



**FIRST ANNUAL VERMONT CHEESEMAKERS FESTIVAL
TO BE HELD ON AUGUST 23rd**

***STATE'S LEADING CHEESEMAKERS AND OTHER ARTISAN FOOD
PRODUCERS TO GATHER IN SHELBURNE***

April 30, 2009—Burlington, VT – On Sunday, August 23rd, dozens of cheesemakers and other artisan food producers will gather in Shelburne, VT, for the first annual Vermont Cheesemakers Festival. The one-day event, hosted by the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese, the Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, and the Vermont Cheese Council, will be held from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Coach Barn at picturesque Shelburne Farms.

The Festival is a spectacular opportunity for food-lovers to spend a day amidst Vermont's bucolic landscape while sampling some of the most delicious foods available anywhere. Tickets to the Festival are available online at <http://www.vtcheesefest.com/> for \$20 each, and the event will be open to the first 1,000 people who register.

Festival visitors can sample over 100 types of cheese from 40 different cheesemakers, a variety of locally produced wines and beers, and several other artisan foods, including maple syrup, honey, chocolates, baked goods, and more. The Festival will also feature four tasting seminars, where visitors will learn how to pair cheeses with wine, beer, and other foods.

Among the “big cheeses” taking part in the Festival will be:

- **Eric Warnstedt**, *Food & Wine* magazine's Best New Chef of 2008;
- **Tom Bivins**, Executive Chef of the New England Culinary Institute;
- **Laura Werlin**, cheese authority and author of numerous books including *Laura Werlin's Cheese Essentials: An Insiders Guide to Buying and Serving Cheese*;
- **Liz Thorpe**, Vice President of Murray's Cheese in New York City and author of the upcoming *The Cheese Chronicles: A Journey Through the Making and Selling of Cheese in America, From Field to Farm to Table*;
- **Max McCalman**, Maitre Fromager, Artisanal Premium Cheese Center in New York City.

Eric Warnstedt and Tom Bivins will each lead a cooking demonstration designed to show visitors new innovative ways to incorporate cheese and other local products into their cooking. Laura Werlin will lead a seminar on the best wine and cheese pairings and how to host your own pairings event.

“Vermont has more artisan cheesemakers per capita than any other state, and it produces some of the best cheese in the world,” said Allison Hooper, co-owner of Vermont Butter & Cheese Company, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. “We wanted to create an event that not only showcases the cheesemakers’ skills but also gives the wider community a chance to learn about their craft.”

“Vermont has become one of the top culinary destinations in the United States,” said Catherine Donnelly, co-director of the Vermont Institute for Artisan Cheese. “Cheeses from Vermont consistently rank among the top in national and international competitions. This is a great event for those wanting to experience artisan food at its best.”

"The Festival is a great opportunity for our customers to meet us and taste our cheese," said Laini Fondiller, President of the Vermont Cheese Council. "It also builds solidarity among cheesemakers, winemakers, brewers, and all of the local producers of the foods that we love to eat and promote."

For those who wish to turn a visit to the Festival into a weekend of artisan food enjoyment, more than 20 artisan food producers will be taking part on the preceding day – Saturday, August 22nd – in Vermont Artisan Food Open Studio Day. Creameries, vineyards, and breweries across the state will be open for special tours and tastings, allowing visitors a chance to go behind-the-scenes and taste some of Vermont’s most well-known offerings. Further information on Open Studio Day is available at the Vermont Cheesemakers Festival website.

The official destination resort for those attending the Festival is The Essex, Vermont’s Culinary Resort & Spa. Located in Essex, VT, the resort is home to the award-winning New England Culinary Institute. The Essex will offer special rates to media, vendors, and visitors attending the festival, as well as an exclusive festival package that includes reduced rates, special amenities, admission for two to the Festival, a special welcoming event, and more. Further information can be found at <http://www.vtculinaryresort.com/>.

For further information or to attend the Festival, contact: Amy Jaick, Goodman Media International, 212.576.2700 x 229 or ajaick@goodmanmedia.com.