



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Urban agriculture summit on Oct 27 will address unequal access to
fresh, healthy food in New Castle County**
*150 people are expected for “Growing Local, Staying Local, Eating Local”
hosted by the Delaware Urban Farm Coalition*

WILMINGTON – The [Delaware Urban Farm Coalition](#), the [Delaware Center for Horticulture](#), and the [Delaware Department of Agriculture](#) are pleased to announce a summit on Thursday, October 27 that will bring together a broad range of people who are interested in creating broader access to fresh, local, healthy food for underserved areas of New Castle County. The event will be held at [Westminster Presbyterian Church](#) on the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue & Rodney Street in Wilmington, Delaware from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Organizers are expecting 150 attendees. The summit is free and open to the public, but requires advance registration.

Scheduled to coordinate with [National Food Day](#), the goal of “Growing Local, Staying Local, Eating Local” is to assemble and mobilize food promoters, community organizers, farmers, religious groups, neighborhood advocates, health educators, investors, and others dedicated to improving access to fresh, healthy food in New Castle County.

“The time is now for all of us in New Castle County to take action so that our residents can purchase a local apple or fresh greens just as easily as they can currently purchase processed, pre-packaged foods that are high in fat and sodium,” said **Jeff Kline, Chair of the Delaware Urban Farm Coalition**.

Ed Kee, Delaware’s Secretary of Agriculture and Eric Robinson, Wilmington City Councilman (3rd District), will deliver remarks. Haile Johnston, co-founder of [Common Market](#) in Philadelphia will be the Summit’s keynote speaker.

“I am really pleased that we are all coming together to explore the economic, structural, and often cultural barriers that may affect easy access to fresh, local, affordable, healthy foods in Wilmington and New Castle County,” said **Secretary Ed Kee**. “We need to work together to determine access levels, availability, and prices of foods in the core urban areas as well as the more suburban areas in the County for individuals at all economic levels. Delaware farmers provide *First Rate from the First State* agricultural products that should be enjoyed by everyone. The Department of Agriculture will be an active participant in this effort.”

The agenda also includes professionally-facilitated discussion groups focused on developing specific short-term actions to solve problems related to local food sourcing, access and education. A second summit is planned for spring of 2012 for these groups to report on their progress. Event organizers envision that ultimately fresh produce will be available to those who need it most; the local farm community will be directly involved; and consumers will be more aware of the benefits of a fresh, healthy, local food system.

“Our action-oriented approach for “Growing Local” will ensure practical and achievable solutions to the problem that many New Castle County residents have in accessing fresh, healthy food,” said **Tara Tracy, the Delaware Center for Horticulture’s Urban Agriculture Manager**.

This event is made possible through the generous support of the following sponsors: Delaware Department of Agriculture, Delaware Center for Horticulture, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Chef Dan Butler, and an anonymous donor. In-kind support is being provided by Taylor Kline, Inc., YMCA of Delaware – Central Branch, Alice Davis, and Laura Vogel.

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The Delaware Urban Farm Coalition is facilitated by the Delaware Center for Horticulture and developed the [12th & Brandywine Urban Farm](#) in Wilmington as the group’s flagship effort. Comprising almost 1,600 square feet of three-season growing area in raised beds, the Urban Farm is situated in a low-income area of the city where residents have little direct access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The Farm also includes another 1,200 square feet of raised beds for community members to grow their own vegetables and flowers. The Coalition seeks to: expand the growing of fruits and vegetables in and near Wilmington; improve access to a variety of healthy foods for those who currently don’t have wide access; and provide information regarding healthy eating. Find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/DelawareUrbanFarmCoalition>

The **Delaware Center for Horticulture** cultivates greener communities by inspiring appreciation and improvement of the environment through horticulture, education and conservation. Founded in 1977, the Center’s headquarters in the Trolley Square neighborhood of Wilmington includes public gardens, an art gallery, lecture hall and greenhouse. TheDCH supports 23 community and school gardens; beautifies Delaware’s roadsides with native vegetation; leads regional conservation projects to enhance Delaware’s urban forest; and provides educational programs for children, teens, and adults. For more information, visit thedch.org or find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/TheDCH.org>