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News Release
Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension program coordinator, wiemer@iastate.edu, 563-794-0599

Taste of Northeast Iowa Set for Oct. 6

DECORAH – Mirroring the growing national movement in regional food production and healthier living, northeast Iowans have shown an increased interest in locally produced food. To celebrate the wonderful foods grown here, several community partners are hosting a sampling event to delight any palate.

A Taste of Northeast Iowa will feature farms, restaurants, caterers, microbreweries and wineries from Northeast Iowa. The event will take place at the Elks Lodge in Decorah from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Attendees will browse the food tables and visit with the people who grow and prepare the food.

The cost is $10 per person. Children 9 and under are free with attending adult. Tickets are available at the Oneota Community Food Coop in Decorah.

Proceeds will go to the Food & Fitness fund at the Northeast Iowa Funders Network. The Network is a regional network of funders committed to growing healthy communities by encouraging partnerships, promoting local community foundation endowment funds and raising and pooling project funds to benefit Northeast Iowa. An innovative approach to project sustainability, the Network received the Nonprofit Collaboration Award at the Iowa Nonprofit Summit in 2010.

This celebration of local food is sponsored by GROWN Locally, Oneota Community Food Coop, Farm Bureau, Sodexo, NE IA Food & Fitness Initiative, NE IA Buy Fresh, Buy Local, the Elks and FoodCorps.

For more information, visit www.iowafreshfood.com.

Photos & Captions
Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, FFI Communications Coordinator, wiemer@iastate.edu; 563-794-0599.

Cooking School for School Cooks
Some local school food service staff are sharpening their cooking skills by attending 5th Season Workshops hosted by the Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative Farm to School program.
A 5th Season Workshop is designed to teach food service staff how to prepare and store local foods from farmers or school gardens. As the name implies, the fifth season is when you utilize local foods that have been preserved by a variety of methods in meals.

At one workshop, guest chef and author Monique Hooker from De Soto, Wisconsin showed food service workers how to prepare and store fresh local produce to be used throughout the school year by creating a vegetable dish called ratatouille. The ratatouille was frozen and will be used in pizza, lasagnas and other dishes for school lunch at South Winneshiek this year.

At another workshop, guest Chef Jason Skarin from Luther Collage led a stir-fry workshop at Decorah Middle School. Food service staff prepared and froze stir-fry vegetables from the school garden and local farmers.

Research shows that transforming school food and increasing physical activity improves student health and academic performance, and lowers absenteeism. Increasing healthy, locally grown foods in schools is financially feasible and benefits the entire Northeast Iowa economy.

Cooks from five schools participated in the trainings: Decorah, Oelwein, Turkey Valley, Postville and S. Winneshiek. For more details about any of the Farm to School project, visit www.iowafoodandfitness.org.

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DOWNLOAD photo here.
Participants at the 5th Season Stir-fry Workshop at Decorah Middle School in September.
Front row (L to R): Stephanie Conant, FoodCorps; Dawn Groth, Decorah; Sonja Arneson-Ecklund, Elizabeth Makarewicz, Melanie Stewart, AmeriCorps. Back row (L to R): Sandy Felke, Decorah; Chef Jason Skarin, Luther College; Jane Bullerman, Decorah; Deb Vargason and Pat Rechkemmer, Oelwein; Laura Lechtenberg, South Winneshiek; Diane Shileny, Turkey Valley.

DOWNLOAD photo here.
Participants at the 5th Season Ratatouille Workshop at S. Winneshiek High School in August:
Front row (L to R): Chef Monique Hooker; Lynn Imoehl and Marlys Oakland, S. Winn; Diane Shileny, Turkey Valley; JoDee Anderson, Deb Schultz and Mandi Sebastian, Postville. Back row (L to R): Robin Hageman, Pay Heying, Laura Lechtenberg, S. Winn; Felke, Laurie Smith, Julie Ash, Chris Thone, Postville.

News Release
Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, ISU Extension program coordinator, wiemer@iastate.edu, 563-794-0599

DOWNLOAD photo at this link. (Click the arrow next to Actions and select Download Photo.)

School Food Service Workers Complete ServSafe Training
School food service employees from five school districts participated in a day-long food safety in-service this summer taught by Iowa State University Extension specialist Cindy Baumgartner. The training was part of the Farm to School project in northeast Iowa.

Nineteen food service staff from South Winneshiek, Oelwein, West Central, MFL Mar-Mac and Central of Elkader school districts participated in the training.

ServSafe® is a program of the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. The training focuses on food hazards and proper food handling practices to keep food safe and protect the
establishment against foodborne-illness outbreaks. Participants learned about prevention, regulatory requirements, and how to improve food quality.

Participants have the option of testing for certification upon completion of training. Ninety-five percent of the participants passed the exam and are ServSafe® certified for five years. For more information about ServSafe, contact Cindy Baumgartner at 563-927-4201 or cbaum@iastate.edu.

PHOTO CAPTION
Food Safety Class
Participants in the ServSafe training and the school or organization they represent: Back row (L to R): Cindy Baumgartner, ISU Extension; Millie Streittmatter, Oelwein; Janice Turner, Oelwein; Laura Lechtenberg, S. Winn; Lynn Boleyn, Oelwein; Deb Vargason, Oelwein; Kathy Westendorf, West Central; Marlys Oakland, S. Winn; Tammi Fink, West Central. Middle (L to R): Sarah Lewey, MFL Mar-Mac; Dee Dee Larson, Oelwein; Lynn Bartels, Oelwein; Barb Zubrod, Oelwein; Tina Lewis, Oelwein; Pat Rechkemmer, Oelwein; Wilma Miller, West Central. Front Row: Jeanne Krueger, MFL Mar-Mac; Rose Engelhardt, Central; Lori Bunting, Central; Dawn Ledesma, Oelwein.

Other Releases
Road Safety: A Shared Responsibility
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/road-safety-shared-responsibility
Vehicle drivers will be encountering slow-moving agricultural equipment on Iowa roadways as harvest gets under way. When all drivers understand agricultural equipment movement and proper signage, and how to approach the equipment, roadway safety becomes a shared responsibility.

Remember Tax Tips When Paying College Expenses
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/remember-tax-tips-when-paying-college-expenses
Mary Beth Kaufman, a family finance program specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, reminds students and parents paying college expenses to keep receipts and be aware of tax benefits that can help offset college costs.

This information has been sent to you by Teresa Wiemerslage, Regional Communications Coordinator for Region 4 ISU Extension, wiemer@iastate.edu, 563-794-0599.

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