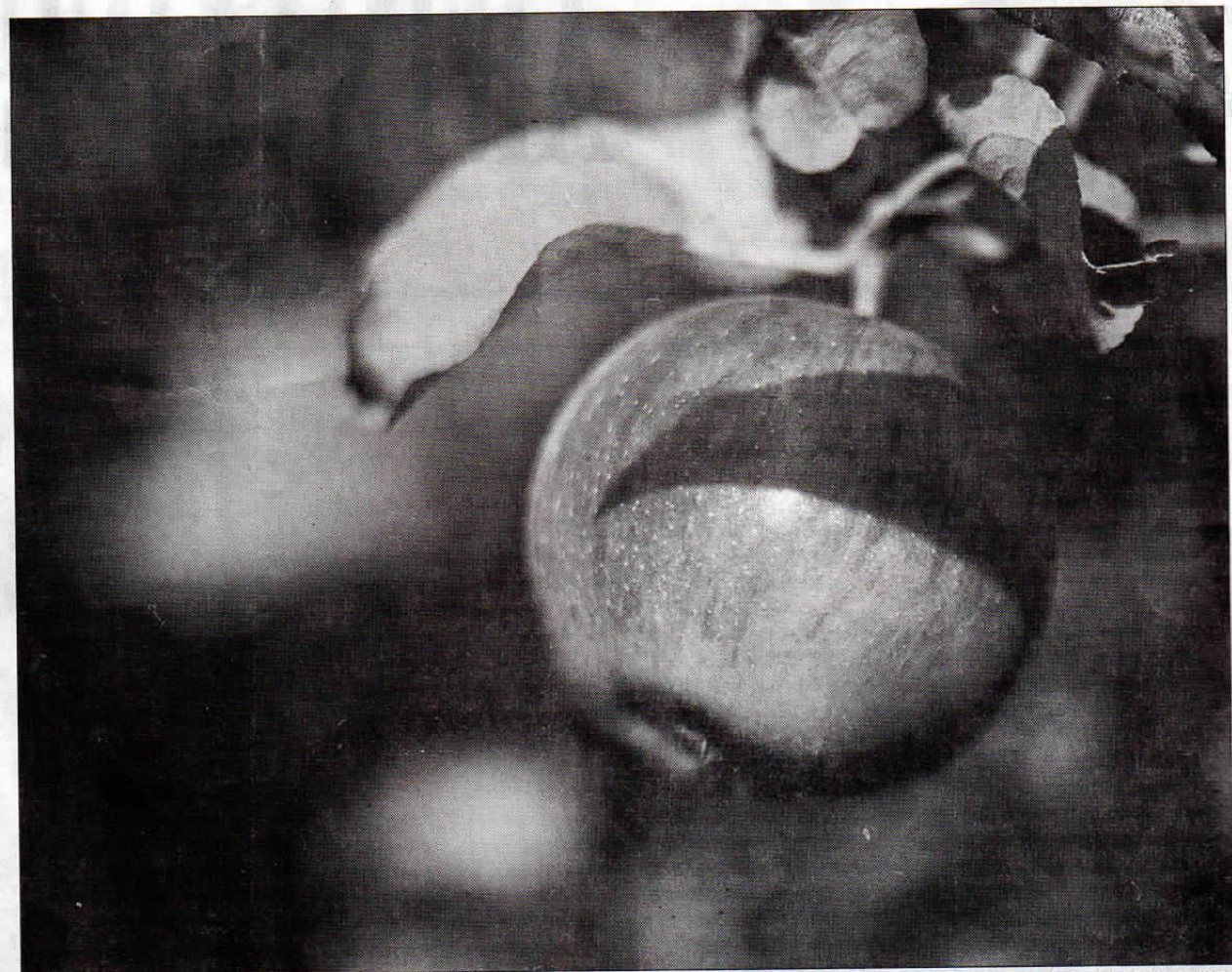
"I just fell in love with Washington



See **ARTIST**, Page D2

## MORE INFO

See more of Laurie Rhodes' photographs on her Web site at [www.laurierhodes.com](http://www.laurierhodes.com).



COURTESY LAURIE RHODES

New York City-based photographer Laurie Rhodes began capturing images from Washington County while working on a project for the Farm to Chef organization.

## Artist began to bond with farmers

### ◆ ARTIST

*Continued from D1*

County and the people," she said. "I have a split personality. I love the city — I love living here because it's so diverse. But I also really love the country."

While shooting photos for Farm to Chef and a show at Chef Mary Cleaver's Green Table restaurant in New York City, Rhodes began to bond with the farmers of Washington County.

"I saw an immediate community of farmers. The people are just so nice. In the city, people tend to be a little more guarded and a little less open-hearted," Rhodes said.

During a number of visits, Rhodes explored the depth of agriculture in the region

and made friends in places like Easton, Greenwich and Shushan.

"I would come up every year for Farm to Chef. Last year, I made four trips," she said.

The landscape has a different feeling from other parts of the state, according to Rhodes.

"The light there is very different. It's a much warmer light," she said.

For the assignments, Rhodes was able to combine her pursuit of scenic beauty with an interest in agriculture.

"I love food, and I'm very interested in the environment and eating well and treating the land well," she said. "I love vegetables — the color of vegetables is so vibrant and

saturated. It was so wonderful to take my skills being a photographer and apply it to something I really love."

She also was drawn to the animals who call the farms home.

"I love animals, and farm animals are very special. They are incredible. They are like people. They are very connected to you. Cows will come right up to you and look you in the eye," she said.

Rhodes developed a special fondness for the hogs.

"They would go running away and then they would come running back. It probably helped that I had chocolate in my bag. The pig shots crack me up," she said.

So far, Rhodes has been able to capture images of the region during two seasons.

"I've only photographed in the summer and early winter. I'd like to photograph the spring, and I haven't really photographed the depths of winter," she said.

She also hopes to make another trip to the area during autumn, but October is a peak season for her Manhattan business.

"The fall coincides with the busiest part of the wedding season," she said.

Although Rhodes initially came to Washington County as part of a special project, she hopes to be able to continue her efforts on her own.

"My goal was to get the absolute best pictures of farms that I could. I would like to try to add a different layer — maybe add more people," she said.