



CT Department of Agriculture

May 2011

Briefs

2011 FTC WEEK

Mark your calendars! The second annual Farm-to-Chef Week will be held **September 18-24, 2011**. Last year's FTC Week attracted over 80 participants, including restaurants, private clubs, hospitals, school dining halls, corporate cafeterias, farmers' markets, and farms, all of which served a special Farm-to-Chef menu of CT Grown ingredients and CT wines. Guidelines and registration info coming soon.

FTC FARM TOURS

The first FTC Farm Tour of the season was held 4/20/11 at Roses for Autism in Guilford (see photos inside). Additional tours for 2011 include **Broad Brook Beef** and **Hastings Farm** on **6/22/11**, **Botticello** and **Deerfield Farms** **8/24/11**, and **Greywall Farm** of the Farmer's Cow on **10/19/11**. Tours are for YOUR benefit. Please take advantage of this opportunity and learn more about these FTC member farms and their products. Tours are free but registration is required. Details and a registration link will be sent out at the beginning of the month of each tour.

TRACK YOUR 2011 CT GROWN PURCHASES AND SALES

One of the most important "measuring sticks" of the Farm-to-Chef Program is quantification of the CT Grown products bought and sold by FTC commercial user and producer members. **Please keep track of your totals (in dollar amounts) throughout 2011 so we can collect this data at year's end.**

Only 48 commercial user members reported 2010 figures, but those alone totaled over \$2 million in CT Grown purchases, along with about \$879,000 in CT Grown sales to commercial users by the 26 FTC producer members who reported. These are great numbers, but we can do much better if more members report!

The importance of having complete and accurate figures cannot be overstated. The success of the program will be evaluated based on its contribution to the state's economy. PLEASE keep track of these numbers so we can have an accurate representation of the program to report at the end of 2011. Thank you!

PLEASE CHECK YOUR LISTING

Please look at the Farm-to-Chef online [resource listings](#) (including CT Grown producer/providers, restaurants/dining facilities, and specialty food producers) to see if your information is accurate and up to date. If not, please email changes to Linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov. Descriptions following the contact info are limited to a total of **500 characters** including punctuation and spaces.

If you are a producer/provider, please list only CT Grown items approved for food-service (i.e. do **not** list uninspected eggs, custom processed meats, raw milk, etc.).

CT Grown in Season MAY

Asparagus Beef Beets
Black Currant Juice Bok Choi
Broccoli Carrots Chard
Cheese Chicken Clams
Cream Eggs Fiddleheads
Fin Fish Greens Herbs
Honey Ice Cream Kale
Lamb Lettuce Lobster
Maple Microgreens Milk
Mushrooms Oysters
Peas Pork Raab
Radishes Ramps Scallops
Shoots Specialty Foods
Spinach Sprouts Veal
Wheatgrass Yogurt



Contact Us

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On Becoming a Locabibe

By Renee Allen, Wine Institute of New England

I first heard of the Connecticut Farm-to-Chef Program when a mutual acquaintance email-introduced me (the new rage) to Linda Piotrowicz of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. This acquaintance thought she might be a good connection for me as I navigated the murky waters of beginning my own wine education business in Connecticut. During my course of study for the Certified Specialist of Wine (CSW) examination, we had covered “other” regions, including the Northeast, but there was no mention of Connecticut wineries. A native New Yorker, I did not take the slight too personally, but it occupied a little space in the back of my mind.

Upon successfully completing the course and passing the CSW exam, I had the daunting task of deciding what to do with my new accolade. It was my intention to pursue food and wine writing, an avocation combining three things I held near and dear to my heart. But that little space in the back of my head was troubling me. Why was Connecticut not even mentioned during the preparatory course? And, now that I thought about it, why did I have to leave Connecticut and travel to New York to find a course that would help me prepare for certification in the wine industry? The space these thoughts were occupying in my head was getting a little bigger.

A few months after receiving my certification, I was asked by the same acquaintance, a chef by trade, to provide wine pairings for an all Connecticut sourced food, hands-on cooking class he was planning. Thrilled by an opportunity to showcase some of the interesting wines I had been researching, including some fascinating organic and biodynamic ones, I readily agreed. There was a catch. The wines would also have to be from Connecticut. I won't lie to you, folks. I knew nothing about Connecticut wines. But I have never been one to back down from a challenge, so I hit the trails. More specifically, the Connecticut Wine Trail. This may have been one of the most enlightening journeys since Dorothy hit the yellow bricks in search of Oz. And, just like Dorothy and her friends, I too found brains, heart, and courage on my travels.

Connecticut wineries comprise the most fascinating and talented people. There is no shortage of smarts here – from plant scientists, to cancer geneticists, to agricultural experts, to business professionals. And when it comes to courage, any home gardener in this state knows the true grit of braving our New England elements. Staking one's livelihood on a business that rises and falls on those elements is certainly an act of courage. But it was the heart of the men and women I met along the way that impressed me the most. I was moved by the passion these winemakers and vineyard owners shared for *vinis vinifera* (and, in some cases, *labrusca*) and for the winemaking process. This same kind of passion resonated in the words of the local produce growers whom I had the pleasure of speed dating at this year's Farm-to-Chef meeting. To grow vegetables or grapes in our challenging climate is a labor of love.

And what of the wines? I found seyval blancs with which I would replace a chardonnay any day, pinot grigios as thirst-quenching as those from Italy, fruit wines, both sparkling and still, to pair with a variety of foods, and cabernet francs that rival some of the best I have tasted from around the globe.

So I asked myself, with such a sweeping and momentous movement taking place right now to eat locally grown and raised food, which supports the local economy and benefits both the environment and our bodies, why shouldn't we feel and do the same with wine? Perhaps it is the lack of a catchy word. After all, the word *locavore* has all the requisites of representing an important movement: people understand the latin roots - loca=local, vore=to eat, and it has a catchy sound to it. So much so, that it was accepted into common usage in 2007, after being introduced by a San Francisco group trying to spread the word about sustainable agriculture. So I am proposing a word, a term, a movement, to encourage people to think local when pairing their locally caught flounder and locally grown spinach with wine for dinner. I am calling it “*locabibe*,” (pronounced with a long i, as in vibe). The rest is up to all of the wine drinkers out there.

(continued next page)

On Becoming a Locabibe (continued)

SOME OUTSTANDING CT WINES TO TRY:

Digrazia Vineyards

- *Honey Blush* – An unusual and delicious semi-dry honey and grape wine. Great for those with sulfite sensitivities because there are no added sulfites.
- Any of Dr. Digrazia's dessert wines are worth imbibing, especially *Wild Blue*, which has a high antioxidant level, and the *Blacksmith Port*, done in a ruby style.

Hopkins Vineyard

- *2009 Vineyard Reserve* – Estate grown Seyval Blanc in the style of a Viognier with luscious, floral notes and a crisp finish.
- *2007 Night Owl* – An exceptional late-harvest dessert wine made from estate grown Vidal Blanc grapes.

Jones Winery

- *2010 Pinot Gris* – CT Specialty Food Association Competition 1st place winner in the white wine category, this 100% estate grown Pinot Gris is acidic with green apple and melons, nicely balanced and thirst-quenching. An excellent expression of the Pinot Gris grape.
- *2010 Strawberry Serenade* – Made from 35% CT grown strawberries and 65% Chenin Blanc from Massachusetts, this is the perfect sparkling accompaniment to any spring or summer time festivity. The aroma and flavor of the strawberries is intoxicating without being overly sweet. The 2011 is slated to be released this month and will feature Chenin Blanc from California.
- *Black Currant Bouquet* – CT Specialty Food Association Competition 1st place winner in the fruit wine category, this dessert wine is intense, jammy and tart.

Saltwater Farm Vineyard

- *2009 Estate Sauvignon Blanc* – An elegant example of this grape with floral and citrus notes.

Stonington Vineyards

- *2007 Cabernet Franc* – CT Specialty Food Association Competition 1st place winner in the red wine category, this is one of the best expressions of Cabernet Franc I have had in Connecticut. Earthy, with aromas of dark berries and hints of mushrooms and forest floor.



Renée B. Allen is the Founder and Director of the Wine Institute of New England (WINE) and a Certified Specialist of Wine. WINE conducts wine appreciation classes on the wines of the world, including Connecticut, offers a CSW study course, holds private and corporate wine tasting events, does food and wine pairing events, and provides menu consultation and public relations representation. Beginning this May, WINE's website will have a monthly blog category for showcasing Connecticut winemakers and their wines. www.wineinstituteofnewengland.com.

CT Grown "Haves" and "Wants"

CT GROWN "HAVES" IN MAY

[Chef Tor Sporre'](#)

Westport
203-451-6888
torsporre@gmail.com

Lemon trees: Meyer and Ponderosa. Also have lobster cooking and wine pairing to perform at your establishment.

[Deerfield Farm](#)

Durham
Melynda Naples
860-301-7828
Jerseys@deerfieldfarm.org

Plain, vanilla, and strawberry yogurt; chocolate milk; fresh white cheese made with Jersey cow milk and flavored with different herbs; and gelato made from our own milk.

[Eagle Wood Farms](#)

Barkhamsted
Bryan Woods
860-402-4953
bryanwoods@eaglewoodfarms.com

Frozen retail portions of beef, pork, veal, lamb, pig roasters, suckling pigs. We grow our own animals. Ready-to-eat smoked items include beef sticks, hotdogs, Andouille sausage, bratwurst, pepperoni, kielbasa, liverwurst, and knockwurst.

[FreshPoint CT](#)

Daniel Batchelder
800-824-0448
Daniel.batchelder@freshpoint.com

Apples, currant juice, goat cheese (chevre and feta), wheat grass, eggs, seitan, tofu, fiddleheads, ramps, spring onions.

Zelda's Vegetables

Terryville
Susan
galfarmer@yahoo.com
860-585-5978

1/2 Pint green berry boxes (new) 50 for \$8.00, pickup in Terryville.

Right: A heart-shaped wreath made with dried roses produced at Roses for Autism. Wreaths are also sold through the farm's website, www.rosesforautism.com

CT GROWN "WANTS" IN MAY

[Chef Tor Sporre'](#)

Westport
203-451-6888
torsporre@gmail.com
CT Grown asparagus.

Frank Andrews Mobile Kitchen

Frank
203 640-9545
frank.andrews@snet.net
PYO farms wanted. I have a fully-equipped mobile kitchen and wood fired oven. As customers pick their own on your farm(s) we can provide pizzas, calzones, breads or similar on site utilizing their freshly chosen produce. I'll enter all scheduled events on my website.

[Octagon Steakhouse](#)

Groton
Executive Chef Paul Krawic
860-326-0303
pkrawic@waterfordhotelgroup.com
Octagon is seeking local farmers and local area producers to work with in showcasing local items for our Farmer's Dinner Series, Series 1 slated for July. Our Farmer's Dinners feature a reception and custom menu featuring locally grown and harvested items. Help us showcase what this region has to offer!

[Peace Tree Desserts](#)

Robyn Eads
203-448-8927
peacetreedesserts@gmail.com
Looking for a local/organic unsalted butter producer. Also want local/organic edible flowers to use in my desserts. Thanks!



CT Grown "Haves" and "Wants" (continued)

JOB OPENINGS/POSITIONS WANTED

[The Milkman Company](#)

Sandy Hook

Ed Hartz

203-426-7141

themilkman@earthlink.net

We have three job openings. (1) Chef to cook prepared meals that can be frozen. Pot pies, vegetarian entrees, baked goods, etc. Meals will be made with fresh ingredients from local farms. (2) Sales and marketing. (3) People to deliver farm fresh foods in Fairfield County. Please email Ed Hartz at themilkman@earthlink.net.

Oxen Hill Farm

Suffield

www.oxenhillfarm.com

Lisa Griffin

860-986-2284

lisa@oxenhillfarm.com

Seeking farmers' market assistant for Fairfield county markets (Greenwich, Fairfield, Stamford.) Candidate will be familiar with selection, storage and preparation of a wide variety of vegetables and have experience working in a fast-paced environment with customers that have high expectations. Must be available every Saturday, rain or shine, from 8am-1pm or 4pm, depending on market. A competitive wage will be paid, commensurate with experience and performance. Send resume to lisa@oxenhillfarm.com in order to apply.

[River Tavern](#) / [Dinners at the Farm](#)

Chester

Erica

860-526-9417

At River Tavern & Dinners at the Farm we're looking for talented sous chefs, line cooks, waitstaff and interns. The right person will have at least two years serious kitchen experience and shares our philosophy of simple careful cooking. Great opportunity to work in a kitchen (and/or outdoor kitchen) where the menu changes daily and consists of the highest quality, locally grown ingredients.

Sodexo Campus Services

Lakeville

Mary Attenweiler

Mary.Attenweiler@sodexo.com

Sodexo Campus Services at The Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, CT, is looking to hire a full-time sustainability director. If interested please contact

Mary.Attenweiler@sodexo.com



Photos from 4/20/11 tour at Roses for Autism (from top):
 One of the L-O-N-G glass greenhouses at the farm
 Rose bushes inside one of the greenhouses
 Rose bud nearly ready to cut

Happenings

The outdoor [Farmers' Market at Billings Forge](#) opens 5/5/11, 11-2, 563 Broad Street, Hartford, and will feature a book signing and demo by chef-author Terry Walters, WNPR live radio broadcast of The Colin McEnroe Show, and music by state troubadour Chuck Costa. 860-878-1854 or rdeckerparry@hartfordfarmersmarket.org for more info.

CT NOFA's Pasture Evaluation Workshop will be held on 5/9/11 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Community Farm of Simsbury. \$10 for CT NOFA members/\$15 for non-members. See www.ctnofa.org for details or call 203-888-5146.

Urban Oaks annual organic seedling sale with hundreds of varieties of heirloom tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, herbs, and more begins Friday 5/13/11 and continues for 5 weeks (Fridays and Saturdays) through 6/11/11. For more information, contact urbanoaks@earthlink.net.

White Flower Farm, Litchfield. "New Plants for 2011", 5/14/11 at 10:00 a.m. Nursery Manager Barb Pierson will show this year's exciting varieties of new plants and take you on a guided tour of our colorful display gardens with hundreds of spring bulbs in bloom. Free. Please register at: www.whiteflowerfarm.com/new-plants-2011-reg.html

[White Silo Farm & Winery](#)'s 4th annual asparagus festival runs 12-5 on 5/14/11 and 5/15/11. Live music, winery and field tours, and tours will be held. Admission to this family-oriented event is free. Dishes prepared from the farm's asparagus will be offered at \$5-6 per small plate. 860-355-0271 for info.

2011 Taste of the Nation will be held in Hartford 5/19/11 and in New Haven 6/8/11. Savor the finest food, spirits, and wine from the hottest chefs and mixologists. 100% of ticket sales support Share Our Strength's effort to end childhood hunger. [Learn more](#).

Peonies, Wine & Jazz, a fundraiser for CT NOFA, will be held on 5/20/11 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Hosted by Cricket Hill Garden in Thomaston. \$50 for CT NOFA members/\$65 for non-members. See www.ctnofa.org for details or call 203-888-5146.

Tomatomania! will run 9-5, 5/20/11 – 5/22/11, at White Flower Farm in Litchfield. Over 100 varieties of tomato seedlings to choose from, plus fertilizers, stakes, ties, containers, and a selection of herbs and vegetables to make this year's garden the best ever. Experts will be on hand to answer your questions.

The next free [Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network](#) (NMPAN) webinar, The Business of Meat Processing: Planning & Profitability, will be held from 1-2 on 6/2/11. Webinar is free and open to the public. To attend, go to <http://connect.extension.iastate.edu/nichemeat> a few minutes before start time and log in as a guest.

The outdoor season of the [Coventry Regional Farmers' Market](#) kicks off 6/5/11, 11-2, at the Nathan Hale Homestead, and features Emily Brooks, author of *Connecticut Farmer and Feast*, 43 farmers featured in the book, a visit from the Farmer's Cow and calf, pony rides, sheep shearing, antique tractors, and more.

[White Silo Farm & Winery](#)'s Rhubarb Festival runs 6/11/11 and 6/12/11; Mid-Summer Harvest runs 7/23/11 and 7/24/11, Blackberry Festival runs 8/20/11 and 8/21/11; Raspberry Festival runs 9/17/11 and 9/18/11. See website's [events](#) page for details.

Save the Date! The [Connecticut Wine Festival](#) will be held 7/30/11 – 7/31/11 at the Goshen Fairgrounds in Goshen.

The 11th Annual Celebration of Connecticut Farms will take place 9/11/11 at Jones Family Farms in Shelton. Guests can enjoy spectacular dishes featuring ingredients from over 50 farms across the state and prepared by chefs from 24 of Connecticut's best restaurants. Purchase tickets at CelebrationofCTFarms.org, or call 860-247-0202.

The second annual Farm-to-Chef Week will run 9/28-11 through 9/24/11, and will feature restaurants, dining halls, and other eateries serving special Farm-to-Chef menus of CT Grown ingredients and local wines.

Miscellaneous Announcements

Wave Hill Breads is moving to Norwalk and has space for rent in Wilton. Zoned retail and approved for food production, the space has a food license with sinks, Bongard oven with loader, and more. If no interest in renting, we will sell equipment. Margaret Sapir, 203 984 8771, info@wavehillbreads.com.

The Kitchen Co-Op has equipment for sale! Two candy-apple red, commercial-grade 6-qt. KitchenAid mixers and attachments \$250 each (retail for \$365). Standing single door commercial freezer (stainless), \$600. Standing single (glass) door commercial fridge, \$600. Speed rack, \$100. Contact Anne Watkins for more info, kitchencoop@gmail.com or 203-243-9419.

The First Lady's [Chefs Move to Schools](#) program, run through USDA, seeks chefs to work with local schools to serve healthy food to students. There are plenty of schools in CT that have not yet been matched with chefs. If interested, check out the program's [information page for chefs](#). Chefs should contact schools directly if they would like to partner with them.

[CT Sea Grant](#) and the CT Seafood Council are offering insulated bags, 13" x 14" x 7" with zipper top. Keep seafood, meat, dairy, and other temperature-sensitive foods cold and safe! Great for farmers markets, farm stands, etc. \$3.25 each plus shipping (or pick up). Nancy Balcom, 860-405-9107 or nancy.balcom@uconn.edu.



Above, Lori Gregan at *Roses for Autism* shows one of the bud vases from the farm's restaurant program. Vases are picked up once a week, cleaned, restocked with a fresh rose, then delivered back to the restaurant.

The Farm-to-Chef newsletter is published electronically at the beginning of each month and welcomes submissions from members and others. Get the complete [submission guidelines](#).

Please email copy to Linda.Piotrowicz@ct.gov no later than the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's newsletter. The editor reserves the right to decline submissions for any reason. Copy may be edited for space, grammar, and/or clarity. All submissions become property of the Farm-to-Chef Program.



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860-713-2516 fax
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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.