



Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture to Host 21st Annual Farming for the Future Conference

January 22 • Posted by Guest Authors • No Comments

The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), in partnership with Food Alliance, announces two opportunities for food service industry professionals to connect with sustainable food producers during PASA's [21st Annual Farming for the Future Conference](#).

The events – the **FoodSource Connection and Food Alliance**: Advocating for Sustainability in the Food and Agricultural Industries – will be held **February 1, 2012** at the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel in State College, PA in concert with a pre-conference track titled, "Sustainability in the Food Service Industry."

The FoodSource Connection is a small-scale food exhibition during which producers and purveyors of Pennsylvania food products will showcase their wares. They will be joined by a selection of farmers, growers and producers from the mid-Atlantic who are certified by Food Alliance, an organization providing comprehensive third-party certification for social and environmental responsibility in agriculture and the food industry. The FoodSource Connection will begin at 4:30 pm.



"Sourcing locally is more than a trend in food service," says Megan Epler, Business Outreach Coordinator at PASA. "Many chefs are embracing it as the way to do business, and educated customers have come to expect high quality restaurants to source local, high quality food. The FoodSource Connection will showcase some of Pennsylvania's best products."

Immediately following the FoodSource Connection, Food Alliance Executive Director Scott Exo and PASA Executive Director Brian Snyder will host an interactive session titled, "Food Alliance: Advocating for Sustainability in the Food and Agricultural Industries." The session will include a brief overview of Food

Alliance, as well as a moderated panel discussion featuring Food Alliance Certified producers from in and around Pennsylvania.

“This discussion will be a valuable opportunity to introduce those in the food service industry to Food Alliance,” says Snyder. “This certification gives our regional farmers a tool to differentiate their products in the retail or food service setting, and it gives chefs a better means to separate the marketing of food from the reality of production practices.”



Participants will have the opportunity to sample food from local, Food Alliance Certified farmers and network with producers and other food industry professionals.

Interested parties are encouraged to register for the two-day “Sustainability in the Food Service Industry” pre-conference track, though food service professionals are invited attend the FoodSource Connection and the Food Alliance session at no cost.

“The ‘Sustainability in the Food Service Industry’ track is a great way to put farmers and chefs in the same room where they can gather new ideas and have an opportunity to network,” says Jamie Moore, Director of Sourcing and Sustainability at Eat n’ Park Restaurants and one of the track’s organizers. “Where else can you see farmers teaching chefs how to prepare grass-fed beef or educating them about the benefits of raw milk cheese? It’s so great to see these two types of artisans working together in building a stronger local food system.”

The one-and-a-half day track will meet February 1-2 and cover a wide variety of topics related to food service and sustainability, from kitchen composting to on-site gardening at restaurants.

“Chefs and food service professionals who want to support Pennsylvania’s growing local food economy will not want to miss these events,” says Epler.

Attendance of the Farming for the Future Conference is expected to once again exceed 2,000 farmers, chefs, students, business leaders and others from over 30 U.S. states and several foreign nations. The event will be held February 1-4, 2012 around the theme “Breaking Ground for a New Agriculture: Cultivating Versatility and Resilience.”

The Farming for the Future Conference is made possible in part by [PASA-bilities Sponsor Kimberton Whole Foods](#), Patrons of Sustainability Sponsors Pennsylvania Certified Organic, The Rodale Institute and Spiral Path Farm and Media Partners Farming Magazine and Mother Earth News.

To learn more about the Farming for the Future Conference, and to register online, visit pasafarming.org/conference.