

For Immediate Release
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Governor Doyle Announces \$225,000 to “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin”
Presents \$41,000 Grant for Chippewa Valley Efforts to Buy, Sell Local Food

EAU CLAIRE – Governor Jim Doyle today announced \$225,000 for seven projects to increase local food sales and grow the state’s economy. The funding is from the state’s first-ever “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin” grant program aimed to keep food spending in local communities.

“Everyone knows the best produce, dairy, and other foods are produced right here in Wisconsin,” Governor Doyle said. “This program supports local efforts to keep high-quality local food in Wisconsin communities to provide fresh food to families, support farmers, and grow the state economy.”

The Governor presented a ceremonial check for \$41,660 to River Country Resource Conservation and Development Council (River Country RC&D) to develop the Chippewa Valley Buy Local Consortium. The consortium will bring together farms from 11 Northwestern Wisconsin counties and institutions looking to buy and sell local food. The efforts will help local farmers organize collective efforts to sell local food to small and large purchasers.

The announcement was made at Sacred Heart Hospital to showcase an innovative partnership to support local farmers and nourish patients. Sacred Heart Hospital has pledged to dedicate 10 percent of their \$2 million food budget this year to purchase locally grown products from this consortium.

“The virtues of local food are well-known. This project will help farmers have a guaranteed market to sell products at a fair local price,” said Steve Ronstrom, Chief Executive Officer of Sacred Heart Hospital.

Governor Doyle thanked Sacred Heart Hospital, the River Country RC&D Council, and Secretary Rod Nilsestuen for working together to make this partnership possible.

The Governor announced today the following 2008 “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin” grant recipients:

- Badgerland Produce Co-op Auction of Montello, will receive \$46,540 to expand their sales through a partnership with the Institutional Food Market Coalition – a

project of the Dane County Planning and Development Department. More than 200 farmers participate in the Badgerland Produce Co-op Auction.

- Research, Education, Action and Policy on Food (REAP Food Group) of Madison, will receive \$43,580 to expand their Buy Fresh, Buy Local Southern Wisconsin program connecting restaurants and food service operations with local farmers.
- Pri-Ru-Ta Resource Conservation & Development Council of Medford, will receive \$28,980 on behalf of the Wisconsin Grass-Fed Beef Producers to market grass-fed beef.
- The Northwest Wisconsin Regional Food Network of Rice Lake, will receive \$26,583 for the Nourishing Northern Wisconsin project to develop a cooperative to market local foods and to provide education and outreach to consumers.
- Braise on the Go, Culinary School of Milwaukee, will receive \$25,502 to create the Milwaukee Area Restaurant CSA to provide the infrastructure for local farmers to more easily distribute their products to restaurants in Southeast Wisconsin.
- The Wisconsin Apple Growers Association of Waterloo, will receive \$12,155 to create the first segment of the Autumn Harvest Trail from the Kenosha/Racine/Milwaukee area to Madison. By featuring farms, orchards, agri-tourism destinations, festivals, farmers markets, and restaurants, the trail will increase local food sales and educate Wisconsin travelers on the diversity of Wisconsin agricultural product.

Governor Doyle provided \$225,000 for the “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin” program in the 2007-09 state budget. The program, aimed to capture 10 percent of local food spending in Wisconsin communities, passed with bi-partisan support in the Legislature with broad support from farm leaders, food businesses and non-profit groups. This year, the “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin” program received 94 applications requesting more than \$3 million for a wide variety of projects to keep local food dollars in Wisconsin communities.

Consumers and businesses can search for local food sources online at:
<http://www.savorwisconsin.com/>.