

For Immediate Release
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New Partnership Brings Local Food Distribution to Southeastern Massachusetts

Wareham, Massachusetts, Wednesday, April 27, 2011—Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP) and FoodEx, a food exchange operated by Organic Renaissance, have come together to make local food distribution a reality and strengthen the regional food system in southeastern Massachusetts. FoodEx will operate a food hub in New Bedford's south end providing local pickups, deliveries, and warehousing while opening direct access to Boston and other regional markets. The New Bedford facility is scheduled to open in June 2011. SEMAP will facilitate introductions to the service and provide technical assistance to farmers transitioning to wholesale through its Farms Forever program.

Creating an efficient distribution model for getting product from farms to buyers has been a huge challenge for many of our local family farms. FoodEx will offer a virtual Business-2-Business marketplace with full warehousing and logistics support that will allow producers and buyers to manage and control relationships directly without leaving their respective worksites. Buyers will be able to browse, select and purchase from a large variety of regional growers. Local growers will be able to post products, make sales and arrange for delivery.

“Efforts to expand greater access to locally grown food are not only good for consumers but are also good for our economy by encouraging growth of our farming businesses,” said Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner Scott Soares. “I look forward to the great work of SEMAP and FoodEx to provide such opportunities throughout Southeastern Massachusetts.”

“This is exactly the type of project that we want to see in the city,” said New Bedford Mayor Scott W. Lang. “In addition to providing farm-fresh local food to our region, it also represents the adaptive re-use of mill space, creates jobs, and continues to make New Bedford a sustainable city.”

To help launch the service, SEMAP will host a three-stop tour for growers, producers and buyers to view a demonstration of the FoodEx platform. FoodEx president, Jonathan D. Kemp, will provide a detailed description of how FoodEx works to transport local foods from the farm or New Bedford facility directly to chefs, retailers, institutions, and other buyers throughout New England.

The launch tour will kick off at FoodEx's distribution hub at The Mill at 21Cove Street, New Bedford on Monday, May 9th, starting at 5:30 PM, where attendees will also be given a tour of the loading dock and storage space.

The second stop on the launch tour is co-hosted by Buy Fresh Buy Local™ Cape Cod (buyfreshbuylocalcapecod.org), taking place in Barnstable at the Sturgis Library, located at 3090

Main Street, on Tuesday, May 10th at 5:30 PM. Attendees will also have the option to stay for a workshop on institutional sales presented by Emily French of the Massachusetts Farm to School Project.

The third stop is co-hosted by Whole Foods Bellingham, with the meeting being held at the Bellingham Public Library, located at 100 Blackstone Street, on Thursday, May 12th at 5:30 PM. Whole Foods Bellingham will provide food and beverage, including their Tasty Tots & Mediterranean Quinoa Salad. Both recipes are finalists in the USDA's Recipe for Healthy Kids contest (they need your votes). **Growers, producers and buyers can sign up for one of the launch meetings at www.semaponline.org.**

“We never own a product or charge a margin, but we do own trucks and warehouses,” stated Kemp. FoodEx currently delivers products for hundreds of producers who sell their products directly to retailers, restaurants, CSAs, buying clubs, schools, and institutions in the Northeast. “Partnering with FoodEx just made sense,” said Bridget Alexander Ferreira, SEMAP's executive director. “They were already doing runs to our region and we knew of the Cove Street space. A couple of meetings later and here we are making a push for this season.”

About FoodEx, an Organic Renaissance company

Founded in 2009, FoodEx takes a transparent, open source approach to aggregation and distribution of the regional food supply. The FoodEx platform is designed to facilitate sustainable growth in the natural and organic community while integrating regional markets that have been out of reach because of geography, scale, cost, and other distribution obstacles.

About SEMAP

SEMAP is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to preserving and expanding access to local food and sustainable farming in southeastern Massachusetts through research and education. SEMAP educates the public on the why, where and how of local food through its Buy Fresh Buy Local™ campaign and provides technical assistance to the farming community through its Farms Forever program.

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