



CT Department of Agriculture

November 2008

Briefs

CT GROWN IN SEASON

While berries, tomatoes, and sweet corn are gone until next year (unless you preserved some for winter use), and produce offerings are thinning out, there is still plenty of CT Grown goodness to be had! Check out the list at right.

The season has opened for many species of fin fish—CT fishermen are catching scup, black sea bass, tautog, whiting, flounder, and bluefish. And don't forget that CT produces fantastic shellfish for fall and winter chowders!

SAVE THE DATES!!!

Save the date! The Farm-to Chef **Annual Meeting**, free and open to all members, will be held on Wednesday, 1/21/09 at the [Country Club of Farmington](#). The next **Chefs' Workshop** is tentatively set for Wednesday 10/14/09 at [Stuart Family Farm](#) in Bridge-water and will focus on CT Grown meat. We will be contacting members soon for input on how to make these events as productive and helpful as possible..

CHEFS NEEDED FOR SCHOOL DEMONSTRATIONS

[South Windsor Public Schools](#) Food Service Director Mary Ann Lopez is seeking chefs for two upcoming in-school culinary demonstrations for students. Demos will feature CT Grown foods with a cultural theme. If interested, please contact Mary Ann at MALOPEZ@swindsor.k12.ct.us.

CT SPECIALTY FOOD ASSOCIATION PRODUCT AWARDS

The CT Specialty Food Association held its eighth product awards competition on 10/28/08 at the Aquaturf. Judges included many FTC members as well as local media personalities such as WTIC Newstalk 1080's Ray Dunaway, Diane Smith, and Colin McEnroe and former Hartford Courant Food Editor Linda Giuca. See Page 4 for more.

DoAG GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE NOVEMBER 14

Don't delay! November 14, 2008 is the application deadline for the next round of annual [Farm Transition Grant](#) and [Farm Viability Grant for Municipalities](#) Programs. These competitive grants are very popular and have funded marketing programs, greenhouse expansions, production and processing equipment, and much more. For more info, contact Ron Olsen at 860-713-2550 or Ronald.Olsen@ct.gov.

CT Grown in Season NOVEMBER

Apples Beets Broccoli
Cabbage Carrots
Cauliflower Collards
Dairy Eggs Fin Fish
Garlic Greens Herbs
Honey Lettuce
Lobster Meat Onions
Pears Potatoes
Scallops Shellfish
Specialty Foods
Turnips Winter
Squash

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



Contact Us

CT Farm-to-Chef Program
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Member Profile: John Turenne of Sustainable Food Systems

By John Turenne

Three years ago, in response to the growing demand for locally-grown and sustainable foods, I founded Sustainable Food Systems (SFS), believing that sustainability practices in food production and preparation strengthen local communities and economies.

SFS was founded on my experience of having operated college and university food services for 25 years. During that time, I had the opportunity to create and implement one of the very first institutional sustainable food programs with Alice Waters and others at Yale University.

Today, SFS continues to expand, partnering with organizations and institutions to incorporate local and planet healthy practices into their food programs. Because my experience helps me to understand the demands of the foodservice industry, we look to bridge the gap between what might be the long-term vision of sustainability and the day-to-day reality of running a food service operation.

Some of our principles and philosophies regarding sustainability are as follows:

Local Food and Environmentalism

Food is the largest sustainability area over which chefs have the greatest influence. Conversely, small sustainability decisions in the area of food yield the greatest global and environmental impact. The food we serve must pass through many growing, processing, and delivery steps before reaching our establishments.

Once purchased, the food must go through many more steps to be prepared for consumption. Food purchasing decisions can affect sustainability at many levels throughout this cycle, and comprise the most influential area for understanding, learning, and affecting sustainable change.

The sustainability movement incorporates local food purchases and provides an opportunity for foodservice operators to gain competitive advantage, reduce costs, increase employee loyalty, and stimulate greater innovation, all while improving the health of both the planet and the people. To me, it's a 'win-win-win' situation.

Sustainability Is a Journey

I believe that sustainability is a journey – a journey in which everyone from individuals to organizations can participate, regardless of where they are or what funding they have to work with.

Sustainability, environmentalism, and the local food movement are not fads that will disappear with time. Our global society is at the precipice where action is necessary to reduce our environmental impact by practicing sustainable principles.

In conclusion, at SFS, we've come to believe that:

- Sustainability does not happen overnight; it is not a switch to flip.
- Purchasing local foods is the most influential area to positively affect the environment, and can be incorporated into any organization regardless of budget, geographic locale, physical and fiscal structure, staff levels and competencies, and administrative support.
- There is no right or wrong "sustainability." There are only better sustainable practices and actions.
- Environmentalism is not a financial threat to the bottom line. There need be no conflict or compromise between commercial profits, environmental health and well-being of community.

To learn more about SFS, our philosophies, our partners, and our online resources, please visit our new website at

www.sustainablefoodsystems.com.

News, Events, and Announcements

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[Wave Hill Breads](#) would like to partner with farm stands to sell their popular Three-Grain French Country Bread and Demi-Baguettes. Wave Hill has been a big hit at several farmers' markets over the past few seasons. Bread is made fresh for delivery every day except Tuesday and can be successfully frozen. For more information, please email info@wavehillbreads.com.

[US News & World Report's](#) 10/31/08 article [Gluten Free Diet: A Cure for Some, A Fad for Most](#) reports that surveys have shown about 15 to 25 percent of consumers report looking for gluten-free products.

A 10/17/08 column in the [St. Louis Obispo Tribune](#) reminds us in these troubled economic times that homegrown food is real wealth. Read [Phil Dirkx: To measure real wealth, look past money](#).

[Time Magazine](#) named renowned Chef [Alice Waters](#) one of its "Heroes of the Environment 2008." Read the [Joel Stein article](#).

Timothy Cipriano, new Food Service Director for [New Haven Public Schools](#), is featured in this New Haven Register [article](#) and online [video](#) about all of the healthy changes happening in the city's schools.

CPTV's [Eating CT](#) visited eateries around Litchfield for its [second episode](#), including [West Street Grill](#). The [third episode](#) takes viewers to Middletown, with a stop at [It's Only Natural](#).

[Wesleyan University](#) was one of only 16 schools to advance through the first round of PETA2's competition for the nation's Best Vegetarian-Friendly Colleges. [Cast your vote](#) for the next round.

The EPA's Waste Wise Program has resources available that may be of interest, including the fact sheet [Donating Surplus Food to the Needy](#). For more information about this EPA Program, go to the Waste Wise [website](#) or contact Janet Bowen, EPA Region I, at 617-918-1795 or Bowen.Janet@epa.gov

The US [FDA](#) announced that it has posted on its website [Food Safety Tips for Healthy Holidays](#).

[Fiddleheads Coop](#) in New London will have the Grand Opening of their Mid-Way Store from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on 11/15/08. They will kick off their first Winter Farmers' Market for the season, featuring 20 local vendors, that same day and time. Go to www.fiddleheadsfood.coop for more info.

CT Restaurant Week runs 11/16/08 – 11/22/08. This statewide celebration is presented by the [Connecticut Restaurant Association](#) and SYSCO Food Services of Connecticut. To learn how to participate, go to [CRA's website](#).

New Haven hosts its own Restaurant Week 11/9/08 – 11/15/08. At least half a dozen FTC member restaurants will be participating, including [Basta Trattoria](#), [Bentara](#), [Carmen Anthony](#), [Miya's](#), [Union League Cafe](#), and [Zinc](#). For more info, check out <http://www.infonewhaven.com/restaurantweek>.

CSFA Product Awards Competition

A slew of FTC members were among the 27 judges at the Eighth CT Specialty Food Association's Product Awards Competition on 10/28/08 at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville. One hundred seventy-eight specialty food items from Connecticut-based manufacturers were entered into 19 categories. The wide array of products included fine chocolates, ice cream sauces, pestos, pickles, hot and iced teas, flavored nuts and seeds, seasoned croutons, and much, much more.



Clockwise from top left (L to R):

Brendan Martin of Litchfield Market and Red Laphear of Black Rock Tavern;

Claire Criscuolo of Claire's Corner Copia & Basta Trattoria and Linda Giuca, former Food Editor at the Hartford Courant;

Carol Byer-Alcorace of New Morning Natural and Organic;

Products in the Outstanding Product Line category.

Anne Gallagher of Anne Gallagher Catering.

For more photos, see [WTIC 1080's website](http://www.wtic1080.com).



News, Events, and Announcements (continued)

CT DEP Commissioner Gina McCarthy will speak on 11/8/08 at the New London Sustainability Fair. The event will be held from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the New London Science and Technology Magnet School, 490 Jefferson Avenue, and will feature networking and breakout sessions. Contact Art Costas at artebova@sbcglobal.net.

A free workshop on writing a business plan is being offered by [CT WagN](#) (CT Women's Agricultural Network) from 6:30 to 9:30 PM on 11/6/08 in Norwich, 11/11/08 in North Haven, and 11/13/08 in Torrington. The workshop is open to all at no charge, but registration three days in advance is required. Contact Trish Manfredi ctwagn@cox.net or 860-657- 8157 for more info.

The [CT Green Industries Council](#) is offering two classes that may be of interest: "Making Your Employee Handbook" features CT Labor Law Expert Attorney Bob Noonan on 11/12/08. "Complying with Federal Truck Rules" on 11/13/08 will be led by Federal Inspector Todd Collins from USDOT's Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Each class runs from 7:00 to 9:00 PM and will be held in Cromwell. Cost for non-members is \$70. For more info, contact Bob Heffernan at conngreen@aol.com.

Free workshops on crop insurance and related risk management topics will be offered on 12/9/08 in Norwich and Vernon and on 12/10/08 in Torrington. New crop insurance information, pesticide safety training, alternative energy resources, estate planning, and working with local officials are among the topics to be covered. For more information, contact Norm Bender at norman.bender@uconn.edu or 860-885-2827.

[USDA's Risk Management Agency](#) has launched a new website with a variety of resources and information designed to help farmers manage risk. Check out Farm-Risk-Plans.USDA.gov.

The next Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show is scheduled for 2/24/09 – 2/26/09 in Sturbridge, MA. There will be two pre-conference workshops, two general sessions, farm tours, and 20 breakout sessions. "Taking Advantage of Farm to Institution Purchasing Programs" will feature FTC members Marydale DeBor, Patrick Horan, Jason Collin, and Thomas Peterlik as panelists, moderated by FTC manager Linda Piotrowicz. FTC's Jonathan Rapp and Drew McLachlan will be on the panel in "Culinary Tourism: Attracting Visitors to your Farm One Taste at a Time." For more info or to register online, go to the [Harvest New England website](#).



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[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.