

**FOR IMMEDIATE
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www.FamilyFarmed.org

Local and Organic Food Event Showcases Top Chicago Chefs, Season's First Farmers Market

CHICAGO, IL – There is no better way to enjoy fresh food from local family farms than to attend the season's first farmers market. Chicago's hottest chefs, sustainable businesses, and heads of major organic food companies will join local Midwestern farmers to create the perfect arena for those of all ages to "Taste Local Flavor" and take part in interactive food demonstrations, tastings, workshops, and movies.

This is happening at the FamilyFarmed.org EXPO on March 23 and 24 at the Chicago Cultural Center. This two-day event includes an informative food industry trade day together with an all-inclusive food festival. The many offerings range from an interactive kids corner and a bookstore with hundreds of titles, to a wide array of exhibits including growers, food processors and organizations dealing with food, farming, organics, artisanal food, gardening, public health, food policy, urban agriculture, GMO issues, fair trade, sustainability, and more. EXPO 2005 and 2006 included farmer exhibitors from 5 states and drew many from the Midwest to attend. This year's event anticipates even larger attendance, and embraces and showcases the ever-growing "localvore" lifestyle. Localvores by definition are those who are committed to eating and learning about food grown within their own "food shed" recognizing the multiple benefits of eating food grown close to home. The informal "localvore" movement has developed over the past five years in response to a food supply that has become ever more global and sprawling.

Friday's trade day is essential for those involved in the food industry and those interested in local and organic food. The **Opening Symposium and Press Event on Friday at 10:30 am** features a wide variety of top policy and food industry speakers addressing the public. Producers, distributors, retailers, consumers, and Chicago-area restaurant and institutional food buyers attend the EXPO this day to network, learn from one another, build marketing relationships, and meet local farmers, food processors, and sustainable business owners.

The **Friday evening Localicious food and wine tasting party** at 6 pm benefits local farms and businesses, as top Chicago chefs pair up with food from local farms and wines from organic vineyards. Chefs include Mehmet Ak, *Cousins Incredible Vitality*; Chipotle; Michael Altenberg, *Crust*; John Bubala, *Timo*; Greg Christian, *Greg Christian Catering*; Christophe David, *NoMI*; Mary Ellen Diaz, *First Slice*; Susie Edwards, *Fox & Obel*; Michelle Garcia, *Bleeding Heart Bakery*; Jo Kaucher, *Chicago Diner*; Joncarl Lachman, *Home Bistro*; Gilbert Langlois, *Chalkboard*; Brian Millman, *Uncommon Ground*; Erick Simmons, *MK*; Lou Sopicic, *Sweet Dreams Bakery*; and Randy Zweiben, *Nacional 27*.

Saturday's food festival includes an extensive farmers market, an interactive kids corner, food-related workshops, movies and documentaries, a bookstore, and demonstrations by some of Chicago's hottest chefs including Rick Bayless, *Frontera Grill*; Karyn Calabrese, *Karyn's Raw* and *Karyn's Cooked*; Gale Gand, *TRU*; Bruce Sherman, *North Pond*; and Timothy Young, *Food for Thought*. Workshop topics include *Organic Eating on a Dime*, *Healthy Eating for Families*, *Soil Made Simple*, and a panel on *Urban Agriculture*, among others.

Tickets for Friday or Saturday are \$15 in advance online and \$20 at the door. The Friday evening Localicious food and wine tasting party is \$75 in advance and \$90 at the door. Scheduling and other information including Friday night Localicious tickets and special 2-for-1 admission for Friday and Saturday afternoon events, are available at www.FamilyFarmed.org.

Sponsors of the 2007 FamilyFarmed.org EXPO include Goodness Greeness, Whole Foods Market, City of Chicago, Organic Valley, Chicago Green Festival, Nature's Path, Conscious Choice, Chicago Sustainable Business Alliance, Earth Friendly Products, Tallgrass Beef, Chipotle, LaSalle Bank, WCPT 850 AM, and Michael Fields Agricultural Institute.

About FamilyFarmed.org

Striving to build healthy, thriving communities, FamilyFarmed.org—a program of the Chicago-based environmental nonprofit Sustain—helps to build a food system that supports local and organic farmers by strengthening food security for the Chicagoland area while creating jobs and providing new economic opportunities. Their mission lies in connecting local and organic Midwestern farmers to new buyers.

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