



CT Department of Agriculture

Briefs

REGISTRATION CLOSES 1/13/10 FOR ANNUAL MEETING

The third Farm-to-Chef Annual Meeting will be held Monday 1/25/10 at the Country Club of Farmington. We have a fantastic panel and great speakers lined up, in addition to our always-incredible CT Grown lunch and excellent networking opportunities.

Come hear Coventry Farmers' Market Master Winter Caplanson discuss creative marketing ideas. Learn Pricing 101 from Kevin Cottle, Executive Chef at our host Club. Sean Maloney, creator of a half-hour documentary on the Farm-to-Chef Program, will introduce his work.

There is no cost to attend and we encourage new members to join our family. Register by 1/13/10. Get [all the info](#) and [registration form](#).

JOINT VENTURE GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE 1/31/10

Applications are due to CT DoAG 1/31/10 for the next round of funding through the CT Joint Venture Grant Program. Matching funds of up to \$2,000 for individual businesses and \$5,000 for agricultural organizations are available for marketing projects that use the CT Grown logo.

Note that both FTC producer/provider and user members are eligible for these grants. Examples of past projects that were funded include site and vehicle signage, packaging, advertisements, brochures, websites, and promotional items, to name but a few.

Get the [guidelines and application](#).

CT GROWN AVAILABLE ALL YEAR

Who says there's a lack of CT Grown food in winter? Check out all the great stuff in this month's "Haves" section, and be sure to visit one or more of the many winter farmers' markets around the state. There's a [list of winter markets](#) posted on the Department of Agriculture's website.

January 2010

CT Grown in Season JANUARY

Apples	Beef	Beets
Broccoli	Brussel Sprouts	
Cabbage	Carrots	Celeriac
Cheese	Cream	Eggs
Fin Fish	Garlic	Greens
Herbs	Honey	Ice Cream
Lamb	Lettuce	Lobster
Maple	Microgreens	Milk
Mushrooms	Onions	Parsnips
Pea Shoots	Pears	
Potatoes	Pork	Scallops
Shellfish	Specialty Foods	
Sprouts	Turnips	Wheatgrass
	Winter Squash	Yogurt

If you need help locating any of these items, please [contact us](#).



Contact Us

CT Farm-to-Chef Program
CT Department of Agriculture
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Linda.Piotrowicz@ct.gov
www.CTGrown.gov

Local Food Systems: A Sustainable Business Model

By Jonathan Rapp
[River Tavern](#) and [Dinners at the Farm](#)

I think we can all agree that 2009 was not the easiest of years. Restaurants and stores struggled to survive in an atmosphere where spending money went totally out of style. Farmers coped with bad weather, higher costs for everything and tight credit. Many of the forces that had been driving the surging interest in local food suddenly slackened. High oil and commodity prices, which had begun to tip the scales in favor of a locally based food system not dependent on petrochemicals and cheap corn, crashed as worldwide demand fell.

As millions of Americans struggled the most important issue concerning food was whether people could afford to eat three meals a day – not where that food was coming from or how it was grown. The first hints of a backlash against locally grown food as the expensive, elitist hobby of its mostly white, affluent audience began to emerge in a press that until then had been running a continual stream of positive articles.

Well, reports of the death of the local food movement have been greatly exaggerated. New farmers markets, more restaurants using and promoting locally grown food, more grocery stores getting on the local bandwagon, sold-out CSAs, a dedicated and growing customer base and a renewed drumbeat of positive press all point to the fact that far from being some sort of fad, interest in a new local food system is here to stay.

In addition, many of the larger concerns about our current industrial food system have stubbornly refused to go away. With every outbreak of *E. coli*, every toxic spill from a manure lagoon, every new piece of evidence linking our diet to epidemics of diabetes and heart disease, and every new film, article, or book exposing the dark side of our food chain, more and more people begin to see the true cost of this flawed system. The contrast between local and industrial is getting sharper and sharper.

I think that one of the true bright sides of this Great Recession is that in fundamental ways it has forced many of us to rethink how we live our lives, how we run our businesses and how we sustain our communities. Many of our old ways now seem selfish or shallow – we want to be more connected and to invest our energy and talent in something real, valuable and lasting. What could be more important, especially for us, than continuing our work of rebuilding our local food systems – a legacy that will benefit generations to come.

While I have been a quiet advocate for local food since I opened my first restaurant in NYC, in 1992, it is really only since 2006 that I made a conscious and determined decision to make my commitment to local food and farmers the defining motive of my business.

In 2007 we created Dinners at the Farm, a series of 100% locally sourced dinners at Connecticut farms, which gave us an exciting new platform from which to help promote our farm partners, our non-profit beneficiaries, and the restaurant. This three-way partnership has, I think, been a great benefit to all of us. To date Dinners at the Farm has earned close to \$500,000, purchased over \$100,000 worth of local produce and donated nearly \$50,000.

This past year I helped found the Chester Sunday Market, another effort that brings together local businesses, farmers, and the community to create a powerful and exciting new market. At the restaurant itself we have redoubled our commitment to using local products (45% of our total spending on food goes to local producers) and continued to grow our network of local suppliers. Projects for this year include expanding the Dinners at the Farm model to catering and opening a retail and wholesale market that will focus on local product .

(continued next page)

Local Food Systems: A Sustainable Business Model (continued)

For me, 2009 was a crucial test, both of my business and of my conviction in the sustainability of the local food movement. While it was certainly a gut-wrenching year financially, I am more convinced than ever that local is the future of my business. My team and I are going to continue working to find new ways to utilize and promote locally produced food. The farmers we work with are nearly all on firmer financial footing than they were even a couple of years ago and most of them are also searching for ways to expand their production and find new markets for their products. From my perspective the future looks pretty good.

As always, there are challenges. We lack crucial infrastructure, we need many more farms and farmers, we need more help from the state in supporting existing agricultural and aquacultural assets and in developing new ones. We need a more consistent regulatory environment. We need to do a lot more work to get locally grown food into our schools and to our less affluent communities. We need Linda to clone herself several times. There is a lot to do but there are many very good reasons to do it and many, many truly talented and dedicated people to make it happen.



LEFT: Jonathan cooks off the Dinners at the Farm truck for over 700 VIPs at the 2007 FarmAid concert in New York.

BELOW: Jonathan at River Tavern in Chester.



CT Grown “Haves” and “Wants”

DISCLAIMER!!!

The CT Grown “haves” and “wants” listed below were submitted by members. Farm-to-Chef Program reminds all members that questions regarding what can or cannot be sold in a foodservice establishment should be answered by your local department of health (DPH). Your [local DPH](#), and, by extension, the [state DPH](#), are the entities that regulate the sources of foods and the documentation of the sources of foods that can be purchased and served in a food service establishment. There is no guarantee that products listed below will be approved by your local health department.

Check with them directly.

CT GROWN “HAVES” IN JANUARY

Eagle Wood Farms

Barkhamsted
Bryan Woods
860-402-4953

bryanwoods@eaglewoodfarms.com

Frozen retail portions of beef, pork, veal, lamb, pig roasters, suckling pigs. We grow our own animals. Ready-to-eat smoked items include Beef Sticks, Hotdogs, Andouille Sausage, Bratwurst, Pepperoni, Kielbasa, Liverwurst and Knockwurst.

FreshPoint

Hartford, CT
Daniel Batchelder
800-824-0448 ext 359

Daniel.Batchelder@FreshPoint.com

Apples (more than a dozen different varieties), Cider, Goat Cheese, Seitan, Currant Juice, Honey, Microgreens, Eggs, Milk, Wheat Grass.

[Hidden Brook Gardens, LLC](#) (certified organic through Bay-state Organic Certifiers)

Ledyard
Anita Kopchinski
860-912-1767
anitanbill@comcast.net
Celeriac (Celery Root), \$3/lb; Jerusalem Artichokes, \$6/lb; Turnips, \$2.50/lb; Arugula, \$8/lb (grown in our hoop house). We also have apple jelly, apple butter and apple sauce

Sankow's Beaver Brook Farm

Lyme
Suzanne Sankow or Tim McLaughlin
860-662-0053
Rack of lamb, raw cow's milk Feta cheese, raw cow's milk Pleasant Cow cheese

CT GROWN “HAVES” IN JANUARY

Sepe Farm
Sandy Hook
Pete Sepe
203-470-4084 or 203-270-9507
pasepe@juno.com

LAMB (USDA Inspected Whole Carcasses. I can arrange for processing)

Stone Circle Farm
Woodstock
Reva Seybolt
860-928-0754
revabseybolt@yahoo.com
Organically raised duck eggs.

Star Light Gardens

Durham
David Zemelsky
860-463-0166
starlightgardens@comcast.net
7 green spinach, samish spinach, renegade spinach, salad greens, dragon carrots and napoli carrots

White Gate Farm

East Lyme
Nora Painten
860.575.8852
npainten@gmail.com
Certified Organic Sunshine Squash, Butternut Squash and Sugar Pumpkins, \$.99/lb; Certified Organic Potatoes: Kennebec, Rose Gold, Red Norland, Adirondack (purple), and Yukon Gold, \$2/lb. for 20 lbs or more per variety; La Ratte Fingerlings, \$3/lb for 20 lbs or more.

Happenings

Alchemy's next three-week "Raw Food Basics" series with Imani and John begins 1/7/10. They continue their popular Raw Food Potlucks this month in conjunction with their free Friday night films, focused on health and wellness. Find out about these and their other events on the Growing Green Coop's [calendar page](#).

ZINC has an impressive line up of Chef's Table events scheduled for 2010, including "All About Tea" with Michael Harney from Harney + Sons Teas on 1/9/10 at 1:30PM. Check out the [events page](#) on the restaurant's website for details and the full 2010 schedule.

The CT Greenhouse Growers Association (CGGA) and CT Nursery and Landscape Association (CNLA) will hold their information-packed 2010 Winter Symposium on 1/13/10 and 1/14/10 in Wallingford. Registration and other information are available [online](#).

[Firebox Restaurant](#) will hold a Jonathan Edwards Wine Dinner 1/20/10. This local dining and drinking experience will feature local wines from Jonathan Edwards Winery in North Stonington. Along with the Kitchen at Billings Forge, they also offer a variety of [cooking classes](#). Check out their website for more info.

The [CT Restaurant Association](#) has announced that ServSafe classes are available on Monday nights at various locations around the state. Get the [2010 schedule](#).

The third Farm-to-Chef Annual Meeting will be held Monday 1/25/10 at the Country Club of Farmington. Why should YOU be there? This is our once-a-year chance for all of our members to brainstorm together, learn from one another, and make important new contacts for the coming season.

CT NOFA is sponsoring a workshop on 1/30/10 at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven for both beginning farmers who choose to farm organically and established farmers who are converting their operations to organic. See [website](#) for details.

The 30th Milford Aquaculture Seminar will be held 2/8/10 – 2/10/10 at the Courtyard Marriott in Shelton. The seminar will begin with a poster session and celebratory event highlighting 30 years, followed by two days of technical sessions predominantly focused on shellfish aquaculture. Contact Walter Blogoslowski at 203-882-6535 or wblo-gosl@clam.mi.nmfs.gov for more information.

Temple Grandin, leading animal behaviorist and expert on the humane treatment of animals, will speak at UConn on 1/3/10. Contact Sheila Andrew (sheila.andrew@uconn.edu or 860-486-0803) or Michael Darre, (michael.darre@uconn.edu or 860-486-1008) for more information.

[The New England Food Show](#) will be held 3/14/10 – 3/16/10 in Boston and this year will include a special emphasis on local foods. Check website for more information.

Dinners at the Farm has announced its 2010 schedule and a new early-bird discount on tickets purchased before 5/1/10. [Get all the details](#).

Farm-to-Chef Annual Meeting

Monday, January 25, 2010

Country Club of Farmington

BE THERE!!

The Farm-to-Chef Program lists news and events of potential interest to members as space allows. Send to [Linda Plotrowicz](#). The editor reserves the right to edit or exclude listings at her discretion. Submissions should be short, to the point, and related to the Farm-to-Chef Program and/or of direct benefit to its members. The FTC newsletter typically goes out the first week of each month, but sometimes is delayed until later in the month; be sure to allow adequate lead time when submitting listings.

In the News

The Wall Street Journal's blog, "The Specialist" is running a three-part feature on oyster cultivation and culinary use. Check out [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#). Look for Part 3 to be published soon.

First Lady and local food advocate Michele Obama and White House Executive Chef Cristeta Comerford appeared 1/3/10 on Food Network's [Iron Chef America](#). Check out the show's website for photos.

FTC member Jonathan Eddy of New Boston Beef, who will be a panelist at the 1/25/10 FTC Annual Meeting, is profiled in [this issue](#) of the Coventry Winter Farmers' Market newsletter. (Coventry Market Master Winter Caplanson will be a speaker at the meeting.)

The Norwich Bulletin's [12/28/09 opinion piece](#) supports the idea of local agricultural commissions.

This [12/27/09 Norwich Bulletin article](#) by James Mosher explores the role outdoor wood-burning furnaces, facing a proposed ban in the state, play in local farms that rely on them for affordable heat sources.

The Record Journal's [12/20/09 article](#) by Samaia Hernandez explains the new 70,000 SF Vernon E. Cleaves Vocational Agriculture Center at Lyman Hall High School, scheduled to open this month.

Jenna Cho's [12/18/09 story](#) in The Day announces financial assistance to the state's struggling dairy farmers, and the continuing challenges they face to survive. This [12/29/09 Norwich Bulletin article](#) announces a \$404,966 in federal funding awarded to UConn to study the financial and environmental viability of small- and medium-sized New England dairy farms.

FTC members Emily Brooks and Linda Piotrowicz discuss the role of CT Grown foods in a healthy eating pattern on this [12/17/09 episode](#) of WNPR's Colin McEnroe Show. [Tune in](#) on 1/7/10 at 1:00 PM to hear Emily, Linda, and Colin continue the conversation.

This [12/14/09 release](#) from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture reports the results of a recent study done in IA that showed locally grown produce was no more expensive than similar non-local produce available in local grocery stores.

Tasting Table's [12/10/09 issue](#) takes a look at chefs who are getting their feet dirty on the farm.

Animal Welfare Approved's [12/9/09 post](#) explains the trust established when restaurants choose to share their views on sustainable, locally raised humane meats with their customers.

FTC member La Belle Aurore is the subject of this 12/4/09 [New York Times piece](#) by Stephanie Lyness, who also mentions FTC's Still River Café and River Tavern in her look at Connecticut's farm-to-table dining scene.

This [12/3/09 episode](#) of WNPR's Where We Live examines the role of milk in the human diet. DoAG's [Dr. Bruce Sherman](#) provides input on the regulation of raw milk in CT.

FTC member Jaime Jones of Jones Family Farm explains how to select the perfect CT Grown Christmas tree in this [12/2/09 segment](#) on NBC Connecticut Today.

[WFSB-3 TV](#) weekend edition of Eyewitness Morning News regularly features FTC members Emily Brooks, Tim Cipriano, and Drew McLachlan each month. Tune in between 8:00 and 9:00 AM.

Miscellaneous Announcements

[Urban Oaks Farm](#) has announced an eight-week Winter CSA to run from 2/5/10 to 3/27/10. Deadline to sign up is 1/15/10. The farm also is accepting new members for their Summer CSA (7/30/10 to 10/16/10) and offers a discount to those who sign up by 1/31/10. Call Alexa at 860-223-6200 for more information.

FTC member Tim Cipriano of the New Haven Public Schools is looking for farmland for educational programs with the kids to see food growing and get some hands-on experience, and for agricultural production for the New Haven School system. He has grant money to put these ideas into place. Please [email Tim](#) with any ideas or information about available farmland.

The Community Farm of Simsbury is a certified organic farm, providing the use of inexpensive farmland, (up to 1 acre), for people interested in becoming organic farmers. CFS offers hands-on training and assists with plowing, irrigation, equipment, storage, and other services. Informational meetings will be held 1/6/10, 1/9/10, 1/13/10, and 1/23/10, and at the Eno Farm House, 73 Wolcott Road, Simsbury. RSVP to Tim Goodwin, 860-655-5580 or trgood21@mac.com

This [free online guide](#) from USDA's Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center is a great resource for anyone interested in aquaponics.

USDA has announced [this new pilot project](#) for farmers to establish high tunnels to increase the availability of locally grown produce in a conservation-friendly way. Financial assistance through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NCRS) will fund one high tunnel per farm. Connecticut is among the participating states. NCRS also has a variety of other programs and funding available for farmers. Check the CT office's [website](#) for descriptions and eligibility requirements.

USDA and FDA, in conjunction with other federal agencies, have created [this free online tool](#) to help farmers and producers find vulnerabilities in their production processes. The prioritization tool has been adapted from the military version (CARVER) for use in the food industry and allows the user to think like an attacker to identify the most attractive targets for an attack.

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has opened a new help desk for operators of small meat, poultry and egg processing plants. Specialists will be on hand to answer producers' questions about agency requirements. The new service supports USDA's "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" initiative by helping small processors save time and money. To speak to a staff specialist, call 877-374-7435 or email at InfoSource@fsis.usda.gov.

RestaurantsCT.com has launched the new [CT Food Mall](#). The site offers discounted gift cards to a variety of CT food businesses.

[The Kitchen Coop](#) has hours available for rent in the afternoons and evenings at its state-of-the-art, fully licensed commercial kitchen in Bridgeport. Rates range between \$27 and \$35 per hour. See website or call at 203-243-9419 to schedule a tour.

The not-for-profit [Connecticut Vineyard and Winery Association](#) (CVWA) now offers business memberships to restaurants. This program is designed to help food-related businesses develop relationships with CVWA members, while also helping to promote and market those businesses on CVWA's website, in the CT Wine Trail Brochure, and through other channels. For more information, please contact Ginger Kunkle, Ginger@ctfood.org or 860-677-5467.

Funding Opportunities

Applications are due 1/31/10 for the next round of funding through the CT Joint Venture Grant Program. Matching funds of up to \$2,000 for individual businesses and \$5,000 for agricultural organizations are available for marketing projects that use the CT Grown logo. Note that both FTC producer/provider and user members are eligible for these grants. Examples of past projects that were funded include site and vehicle signage, packaging, advertisements, brochures, websites, and promotional items, to name but a few. Get the [guidelines and application](#).

Applications are due 3/1/10 for the next round of funding through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Awards up to \$75,000 are available for projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of CT's specialty crop industry. Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, maple syrup, honey, horticulture, and nursery crops including floriculture. Projects must impact and produce measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, or individual. Read the [news release](#) about the last round of funding to see what types of projects received funding.

Applications are due to CT DoAG 4/30/10 for the next round of funding through the CT Farm Reinvestment Grant Program. Matching funds of up to \$40,000 may be available to CT agricultural producers for long-term capital projects. See [website](#) for more information.

The National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service maintains an [online listing](#) of a wide variety of funding opportunities for producers and agriculture-related entities.

Food for Thought

This [12/26/09 Wall Street Journal article](#) cautions that willpower is a limited resource when it comes to those New Year's resolutions, especially when one's prefrontal cortex has other work at hand, including remembering things, solving abstract problems, or just keeping one focused.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE BUREAU OF INSPECTION AND REGULATION

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- Marketing Bureau
- 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 129
- Hartford, CT 06106
- 860-713-2503 phone
- 860-713-2516 fax
- Linda.Piotrowicz@ct.gov
- www.CTGrown.gov

[Farm-to-Chef](#) is a free program that helps connect local culinary professionals with producers and distributors of CT Grown products. Informational newsletters, workshops, networking, promotions and other opportunities are provided to members as part of the program.

The program also helps the public locate restaurants and other dining facilities that serve CT Grown foods.

Farmers, wholesalers, chefs, and other food service professionals are encouraged to join. Please contact Linda at the [CT Department of Agriculture](#), Linda.Piotrowicz@ct.gov or 860-713-2558, for more information.