



going local {news}

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Winter 2013

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

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Let us know by sending the information to agodfread@nd.gov. Or, share it on one of our networking communities:

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applicants can apply for an operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

USDA farm loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and supplies, or be to construct buildings or make farm improvements. Small farmers often rely on credit cards or personal loans, which carry high interest rates and have less flexible payment schedules, to finance their operations. Expanding access to credit, USDA's microloan will provide a simple and flexible loan process for small operations.

Producers interested in applying for a microloan may contact their local Farm Service Agency office.

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directly to ethnic markets and farmers markets, the microloan program offers a path to obtain financing. For past FSA Rural Youth Loan recipients, the microloan program provides a bridge to successfully transition to larger-scale operations.

Since 2009, USDA has made a record amount of farm loans through FSA—more than 128,000 loans totaling nearly \$18 billion. USDA has increased the number of loans to beginning farmers and ranchers from 11,000 loans in 2008 to 15,000 loans in 2011. More than 40 percent of USDA's farm loans now go to beginning farmers. In addition, USDA has increased its lending to socially-disadvantaged producers by nearly 50 percent since 2008.

Producers can apply for a maximum of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation, delivery vehicles, and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As their financing needs increase,



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 sauce pan. 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.



Save the Date: April 11-12



2013 Dakota Grown

Local Foods Conference

& NDFMGA Annual Meeting

Bismarck, ND



*In connection with the Dakota Garden Expo
April 12-13

You are invited to the 2013 Dakota Grown Local Foods Conference in Bismarck, April 11-12. It is your opportunity to learn from fellow local foods enthusiasts, network with growers and consumers, and hear about new strategies and regulations that will make a difference for you. Save the date and watch for more information coming soon!

For more information, visit:

www.nd.gov/ndda/program/local-food-initiative



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.

Source: North Dakota State University Extension Service, <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise/recipes/vegetables/roasted-sweet-potato-wedges>.

{upcoming events}

Local Foods Conference

April 11-12, Bismarck Civic Center

Dakota Garden Expo

April 12-13, Bismarck Civic Center

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.



NORTH DAKOTA
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