



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE      CONTACT: Donna Tommelleo, 860-524-7313  
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**Governor Rell: Celebrate 375 Years of CT Agriculture  
With Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week**

*Inaugural Event Features More Than 80 Restaurants and Farms  
From September 26 to October 2*

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that the rich heritage of Connecticut agriculture will be on display and on the menu at more than 80 restaurants, farms and other establishments for the first-ever Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week, September 26 to October 2.

“What better way to celebrate the bountiful harvest from Connecticut’s farms and fields than with a unique dining experience across the state? Connecticut agriculture and the benefit we derive from it – from beautiful open space to healthy, fresh locally grown delights to the jobs the industry creates – contributes greatly to our quality of life,” Governor Rell said. “Our family farms have helped define us as a state for generations and this special week is one more way to commemorate the state’s 375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.”

A special kick-off event will be held at the Coventry Farmers’ Market on Sunday, September 26, 2010. Chefs from participating locations, including Zest Restaurant’s Carrie Landry, Saybrook Point Inn and Spa’s Carlos Cassar, and Max’s Oyster Bar’s Scott Miller, will shop the market and cook with the CT Grown ingredients they have just purchased. The event runs from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Nathan Hale Homestead, 2299 South Street in Coventry, and is free and open to the public.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture has posted menus, hours of operation, and other information from the 80-plus participating restaurants, farms, cafeterias, and other on its Web site at: <http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=2778&q=330850>.

Each of these locations will feature a special Farm-to-Chef menu that week, showcasing a bounty of CT Grown ingredients. Connecticut wines will be offered by those venues that serve alcohol.

“The variety of choices is tremendous,” said F. Philip Prelli, Connecticut Commissioner of Agriculture. “There truly is something for everyone, regardless of age, taste or budget.”

Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week’s parameters, which allow for an enormous degree of flexibility and creativity, are one reason for the high number of participants, explained Linda Piotrowicz, manager of the Farm-to-Chef Program for the state Department of Agriculture.

“Participants responded with some extremely creative, exciting menus that we think will delight diners of all demographics and diets,” added Piotrowicz.

She believes it was those components of flexibility and creativity, along with the week’s focus on fresh, local foods—which have become increasingly popular among consumers and culinary professionals in the past few years—that enticed people to get involved. Approximately 25 of the participants are new to the Farm-to-Chef Program.

Hard-core carnivores, for example, can find CT Grown beef, lamb, pork, and even goat meat, prepared by an array of methods, while seafood aficionados will delight in the selection of local oysters, clams, scallops, mussels, lobster, shrimp, and calamari. Dairy and eggs will be featured in plates of local cow- and goat-milk cheeses, scrambled eggs, and omelets. Pizza, burgers, and sandwiches will accommodate eaters on the go. Pricing ranges from free samples and a la carte items as low as \$1.50 to fixed-price complete meals in the \$75.00 range.

Vegetarians, vegans, and raw foodists will have plenty of choices, too, including such creations as meat-free moussaka, pumpkin- or squash-filled ravioli, corn-crusting tofu pot pie, raw broccoli-walnut soup, zucchini lasagna with "rawcotta" and marinara, green smoothies, and a plethora of salads full of CT Grown produce.

Even the sweet tooth will not be disappointed. Desserts and confections will include maple-bacon ice cream, apple pie, berry cobbler, white chocolate raspberry tart, and chocolates spiced with local peppers or herbs, just to name a few.

Connecticut wines will have an opportunity to shine, as they will be offered by participating venues that normally serve alcohol. The state currently boasts approximately 35 licensed farm wineries, making local grape and wine production among the fastest growing agricultural sectors in Connecticut. While many consumers have yet to discover these local wines, the Department of Agriculture hopes Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week will help introduce the public to what it considers one of the state’s best-kept secrets.

“Connecticut wines are very diverse and delicious. From the unique fruit wines to traditional grape wines, Connecticut wines offer a great variety of taste to meet the needs of all,” said Commissioner Prelli.



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The public will have a chance to visit a wide variety of venues while enjoying Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week. In addition to an abundance of diverse restaurants, there are schools, corporate dining services, caterers, prepared food counters, farms, wineries, a hospital, ice cream parlors, a chocolatier, and a farmers' market that have joined in the celebration and will offer delicious dishes featuring CT Grown goodness. Some will conduct related activities that week such as farm tours, farmer talks, discussions, cooking demonstrations, and more.

More information about Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week can be found on the Department of Agriculture's website, [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov), and at [www.CTFarmtoChefNetwork.typepad.com](http://www.CTFarmtoChefNetwork.typepad.com), a blog created and maintained by Farm-to-Chef Harvest Celebration Week participants.

The Farm-to-Chef Program was established by the CT Department of Agriculture in 2006 to help connect local culinary professionals with producers and distributors of CT Grown products. Members enjoy Informational newsletters, workshops, networking, promotions and other opportunities as part of this free program, which also helps guide the public to dining establishments serving CT Grown foods. For more information, contact Linda Piotrowicz at 860-713-2558 or [linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov](mailto:linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov).

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