



Michael Fedele
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lieutenant Governor Fedele and Agriculture Commissioner F. Philip Prelli to Visit with Students at Hartford Farmers' Market

Lieutenant Governor Michael Fedele and Commissioner F. Philip Prelli are scheduled to attend the Farmers' Market at Billings Forge on Broad Street at noon on Thursday, September 13, 2007. They will visit with a class from Burns Elementary School that will be at the market for a delicious CT Grown lunch and to learn about farming and healthful foods.

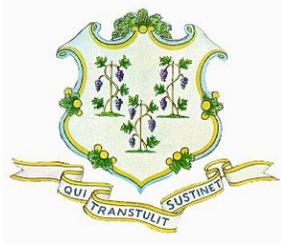
"Many young children growing up in our cities have never even seen a farm," Lt. Governor Fedele said. "This is a terrific opportunity for some of those kids to gain an understanding of where food actually comes from and to better appreciate the men and women who produce that food. Connecticut's Department of Agriculture has many great programs that highlight products grown right here in Connecticut and I am happy to team up with them for such a great event."

Also attending the market that day will be Lonnie Burt, M.S., R.D., CD-N, Hartford Food Service Director. She will speak briefly about the importance of local, healthful food in our schools, and its role in promoting a more conducive learning environment.

The Farmers' Market at Billings Forge is one of many projects undertaken by the Melville Charitable Trust, a national philanthropic organization that aims to end homelessness and fight the causes of homelessness. Purchased by the Trust in 2005, Billings Forge—once a large industrial complex—now is home to 64 children and more than 100 adults, many working but others are unemployed.

In conjunction with the farmers' market, the Trust opened Firebox, a new restaurant on Broad Street serving contemporary American cuisine largely using ingredients grown in Connecticut, much of it by the farmers participating in the weekly farmers' market.

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“Lt. Governor Fedele is a great supporter of our state’s farming community and our initiatives to bring nutritious, local foods to all of Connecticut’s residents,” said Commissioner Prelli. “Those initiatives include making these foods available to not just wealthy suburbs but also lower-income neighborhoods and urban school systems. The Farmers’ Markets at Billings Forge and Hartford Public School System are two examples of those initiatives at work.”

In the last two years, the Trust has worked to help to assist residents secure the tools they need to develop their personal and family assets and to assist the community to reinvest in a wonderful historic neighborhood adjacent to insurance corporations, the Hartford Courant and the halls of state government.

Commissioner Prelli’s Department of Agriculture heads up the statewide farmers market program that brings approximately 300 small family farms to 90 markets across the state, where they sell their produce, dairy, meat, honey, and other farm products direct to consumers.

Commissioner Prelli’s staff also works to bring fresh CT Grown fruits and vegetables to local schools through the Farm-to-School Program and helps connect local chefs and restaurants with CT Grown ingredients through the Farm-to-Chef program.

Lonnie Burt’s work with the Farm-to-School Program provides nutritious, fresh, local produce to students throughout the entire Hartford Public School System. Ms. Burt has worked hard over the years to ensure that Hartford’s students have access to proper nutrition that fosters learning. In addition, her staff provides education to students, their families, and faculty about health and fitness.

The Farmers’ Market at Billings Forge is located at 559 Broad Street and is open every Thursday, 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, through October. Lt. Governor Fedele is scheduled to arrive at the market this Thursday at noon. Commissioner Prelli and Lonnie Burt will speak at approximately 12:15 PM. All press and public are welcome.

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