



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Connecticut Specialty Food Association Seeks Entrants for Competition on February 17, 2011 *Expanded Categories Include Beer, Wine, and Cheese*

Plantsville, Conn. – [The Connecticut Specialty Food Association](http://www.ctfoodassociation.org) (CSFA) is seeking additional entrants for its tenth Product Awards Competition on February 17, 2011, at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville.

This year's categories have been revamped to include beer, wine, and cheese. Other categories aimed at increasing participation by Connecticut farmers include certified organic product, CT Grown product, fresh fruit or vegetable, jam/honey/syrup/sweet topping, and meat/pate/fish. (A complete category list appears below.)

Eligibility is limited to ready-to-sell products made by Connecticut based companies, but both members and non-members of CSFA may participate. The deadline to enter is February 7, 2011.

Winners from past competitions have received considerable media attention and have used their trophies as effective marketing tools in promoting their products.

The 2010 Product of the Year, [The Purple Pear by Tina](#)'s Buttered Almond Cream dessert topping, was featured in four major Connecticut newspaper stories, bringing a flurry of new business to the company.

“Sales for Buttered Almond Cream now far exceed those for our other flavors,” explained the Purple Pear’s Tina Fearnley. “And the press we received has pushed our whole company to a different level.”

Sonal Miller of Mama Manju’s Salsa concurred that her CSFA award has improved business.

“People definitely take notice of the honor,” said Ms. Miller, whose Fandango Mango Salsa won the top prize for best salsa or hot sauce in the 2010 competition. “I mention it in all my marketing materials and display the plaque every time I demo my products. Customers are much more likely to try and buy when they learn it’s an award-winning salsa. It really does make a difference.”

Another benefit entrants enjoy by competing is having their products sampled by some of the state’s leading chefs and food writers. Scott Miller, executive chef at [Max’s Oyster Bar](#) and member of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture’s [Farm-to-Chef Program](#), discovered [Ola! Granola](#) at the 2008 competition and immediately began buying it for his restaurant.

“It was love at first bite,” Chef Miller recounted. “After living and working in Colorado for six years, I did not think there was anything produced here that could compare with those premium granolas, but I was wrong. If I hadn’t volunteered to be a judge, I probably would not have tried Ola! and that would have been my—and my diners’—loss.”

For more information or registration forms, contact Tricia Levesque at CSFA, 860-677-8097 or Tricia@ctfoodassociation.org.

Chefs, culinary professionals, and journalists interested in volunteering to judge should contact Linda Piotrowicz at the Department of Agriculture, 860-713-2558 or linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov.

CSFA is a non-profit subdivision of the Connecticut Food Association. The association represents small, medium, and large Connecticut based food entrepreneurs whose shared vision is to provide consumers with high-quality specialty food products.

The [Connecticut Department of Agriculture](#) (DoAG) serves on CSFA's board of directors in an advisory, non-voting capacity. CSFA and DoAG have worked in recent years to encourage CSFA members to use CT Grown ingredients in their products whenever possible, and have worked to share information about CSFA and its programming with farmers.

Categories for the 2011 competition are as follows:

1. Bean, Grain, Pasta, Rice, or Soup
2. Beer or Ale
3. Bread
 - a. Quick Bread
 - b. Yeast Bread
4. Certified Organic Product
5. Confection or Dessert
 - a. Cake
 - b. Chocolate
 - c. Cookie
 - d. Pie
6. Cheese
 - a. Aged
 - b. Fresh
7. CT Grown Product¹
8. Fresh Fruit or Vegetable
9. Frozen Food
10. Gluten Free Product
11. Herb, Spice, or Seasoning Blend
12. Hors d'oeuvre
13. Jam, Honey, Syrup, or Sweet Topping
14. Meat, Pate, or Fish

15. Non-Alcoholic Beverage
16. Oil
17. Packaged Mix²
 - a. Baked Good or Dessert
 - b. Dip or Dressing
 - c. Savory Product
18. Packaging³
19. Pasta Sauce
20. Pickle, Relish, or Tapenade
21. Salsa
22. Savory Condiment
23. Snack Food
24. Vinegar or Salad Dressing
25. Wine⁴
 - a. Blush
 - b. Dessert
 - c. Fruit
 - d. Red
 - e. Rose
 - f. White

¹ *Processed products must contain a minimum of 51% CT Grown ingredients.*

² *Submit finished product prepared from the mix.*

³ *If your product is perishable, submit packaging only.*

⁴ *Must contain 100% CT Grown fruit.*

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