

FY 2009 Congressional Appropriations/SBA

Senator Jack Reed  
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse

Final Report from

RI Rural Development Council (RIRDC)

and

Farm Fresh Rhode Island (FFRI)

**SBA HQ -09 - I - 0149**

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## LETTER OF THANKS

The Rhode Island Rural Development Council (RIRDC) and Farm Fresh Rhode Island (FFRI) are very humbled and appreciative of the funding awarded to our respective requests for FY 2009 congressional appropriations by Senator Jack Reed and Senator Sheldon Whitehouse.

The funding assistance provided new levels of economic marketplace benefits to the agricultural community in Rhode Island and, in reaching out to all Rhode Islanders about the availability and freshness of our local food products. Fresh local foods were provided through a myriad of programs by Farm Fresh RI from its seven Providence metro area summer farmers markets, its highly successful indoor winter farmers market in Pawtucket, Rhode Island's Hope Artisan mill complex, and the upstart of the Market Mobile, which is an online ordering system for commercial businesses and institutions to buy local food products directly from local farmers and delivered to their businesses.

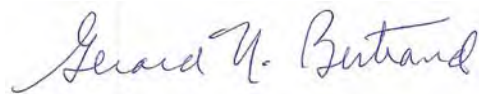
The Rhode Island Rural Development Council offered several programs that encouraged economic growth, marketing, and educational awareness within our agricultural community. Its programs focused on support to local farms, new business collaborations, value-added products, marketing promotion of local products complimenting the RI DEM Division of Agriculture's new statewide campaign "Get Fresh, Buy Local", and educational awareness and workforce training for jobs in the industry.

We wish to thank Senators Reed and Whitehouse for recognizing the importance of our agricultural history and its farm communities, and the confidence and trust in our organizations to provide strong systems and lasting alliances for growth in our State.

Sincerely,



Noah Fulmer, Executive Director  
Farm Fresh Rhode Island



Gerard Bertrand, Executive Director  
RI Rural Development Council



Chase Hogboom  
Board President, FFRI  
*President, Composite Energy Technologies*

Geoffrey A. Marchant  
Board President, RIRDC  
*Exec. Director, E.G. Community Consortium*

## Senator Jack Reed

## Senator Sheldon Whitehouse

*United States Senators for Rhode Island and Providence Plantation*

**July 17, 2008**

### **Press Release**

Senate Panel Approves \$600,000 for Rhode Island in Financial Services Plan

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) announced that the Appropriations Committee has approved legislation including \$600,000 in funding for two Rhode Island small business development projects he requested as part of the 2009 Financial Services and General Government spending bill.

“This bill would help small businesses in East Providence harness green technology and save money through sustainable development,” said Reed, a member of the Appropriations Committee. “Rhode Island’s farms and open spaces are vital to our state heritage, culture, and economy. Federal support in this bill would increase the economic opportunities for our farms by helping them develop and distribute fresh, healthy, and locally grown produce and products.”

\$245,000 for the East Providence Waterfront District Commission

The Commission will use this federal funding to provide technical assistance to small businesses seeking to renovate existing buildings or develop property using green building design and technology. The Waterfront District would be a showcase for innovative and sustainable design approaches and an incubator for green technology firms.

### **\$350,000 for the Rhode Island Rural Development Council and Farm Fresh Rhode Island**

**The Rhode Island Rural Development Council (RIRDC) and Farm Fresh Rhode Island will use this federal funding to support Rhode Island’s rural small businesses by helping them develop and market agricultural products and produce for sale in the local and regional markets. (NOTE: Final Award was \$332,500).**

The bill includes an additional \$32 million that Reed, Chairman of the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment, requested for the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to help the agency meet its mission and protect investors; maintain fair, orderly, and efficient markets; and facilitate capital formation.

“The President’s budget request for 2009 does not provide adequate funding for critical SEC programs integral to tackling the current economic crisis and preventing future crises. This additional \$32 million will allow the SEC to address gaping holes in regulation of our capital markets; ensure adequate supervision of market participants; address staff retention problems; and provide the commission with the necessary tools to carry out its functions,” concluded Reed.

Passing this bill out of the full Appropriations Committee is a critical first step in the lengthy appropriations process, which may not be completed until next year. The bill must now clear the Senate and also be passed by the U.S. House of Representatives. It then goes to the President’s desk and would have to be signed into law. President Bush has threatened to veto this bill as he did last year with other critical domestic spending packages.

###

## HIGHLIGHTS

### RHODE ISLAND RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

#### RI RAISED LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION



The RI Raised Livestock Association received appropriations in the amount of \$24,000 for its logistical planning and implementation of livestock processing. It also provided funds for its marketing programs, educational workshops and outreach to local livestock farmers. The organization was funded with two earlier grant funds from The Rhode Island Foundation and the USDA-RD Rural Business Enterprise Grant program. The Senate Appropriations were used to continue these efforts as they moved to sustainability. The non-profit association was incorporated with nine (9) original farmers with organizational assistance from RIDEM, RI Rural Development Council, and Eastern RI Conservation District.

The 2010 membership was 120 paid members with 35 members currently permitted and licensed to sell meats and value added meat products at Farmers Markets statewide, from on-farm direct sales and wholesale to local restaurants and food institutions. Their organization is currently self-sustaining and operational without any grant funds.

Kim Ziegelmayr served as the Director of the RI Raised Livestock Association (RIRLA). She is an independent contractor hired and paid with SBA Congressional appropriations funds awarded to the RI Rural Development for the organization, administration, and functions of the RI Raised Livestock's meat processing logistics program. Farm ordering and logistics planning for livestock slaughter processes consumes the bulk of her 25 hours per week part-time work activities. She also coordinates the monthly Association Board Meetings and plans for the Annual Member Meeting and Annual Association Dinner.

During the SBA grant period, Executive Director G. Bertrand and Kim Ziegelmayr made application to the USDA-RD RBOG grant process for a strategic planning initiative to complete the process for this non-profit to move towards full sustainability. This grant application was not successfully awarded to our Council. This unsuccessful grant was very disappointing to the mission of the RI Raised Livestock Association as it moves towards sustainability. Because of its success, farmers now express more interest in increasing herds to raise on-farm livestock revenues but seek greater access to processing time slots. Facilities which are in Massachusetts might be an alternative to current in-state processing but most prefer the current RI facility.

From an economic development standpoint, the Westerly Packing Company earned approximately \$300,000 of additional revenue (to date) from activities directly related to processing for the RI Raised Livestock Association. The Westerly Packing Company, a USDA certified processor (for profit), has recently purchased a new \$40,000 cryovac machine specifically for the new business with RIRLA and, is updating the label machine software to

provide farm logos for each farm member's meat products. The Westerly Packing Company continues to pursue the zoning approvals issues needed for the expansion plan for their meat processing facility within the town of Westerly, RI. The expansion of their building (once approved) will provide dedicated freezer space and processing specific for the increased needs and expansion of the RI Raised Livestock processing activities.

Planning is underway for the RI Raised Livestock Assn's second year fundraising dinner event and planning for next year's many seasonal pasture walk educational programs for its farm members conducted by participating farm members.



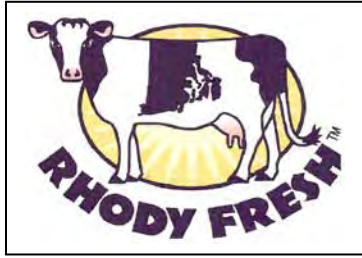
**Pictured from Left to Right at RI Raised Annual Livestock Meeting: Lt Governor Elizabeth Roberts (welcome speech and promotion of her "Buy Local" statewide initiative) and State Senator Susan Sosnowski (keynote speaker, State Senator, and local farmer).**



**RI Raised Livestock Annual Meeting – 100 persons in attendance at West Greenwich Elks Club. Membership is now 120 members with 35 members actively selling meat products (beef, pork, lamb, chicken, turkey, and value added meat products) at Farmers Markets statewide, from on-farm sales, and wholesale to restaurants and hotels in RI.**



**RI Raised Livestock Association Annual Dinner November, 2010. This year's supper event was held at Smithfield Elks Club. Over 150 farmers, family and guests attended.**



The Rhode Island Dairy Farms Cooperative, dba, as Rhody Fresh dairy products has been funded in the past years by several grants and organizations. RI DEM Division of Agriculture was the first to provide a USDA-AMS Specialty Crops six years ago when these funds were available to help dairy farmers. Regulations changed, and the RI Rural Development Council (RIRDC) entered to assist the startup Cooperative with a USDA-Value Added

Producer Grant. It was not successful in the first round of grant awards, and the Cooperative then met with RI Economic Development Council to obtain a loan of \$125,000 for the five original dairy farmers in the Cooperative. The RIRDC eventually received a USDA-RD Rural Business Enterprise Grant to assist the group in obtaining some marketing assistance and to purchase graphic design work for its paper milk cartons. At the next round of USDA-RD Value Added Producer Grants, the RI Dairy Farms Cooperative was successful in obtaining a \$50,000 award for working capital on the initiative of dairy products in retail stores.

The Rhody Fresh group was highly successful and was profitable in 5 months from initial start of milk distribution to supermarkets. The Cooperative now sells in 120 retail supermarkets and convenience stores in Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts (Stop & Shop stores only). And, the Rhody Fresh milk products are now offered in most Colleges and Universities, and some private schools in the RI market area.

The Congressional appropriations were used to provide the startup planning and implementation for the next phase of marketing for the group. The group has decided to invest in cheese production in Rhode Island. Funds were provided to begin capitalization and research in the cheese production of farmstead high-end cheese products.

The group received two payments totaling \$32,000 for initial startup operations and planning for cheese production in Rhode Island.

The Cooperative is in its sixth year of dairy operations, has added 3 new dairy farms to the Cooperative, and does \$3 million dollars in gross revenues from its milk production operations. Dividends to farmers are provided monthly based on their milk production levels.

Currently, the RI Dairy Farms Cooperative committee is working on blueprint floor plan designs for a potential production facility site in Narragansett RI. And, concurrently working on prices of cheese processing equipment and refrigeration. The RI Dairy Farms Cooperative has again filed for a USDA-RD Value Added Producer grant for this purpose, but was unsuccessful in its last round application for grant funds.

“Rhody Fresh”, a true Rhode Island agricultural success story, continues steadfast even in a slowed Rhode Island economy.

## RI ROYAL POTATO GROWERS ASSOCIATION



The six primary potato growers are located in Newport County, Rhode Island area. They had received initial support from Farm Fresh Rhode Island to create a newly branded potato logo to be sold through a wholesaler as RI Royal Potato. The unique crest and purple plastic 5 pound bags are sold in retail supermarkets in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Eastern Connecticut.

The group of farmers requested further assistance from RI Rural Development Council when the facilitator for this project left the employ of Farm Fresh RI. Our Council and the RI DEM Division of Agriculture met with the group and proceeded to review their activities of the past year and make recommendations.

It was recommended that the group formally incorporate as the Rhode Island Royal Potato Growers Association (RIRPGA) with the RI Secretary of State's Office and begin the trademark process for the purple crest logo. The Council worked with the group to create bylaws, articles of incorporation, retain services of a Corporate Attorney, and consider other grant options. The group of farmers also wanted to create additional paper product bags for 10 lbs. and 50 lbs. sales. Farmers sell direct from farms, through wholesalers, and some sell direct to supermarket retailers and restaurants. Larger bags typically purchased by commercial entities or carried by wholesalers for later sale to restaurants, hotels and institutions.

The RI Rural Development Council used funds from USDA-RD RBEG for the retention of the graphic artist to create the templates for printed paper bags. The group also decided to change print vendor and selected Northeast Bag Company. Each farm asked to have its individual farm name printed on each bag to show the place of origin of the potatoes. These tasks were accomplished with the USDA-RD funds.



Next, with limited funding for marketing, the Congressional funds from its marketing "Get Fresh, Buy Local" account was used to create a small marketing campaign for this year with North Star Marketing consultants. Gift certificates of \$50 each were given to local shopping consumers who took a picture of their RI Royal Potato bags and forwarded to North Star Marketing via a facebook site of [www.facebook.com/riroyalpotatoes](http://www.facebook.com/riroyalpotatoes) Newspaper publicity and press releases complimented the new product introduction

and campaign. The campaign and marketing accounted for \$ 4, 195.

To leverage the Congressional appropriations, the RI Rural Development Council has been awarded a \$20,000 (two-year) grant from USDA-AMS for a full fledged campaign for RI Royal Potatoes Growers Association. Fund award is due in April, 2011.

**Ferolbink Farm Preservation (RI Royal Potato Growers Association member).**

*9/10/2010*

The Get Fresh. Buy Local. Fresh Fanatics participated in a press conference at the Ferolbink Farm preservation meeting last Friday. *Get Fresh. Buy Local.* ([www.getfreshbuylocal.org](http://www.getfreshbuylocal.org)) is a statewide campaign launched in 2009 to promote awareness of RI-grown specialty crops. The Fresh Fanatics are hitting events across the State this summer to encourage attendance at RI farmers markets and farm stands.



RI Royal Potato Growers Association campaign posters for retail stores (shown above and top right) and, USDA-RD members at Feroilbink Farm, Tiverton, RI for introduction of new RI Royal bags.

## SEA LETTUCE – (GRACILARIA) CULTIVATION

The Matunuck Oyster farm had request support and funds from RI Rural Development Council to pursue the growth of Gracilaria (sea lettuce) in Rhode Island coastal saltwater ponds. Growth of the Gracilaria is popular with Asian populations and similar products are carried in Whole Food market stores. Matunuck Oyster Farm's owner is also president of the Ocean State Aquaculture Association and sells shellfish products (from his farm and other member farms) at five Farmers Markets each weekend and during winter months.

The Gracilaria pilot is being done at the Matunuck Oyster farm with full intent once successful to expand to other Ocean State Aquaculture Association aquafarms as another value added product from local aquafarms.

The University of Rhode Island Sea Grant has taken special interest in the project and has provided some matching funds that are being expended at this time. Funds from SBA will be used for those costs not covered by URI Sea Grant and new assistance to the project is coming from Roger Williams University Aquaculture initiative. We are very pleased with URI for coming forward and participating in this new product initiative and there will be expansion of this test area in the future to bring a bounty of product to the marketplace.

The interest and assistance received on this project is very much appreciated. Support and additional funding for summer workers has come from URI Sea Grant, testing services and pasteurization of the product from URI Food and Nutrition department, and added technical support services from Roger Williams University.

Plans are for introduction and marketplace feedback and interest of the Gracilaria product from commercial buyers will occur with enthusiastic participation by the Ocean State Aquaculture Cooperative at the Boston International Seafood Show of March 20-22, 2011.





Members of the Ocean State Aquaculture Cooperative presented their shellfish product at the Boston International Seafood Show on March 20-22, 2011. As the highlight feature, the group presented the first sampling product of gracilaria (sea lettuce) produced from local Rhode Island coastal ponds. The product was approved by RI Dept of Health for consumption in March, 2011. Full production of the product will begin in the upcoming season.

## **ENVIROTHON, INC.**

Norm Hammond one of the early organizers and founder of the Envirothon that evolved from the RI Resource Conservation and Development Area Council grant, to its now nonprofit status, has provided extra curricular science training to High School students electing to be in the program with a local and national science competition each year. Some graduating students on winning teams are offered summer employment with USDA-NRCS. Three thousand dollars was provided to Envirothon, Inc. from grant funds.

Norm Hammond writes this letter to RIRDC after our Council's mutual discussion on how to encourage more Science teachers and schools to participate in the 2009 Envirothon. The 2009 Envirothon had the most schools participating in the competition than any prior years.



## **Rhode Island Envirothon, Inc.**

**17 Smith Avenue Greenville, RI 02828**

R.I. Rural Development Council  
Gerard Bertrand - Executive Director  
35 Belver Avenue, Suite 117  
North Kingston, RI 02852

Dear Jerry:

I am writing to give an interim report on the use of the funds that we received from the RI RDC for operation of the Rhode Island Envirothon. We have allocated \$ 1000 to assist schools with cost of Substitute teachers and travel expenses to the competition. This is to match a grant from the Canon Envirothon Diversity Grant to promote participation from underserved schools, both Urban and Rural. As of this time we have registered three schools that have not previously competed and one school that has not been able to compete for several years. Schools will be reimbursed after their teams compete in the May event.

We have used \$ 500 to update and improve our web site by adding study guides and curriculum information. Also, we have produced and/or purchased study materials for schools expressing an interest in competing in this years' event.

Funds have been allocated to purchase food for the event day lunch for participants, judges and volunteers as well as partial funding for the Coordinator position that is so vital to a successful event.

The Rhode Island Envirothon thanks the Rural Development Council in its interest in and support of our program to educate high school students in Environmental Awareness and best practices in Aquatics, Forestry, Soils and Wildlife management.

This years' "Environmental Issue" is "Protection of Groundwater through Urban, Agricultural and Environmental Planning".

Sincerely,

Norman Hammond, Secretary/Treasurer

**GROUNDWORK PROVIDENCE  
– RI NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE CERTIFICATION**

*A Groundwork Providence initiative in partnership with– RI Nursery and Landscape Certification for training and jobs*

A unique training program and affiliation was developed several years ago with former, Ken Lagerquist, Executive Director RINLA and then former Executive Director Clint Lank of Groundwork, Providence.

The early success of an environmental training initiative leading to jobs for unemployed workers was restarted with new Groundwork Providence Executive Director, Joseph Vaughan, with funds received from City of Providence-Mayor David Cicillini, Senator Jack Reed, and RI Rural Development Council, and of course, participating professionals from RI Nursery and Landscape Association.

Multiple classes of 22 candidates received classroom training, with eleven (11) candidates successfully completed and passed the written exam for the RI Certification in Nursery and Landscape. The exam provides successful candidate with a certification that is recognized by all six (6) New England States for Nursery and Landscape skills achievement.

Funds from the RI Rural Development Council congressional funds were used for landscape equipment and safety equipment for workers. Jobs were provided to six candidates to perform restoration of walking trails in urban Providence area. Others were placed with landscape companies. The funds amounted to \$6500.



Pictured above: (L-R) U.S. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and then City of Providence Mayor David Cicilline (now U.S. Representative Cicilline (D-RI) at the Outdoor Ceremony at Neutaconkanut Hill Park, Providence, RI. Neutaconkanut Hill Park is the last remaining place for wild, outdoors walking trails in city of Providence RI. Walking paths and trails are being repaired and cleared of obstructions and shrub growth by team of new workers. Pictured are four of the six persons hired for restoration of Neutaconkanut Hill Park trails in Providence RI.

Shown below in left photo is Joseph Vaughan, Executive Director of nonprofit Groundwork Providence at the Ceremony. Right photo: Four of the Groundwork Prov, RINLA graduates hired for trail work at Neutaconkanut Hill Project, Providence, RI.



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## **BEEKEEPER TRAINING**

An independent initiative was started with Ocean State Bees, a nonprofit, in partnership with the RI Rural Development Council, but not affiliated with the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association (RIBA). Currently, the RIBA annual holds classes for interested individuals, groups and students interested in beekeeping practices. They offer a beginners course. However, the group doesn't offer any additional programs for its members or the general public on the importance of bees to pollination of vegetable, fruit and other fruit bearing plants and trees. Ocean State Bees, members of the RIBA, believed there was a need to create more advanced assistance and programs for those who has aspirations to be professional beekeepers or farmers seeking greater yields for their crops.

It was the intent of this Ocean State Bees to offer advanced course of study on pollination to encourage persons to start local bee businesses or add bees to their farm's or backyard uses for pollination and propagation of local bees. A fund of \$7200 was set-aside for this initiative. The training was conducted over a two-year period and required at least 45 candidates for a successful completion of this program.

Three classes were planned to meet goals and deliverables. The last program was held on April 30, 2011 at the URI East Farm training center (Bldg 75). Thirty-six people were registered for attendance. Mentoring will continue through the summer months for pollination training support by the two consultant/instructors, Mark Robar and Mike Southern with added assisted from Mike Cabral.



**Hands-on classroom training and demonstrations held on April 30, 2011 at URI East Farm by Ocean State Bees as part of the two-year Beekeeper Advance training program. Field mentoring will occur in summer months during pollination periods.**

## MARKETING – “GET FRESH, BUY LOCAL”



Funds from RI Rural Development Council have been earmarked to be provided as support to the RI DEM Division of Agriculture’s newest statewide agricultural campaign. Funds from our Council under the congressional appropriations are to be used for dairy, seafood, shellfish, forestry products, and any other programs not eligible under USDA-AMS guidelines for Specialty Crops grants. Many of the funds are being used

for marketing support and assistance to Farmers Markets and signage carrying the banner and logo of the Get Fresh, Buy Local slogan.

A collaborative effort among all RI farm organizations to promote RI-grown crops, the Campaign seeks to heighten recognition of and demand for RI specialty crops and our farm stands and farmers markets, showcasing the unity among RI farmers and products. In 2009, additional funding for the Campaign was provided by the Rhode Island Rural Development Council - via federal funds - allowing us to expand the reach of the Campaign beyond specialty crops to include RI livestock, aquaculture, forestry, honey and dairy products.



Get Fresh. Buy Local. ([www.getfreshbuylocal.org](http://www.getfreshbuylocal.org)) is a statewide campaign launched in 2009 to promote awareness of Rhode Island grown specialty crops. The Fresh Fanatics are hitting events across the State this summer to encourage attendance at RI farmers markets and farm stands.

*Cranston Herald 8/12/2010 - Fresh Fanatics on the farm*



The Get Fresh, Buy Local Fresh Fanatics celebrated all things tomato at Confreda Greenhouses and Farms' Tomato Festival recently. The old-fashioned farm fair was held at their western Cranston farm on Saturday, July 31 and Sunday, Aug. 1.



he Narragansett Times, Chariho Times 8/18/2010

The **Fresh Fanatics** celebrated at Rhode Island's 44th annual Washington County Fair in Richmond last weekend. "Get Fresh. Buy Local." is a statewide campaign to promote awareness of state-grown specialty crops. The Fresh Fanatics are hitting events across Rhode Island this summer to encourage attendance at farm stands and farmer's markets.

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## NEW FISHERIES PROGRAM

Funds from this grant and additional funds approved by USDA-Rural Development Rural Enterprise Grant (RBEG) funds will be directed to several new initiatives to involve the wild catch fisheries with the Division of Agriculture for direct sales of wild catch fish through farmers markets, farm stores/stands, restaurants, supermarkets, and other retail outlets.

Commercial retailers are receiving their CSF allotment via truck from the Farm Fresh RI Market Mobile program.

The open house for the introduction of this project will be held on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at the "The Local Catch", Port of Galilee, a processing facility certified by the RI Dept of Health and RIDEM Division of Agriculture to begin selling fish products as a CSF (Community Supported Fishery). A CSF offers the general public the opportunity to buy direct from fishermen and/or authorized fish processors through a pre-paid membership agreement plan to receive fish products and lobsters each week for a fixed number of weeks. Varied schedule dates and plan subscription fees are options offered to the general public. They also have the choice of pick-up location for the weekly allotment of fish products.

Pier 9, Newport will be the site of another group of fishermen scheduled to participate in the program and offer fish and lobsters at the Pier 9 Newport. Funds of \$6,965 from the SBA Congressional Appropriations from Senators Reed and Whitehouse are supplemented with USDA funds of \$15,755 for a total of \$22,720 for this program initiative from RI Rural Development Council.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### FARM FRESH RHODE ISLAND

Personnel hours and initiatives were highly productive during the grant period. Activities related to funds received were:

- maintaining the 7 outdoor markets that Farm Fresh manages each summer
- exploring community needs for 2 additional markets in the urban core of Providence RI, including 1 in a housing project in an extremely low-income neighborhood of Providence
- planning the expansion of the year-round wholesale marketplace, Market Mobile
- connecting with other entities to find funding to continue to development of Rhode Island's year-round agricultural wholesale and retail markets



**Farm Fresh RI – Crowds of customers at the Indoor Winter Farmers Market. Wed evenings and Saturdays.**

Farm Fresh continues to respond to the growth of supply of and demand for local food in Rhode Island. Seasonal, neighborhood market opportunities showed a strong season for over 60 local food vendors, including farmers, nurseries, bakeries, and prepared food sellers. These are small businesses that benefit from the low-capital opportunities presented by neighborhood farmers markets.

Planning for the expansion and improvement for the indoor, wintertime farmers market continued through the late summer. The market will occur inside again on Saturdays, this year providing a market opportunity for 60 vendors. A second market day – Wednesday evenings – has been added to create additional marketing

opportunities for vendors and shoppers alike. The Wednesday evening market will allow new vendors to participate, as the Saturday market vendor list is full!

The Wednesday evening market coincides with a drop-off time for the wholesale aggregation and distribution system, Market Mobile. This system continues to flourish, reaching \$500,000 in sales for local growers by late September, and is on track to exceed \$600,000 for the year; up from \$225,000 in sales for 2009. The vigorous growth in this program has pressed Farm Fresh to create a growth plan and capital investment, to expand the system's capacity and ability to keep food fresh and safe. Expanded refrigerated storage and work-spaces will be installed through the fall and winter of 2010-11.

Utilized for Market Mobile: Wholesale Market Distribution system; marketing and delivery of locally grown fruits and vegetables. These funds were spent leasing trucks for Farm Fresh's Market Mobile farm-to-institution system.

## Noah Fulmer Received Golden Tractor Award

Noah Fulmer, the Executive Director of Farm Fresh RI, received the coveted Golden Tractor Award at the Annual Meeting of the RI Farm Bureau at the Green Valley



Country Club in Portsmouth, RI. Noah, who received a standing ovation from the over 100 farmers and friends of agriculture in the room, received the awards for his outstanding administration of the Farm Fresh RI programs which include the Fresh Bucks Program, Market Mobile, and other programs. The Market Mobile Program gets more local food into hospitals, schools, and local restaurants. The Fresh Bucks Program allows customers to use their EBT cards and credit cards to purchase Fresh Bucks (gold coins) which can then be used to buy local food at the Farmer's Markets. Farm Fresh RI also hosts a couple of events

each year that brings chefs and farmers together. They also have an outstanding website that promotes local growing.

Noah is the eighth person to receive the award which was established in 2003 in recognition for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of RI Farm Bureau. The award is given to the person who has done the most for agriculture in the state of Rhode Island recently, but is not a farmer. Previous winners include, Jim Hines (Rhody Fresh), Ken Ayars (Chief of RI Division of Agriculture), Dorothy Brayley (Kids First), Ken Payne (Senate Policy Director), Lee Gardner (Former Director of the RI Farm Bureau), Representative John (Pat) Shanley and Former Governor Joseph Garrahy.

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## NEWS UPDATE ON MARKET MOBILE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Market Mobile Reaches \$1 Million Dollar Milestone

A Homegrown Success Story, Farm Fresh RI Wholesale Program Hits Record In the Middle of Winter (and a Recession)

**Who:** Farm Fresh RI; 40 farmers, food producers; 150 chefs, grocers, hospitals, schools

**When:** February 21st, 2011

**What:** Market Mobile reaches \$1 million in sales

**Where:** Rhode Island and Boston area



**FFRI Market Mobile – sorting process**

Farm Fresh Rhode Island is excited to announce, with this Thursday's delivery of fresh, local food from its Pawtucket warehouse to local chefs, grocers and institutions, that its Market Mobile wholesale program will reach \$1,000,000 in sales after starting up in 2009.

What does a million dollars worth of local food look like? It translates to 22 new jobs created, and fresh healthy foods reaching thousands of RI eaters. It means small family farms are able to grow their businesses as they plan for the coming year. In 2010, our customers consumed 39,198 tomatoes (9.80 tons), 23,374

ears of corn (12.86 tons), 113,175 carrots (11.32 tons), and 109,125 apples (18.19 tons).

Market Mobile is a wholesale food distribution system designed around the needs of Rhode Island family farmers. Every week, Market Mobile works with over 40 family farms and artisan food producers in Rhode Island and Massachusetts to get fresh produce, dairy and meat to restaurants, grocers, schools and hospitals around Providence, Newport and Boston. The online ordering software pools together sales, delivery and invoicing so that Market Mobile farmers can focus on growing the tastiest food in town.

The program has experienced phenomenal growth in its two short year as a result of increasing demand for fresh, quality food that only local farms can provide. Winter isn't usually considered the growing season here in New England, but Market Mobile sales are already up 83% in 2011, after growing 200% last year. Even in the darkest days of winter, with snow covering the farms, weekly winter sales are only 40% off of a September 2010 record. 2011 sales are on track to top \$1 million, on target for Farm Fresh's goal of \$2.5 million by 2014.



**Arrival of produce from Skip Paul Farm, Tiverton, RI to Market Mobile. Logging in is Farm Fresh RI Representative.**



**Farm Fresh Rhode Island – weekly distribution activity to institutions.**

Farmers have dramatically increased winter (and summer) production by adding new year-round greenhouses and storage facilities and expanding acreage to respond to customers' demand. Farmers are selling a bounty of greenhouse greens, sweet potatoes, apples, herbs, eggs, meat, milk and cheese. Participating producers include Aquidneck Farms (Portsmouth), Baffoni Poultry Farm (Johnston), Blue Skys Farm (Cranston), Narragansett Creamery (Providence), NorthStar Farm (Westport), Schartner Farms (Exeter) and Rhody Fresh (nine farm locations).

Local chefs led the way as early adopters of Market Mobile. The idea for Market Mobile came from a 2006 meeting between Farm Fresh RI and the Newport Restaurant Group about creating an easy way for restaurants to order from local farmers. Customers range from Chez Pascal and Castle Hill to the Providence Marriott and McCormick & Schmick's to the Liberty Elm Diner and Café La France. Having delivery routes across RI and MA established is now allowing Farm Fresh to engage schools, hospitals, workplaces and other institutions whose purchasing practices often require longer conversations. RI Hospital, Newport Hospital, RISD, Brown University, and Blue Cross Blue Shield have already signed on. The next stage of Market Mobile expansion is focused on getting fresh food into more hospitals, workplaces and schools.

The Market Mobile program started with funding from RI DEM Division of Agriculture, and it has truly become a community effort.. The program's startup is possible thanks to the support of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Americorp VISTA, Clif Bar

Family Foundation, Farm Aid, Urban Smart Growth, the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, and all of the chefs, schools, grocers and community members who believed in the potential of the potential of Market Mobile to create a better Rhode Island for everyone here who farms or eats. This first \$1 million is for you!

To find out more about the Market Mobile, visit: [www.farmfresh.org/hub](http://www.farmfresh.org/hub).

Farm Fresh Rhode Island is growing a local food system that values environment, health, and quality of life of farmers and eaters. With this mission in mind, we seek to preserve local farmland, build healthier communities, support and strengthen community-based businesses in Rhode Island, increase access to fresh food, and improve the impact of food production and distribution on the environment.

# # #

Hannah Mellion, Market Mobile Coordinator  
AmeriCorps VISTA  
Farm Fresh Rhode Island, [www.farmfreshri.org](http://www.farmfreshri.org) 401 312 4250 (w) 401 447 9984 (c)

## **Farm Fresh Rhode Island named Champion in Action in food and nutrition category**

Nonprofit agency receives unrestricted \$25,000 grant, PR and volunteer support  
Providence, R.I. (April 14, 2011) Citizens Bank and NBC 10 named Farm Fresh Rhode Island in Providence as the second quarter Champion in Action® in the food and nutrition category. Farm Fresh Rhode Island will receive a \$25,000 unrestricted grant, media coverage and extensive promotional and volunteer support for its outstanding work.

The grant will be used to help grow its Bonus Bucks program, strengthen its collaboration with local farmers and build its Harvest Kitchen Program.

“Citizens Bank is pleased to name Farm Fresh Rhode Island as the newest Champion in Action in the food and nutrition category,” said Ned Handy, President, Citizens Bank, Rhode Island. “Accessibility to fresh and nutritious food improves the health and quality of life for communities in our state. This award will help Farm Fresh Rhode Island continue to provide healthy choices to all Rhode Islanders including those limited by both cost and proximity to fresh food.”

“NBC 10 is proud to recognize Farm Fresh Rhode Island for its collaboration with local farmers to distribute fresh produce, dairy and meat to local schools, grocers, hospitals and restaurants state-wide. This organization has become a statewide leader by promoting healthy eating through its nutrition education programs especially those families with limited income. We are pleased to name it a Champion in Action,” said Lisa Churchville, President and General Manager of NBC 10.

Launched in 2002, Champions in Action is a joint initiative of Citizens Bank and NBC 10 to recognize and support nonprofit organizations for their contributions to Rhode Island communities. A new Champion in Action is selected each quarter among a range of social service topics.

Farm Fresh Rhode Island provides a wide-array of programs including:

A 15-week Harvest Kitchen training program for at-risk youth with the Division of Juvenile Corrections to teach food safety, culinary and job skills.

Managing eight urban farmers markets state-wide to provide fresh food year round.

Its Bonus Bucks program where SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) recipients receive extra dollars to spend on fresh foods at farmers markets.

As a Champion in Action, Farm Fresh Rhode Island will receive:

A \$25,000 contribution in unrestricted funds from Citizens Bank.

Media coverage from NBC 10, including public service announcements and television profiles.

Volunteer support from Citizens and NBC 10 employees.

Extensive public relations support.

Promotional support, highlighting the Champion in Action in all Citizens Bank branches and on its ATMs.

Exposure on both Citizens Bank and NBC 10 Web sites.

“It is a tremendous honor for our organization to be selected as a Champion in Action,” said Noah Fulmer, Executive Director of Farm Fresh Rhode Island. “Our mission is to create a local food system that values the environment and the quality of life of all Rhode Islanders. Eating local food strengthens our farms and the health of our communities.”

Applications for the fourth quarter 2011 Champion in Action in the homelessness category are due Friday, July 1, 2011 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced in October 2011. Online applications can be obtained at [www.citizensbank.com/community/champions](http://www.citizensbank.com/community/champions).

Prior Rhode Island Champions in Action include: Bayside Family Healthcare in North Kingstown, the House of Hope in Warwick, The Providence Black Repertory Company in Providence, the Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation in Woonsocket, McAuley House in Providence, TechACCESS in Warwick, Sojourner House in Providence, Pawtucket Citizens Development Corporation in Pawtucket, Rhode Island Free Clinic in Providence, The Genesis Center in Providence, the Norman Bird Sanctuary in Middletown, New Urban Arts in Providence, West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation in Providence, Tides Family Services located throughout the state, Community MusicWorks in Providence, the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center in Newport, Welcome House of South County in South Kingstown’s Peace Dale neighborhood, Franklin Court Independent Living in Bristol, RiverzEdge Arts Project in Woonsocket, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council in Providence, The Institute for the Study and Practice for Nonviolence in Providence, Church Community Housing Corporation in Newport, Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island in Providence, Youth in Action in Providence, Molar Express in Cranston, Everett Dance Theatre in Providence, Olneyville Housing Corporation in Providence, the ASPIRE Program at the RI Foster Parents Association in East Providence, the Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center in Warwick, Amos House in Providence, Connecting for Children and Families in Woonsocket, Southside Community Land Trust in Providence, Kids First in Providence and Social Ventures Partners Rhode Island.

To learn more about how to contribute through donations or volunteerism to Farm Fresh Rhode Island call 401-312-4250.

# # #

Quarterly Allocations by Program for the Reed/Whitehouse Appropriations

Category	RIRDC		RIRDC				Farm Fresh		Farm Fresh		FarmFreshRI
	1st Q starts	2nd Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q **	RIRDC	1st Q starts	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q	
	10/1/2009	1/1/2010	Amended	1/1/2011	12/31/2011		10/1/2009	3/1/2010	10/1/2010	1/1/2011	
Personal Services (Noah/Sheri)							32225	32225	32225	32225	128900
Fringe Benefits											
Consulting											
Consultants (GB) & other prgms	32500	0		16250	16250	65000					
RIRLA (Kim)	12000	0		6000	6000	24000					
Gracilaria Cultivation	18000	0		2000		20000					
Envirothon, Inc.	3000	0		0	0	3000					
Rhody Fresh Cheese	20300	0		11700	0	32000					
RI Nursery and Land Training-Supplies Groundwork Prov			6500			6500					
Ocean State Bees Pollination Training	7200	0		0	0	7200					
Marketing - Be Fresh/Buy Local (FISHERIES)				6965		6965					
Rhody Fresh Cheese Feas Study(RIF)				0		0					
Travel							5000		2500	2500	10000
Equipment							8900				8900
Supplies											
RI Royal Potato Growers( RIRPGA) Get Fresh Marketing			1240			1240					
Added Consultant Fees - RIRDC (fisheries, bees,& RIRPGA)			4795			4795					
Contractual											
Other											
Total Direct Costs											
Gen & Adm	7000	0		3500	3500	14000					
RIRDC	100000	0	12535	46415	25750	184700					
FarmFresh RI							46125	32225	34725	34725	147800

100000

\*\* Grant extension approved by SBA in October, 2011 to be extended to December 31, 2011.

