2013 Local Foods Directory

Calling all farmers markets and local foods producers - we are gathering information for our 2013 Local Foods Directory. All participants in last year’s directory should have received the 2013 form. However, if you did not receive it or you wish to be added as a new market/producer, please contact us as soon as possible.

All information was due January 28 at 5:00 p.m.
Please contact Amanda Godfread at agodfread@nd.gov or (701) 328-2659 if you still need to submit your information.

New USDA Microloan Program

MEMPHIS, Jan. 15, 2013—Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced a new microloan program from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) designed to help small and family operations, beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers secure loans under $35,000. The new microloan program is aimed at bolstering the progress of producers through their start-up years by providing needed resources and helping to increase equity so that farmers may eventually graduate to commercial credit and expand their operations. The microloan program will also provide a less burdensome, more simplified application process in comparison to traditional farm loans.

“I have met several small and beginning farmers, returning veterans and disadvantaged producers interested in careers in farming who too often must rely on credit cards or personal loans with high interest rates to finance their start-up operations,” said Vilsack. “By further expanding access to credit to those just starting to put down roots in farming, USDA continues to help grow a new generation of farmers, while ensuring the strength of an American agriculture sector that drives our economy, creates jobs, and provides the most secure and affordable food supply in the world.”

The new microloans, said Vilsack, represent how USDA continues to make year-over-year gains in expanding credit opportunities for minority, socially-disadvantaged and young and beginning farmers and ranchers across the United States. The final rule establishing the microloan program will be published in the Jan. 17 issue of the Federal Register. The interest rate for USDA’s new microloan product changes monthly and is currently 1.25 percent.

Administered through USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) Operating Loan Program, the new microloan program offers credit options and solutions to a variety of producers. FSA has a long history of providing agricultural credit to the nation’s farmers and ranchers through its Operating Loan Program. In assessing its programs, FSA evaluated the needs of smaller farm operations and any unintended barriers to obtaining financing. For beginning farmers and ranchers, for instance, the new microloan program offers a simplified loan application process. In addition, for those who want to grow niche crops to sell
Eating Local in the Winter - Creamy Tomato Soup

**Ingredients:**
- 1 qt. canned tomatoes (whole or pureed)
- 1/2 c. chopped celery
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1 T. brown sugar
- salt to taste

**White Sauce**
- 1/2 c. butter
- 1/2 c. flour
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 4 c. milk

**Directions:**
1. Bring tomatoes, celery, onion, brown sugar, and salt to a boil and keep at a low boil for 10 min. Simmer until onions and celery are soft. Remove from heat.
2. Puree tomato mixture in the blender.
3. Make White Sauce - melt butter in a saucepan. Add 3 cups of milk and bring to just below a boil.
4. Mix flour and last cup of milk in a bowl and whisk thoroughly. Slowly pour into milk/butter mixture, whisking constantly.
5. Stirring constantly, simmer until thickened. Stir in basil.
6. Stir white sauce into the tomato puree.

Source: www.simplycanning.com
New Local Foods Specialist
As the new local foods specialist for the Dept. of Agriculture, I look forward to working with all of you to strengthen our local foods network in North Dakota.

For more than 10 years I have worked to champion issues North Dakota, such as education, our young professionals, and more. I have developed strategic operational and marketing plans, and done outreach through websites, magazines, and events to best reach target audiences. I am also a foodie, who gardens and loves to cook with fresh fruits and veggies every day.

The 2013 Local Foods Conference in April will be a great opportunity to meet you all before the farmers market season begins. This year we are working with the Dakota Garden Expo to encourage people interested in growing food at all levels to network and share their passion. Beyond our conference sessions, you are invited to have a booth at the Garden Expo if that is useful for you and your business. More details on the weekend will be coming soon.

Thank you for your partnership and entrepreneurial spirit for local foods in North Dakota. I am excited to be part of the team.
Super Bowl Ready - Roasted Sweet Potato Wedges

Ingredients:
- 4 large sweet potatoes or yams, skin on, cut length-wise into 1/2-inch wedges
- 2 T. canola oil
- 1/3 c. brown sugar
- 1/4 c. walnuts
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. curry powder

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 450F.
2. Place walnuts in a mini-chopper or food processor and grind.
3. Mix ground walnuts, sugar, salt, and curry in a small bowl.
4. In a large bowl, toss potato wedges with canola oil and 1/2 of the walnut mixture.
5. Spread potatoes evenly on a greased jelly roll pan.
6. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes or until golden brown and tender when pierced with a fork.
7. Place in serving dish and sprinkle the remaining walnut mixture on top.


Get Squashed

Squash is an incredibly diverse food that is actually native to our country, and was enjoyed by Native Americans long before Europeans arrived. Here are three fun facts to help you want to “get squashed.”

1. Squash is officially a fruit and the smaller the squash, the more flavorful it will be.

2. Winter varieties of squash produce more beta carotene after storage than when fresh from the vine.

3. Sweet dumpling squash is so sweet that if baked whole and served with cinnamon, it makes for a great dessert.

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Local Foods Conference
April 11-12, Bismarck Civic Center

Dakota Garden Expo
April 12-13, Bismarck Civic Center

{upcoming events}