



HealthCare, restaurants now buying food directly from Fridays Farmers Market

By Enterprise Staff

Livingston HealthCare and several local restaurants will now purchase fresh, healthy local food directly from farmers and ranchers at the food-only Friday Morning Farmers Market Downtown, starting Friday.

This marks the first time the buyers will purchase food directly from the sellers, as opposed to going to Bozeman or to each individual farm or ranch.

The Corporation for the Northern Rockies made the new development in Livingston possible by launching its third annual Montana Farm to Restaurant Connection. Friday's event is the kickoff for the expanded program.

The participating restaurants and Livingston HealthCare have taken the CNR "Sustainability Pledge," where they have agreed to use green business practices as well as use local, sustainably produced food. The buyers will represent the ingredients they buy from local producers in their menus.

Ross Martin, executive chef of the Livingston Bar & Grille, Jim Liska of Adagio Trattoria, Brian Menges of Second Street Bistro, and Jessica Wilcox of Livingston HealthCare will be on hand to pick up orders from Indreland Ranch Angus Beef and Wolfridge Lamb & Wool Company, as well as fresh produce from local farmers

and gardeners.

Annie Conley, market connections program director for CNR and coordinator of the Montana Farm to Restaurant Connection, will be at the Farmers Market to answer questions about the campaign.

The campaign has expanded to a year-round program that increases the visibility of sustainable local producers and the business establishments that use their products, a recent CNR news release said.

It provides entry level requirements that any restaurant interested in using local food could comply with, as well as guidelines to take the practice to a higher level, the release said. In addition, it provides promotion for those restaurants.

Friday Morning Farmers Market Downtown, which is open to the public, takes place 7:30 to 10 a.m. There will be a press conference featuring the 2008 Montana Farm to Restaurant Connection Launch Event from 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the market on Callender Street between Main and Second streets.

CNR is a sustainable economic development nonprofit organization that serves Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. Its mission is to promote sustainable choices to the residents of the Northern Rockies, and it works closely with farmers and ranchers to implement sustainable agricultural methods.

For more information contact Annie Conley at 222-0730.