

Piedmont Grown certification program launched

Program identifies food, agricultural products grown, raised or made in NC Piedmont

HILLSBOROUGH — Piedmont Grown recently launched a local certification program to clearly designate food and agricultural products that are grown, raised, or made within the 37 county Piedmont region of North Carolina, including the Triangle, Triad, and Charlotte areas.

Displayed with food and farm products, the Piedmont Grown label readily identifies local agricultural products and helps consumers make informed buying choices that will benefit farms in the region and the local economy.

"Our mission is to support Piedmont farms and rebuild a regional, community-based, farm to fork, local food system," said Noah Ranells, board member of Piedmont Grown NC, farmer, and Ag Economic Development Coordinator for Orange County. "We want to link consumers to local farm fresh foods, build local markets for farmers and food entrepreneurs, and grow healthy and prosperous communities."

Local food retailers like Darren Stevens of Triad Meat Company in Greensboro are "very excited about being Piedmont Grown certified." He added, "We believe our customers are looking for ways to get fresher, healthier food selections. Being a part of Piedmont Grown is just one more way we can provide them with what they are looking for."

The Web site, www.piedmontgrown.org, provides a user-friendly local food directory and map spotlighting over 100 Pied-

mont Grown certified farms and businesses. The site also allows qualified new entities to become certified online. As the program grows, the Web site will become a central hub for consumers to find local food and to learn about the farmers and businesses that make up our local food economy.

"With so many consumers interested in buying local food we feel there is a need for a program like Piedmont Grown to both identify and reward those that provide it," said Jay Pierce, executive chef of Lucky 32 Restaurants in Greensboro and Cary. "Piedmont Grown removes the mystery from local food purchasing."

Piedmont Grown is actively certifying farms, farmer's markets, grocery and retail, restaurants, local food artisans, and other local food businesses. To become certified, members must meet standards and practices specific to their category and sign an annual license agreement to use the Piedmont Grown logo. The standards for using the logo are intended to protect the integrity of the brand and reinforce to the public that these are indeed Piedmont Grown products and businesses. The annual certification fee of \$100 has been prorated to \$50 for 2011 and, thanks to a grant, is free for farms this year.

"We enrolled in Piedmont Grown to make the public aware that there are still family run dairies that process their own dairy products and are a valuable resource to the community in which they live," said

Teri Bowman from Homeland Creamery in the Julian community of Guilford County. "We do our own milk, so we know it is fresh and isn't mixed with other dairies as far away as New Mexico."

The program is managed by Piedmont Grown NC Inc., an incorporated non-profit comprised of a board of directors that includes many local food visionaries.

Current board members include Ranells and Pierce, as well as Dr. Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld, from UNC-Chapel Hill and Jonathon Romm of Elon University and Company Shops.

A keystone Team helps to guide this effort and includes Debbie Roos of the Chatham Extension Service, Marco Shaw of Eno Hospitality / Piedmont, Mike Lanier of the Orange Extension Service, and Robin Crowder from the UNC-Chapel Hill Gillings Sustainable Ag Project.

Piedmont Grown received support from the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project and the Tobacco Trust Fund and is a partner with the 10% Campaign.

"Local means different things to different people," according to Garland McCollum of Massey Creek Farm in Madison, in Rockingham County. "Piedmont Grown is our effort to define local and identify those products that meet our definition. Small business is the force that drives the national economy. Identifying those local farms, restaurants, and markets that provide fresh healthy alter-

natives is a way we can all work to build our local economy, the national economy, and preserve our green space."

For more information, visit www.piedmontgrown.org, or email info@piedmontgrown.org.

Estate of the late Betsy Norris Auction
July 30, 2011

FOR ALL THOSE THAT WERE INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON THE LP GAS TANK THAT WAS ADVERTISED.

Just before the auction began an employee of Snipes Bros. Oil Co. informed me that they owned the gas tank. As promised, I checked on Monday and found that they did own the tank, therefore, we will not be able to accept bids on that item. I hope it did not cause anyone any great inconvenience but we cannot sell another's property without their permission. If you are still interested in the gas tank please contact Snipes Bros., again we apologize but we were misinformed.

Lee Tate

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DAVE SAYS

HE NEEDS LOVE RIGHT NOW

Dear Dave,
My husband and I are adopting my nephew. His mom is involved with drugs and alcohol, and his father isn't in the picture. We've got \$1,000 in the bank, and we're in the process of paying off all our debt, except the house. Should we slow down or stop the Baby Steps temporarily, and spend more on family things since my nephew is a teenager?

Jocelyn

Dear Jocelyn,
Hugs are free. Making cookies costs next to nothing, and spending quality time with a young man or woman doesn't cost a thing. I call that a teenager-friendly environment.

I know your heart is in the right place, but I don't want you to fall into the American trap of thinking he'll be happy if he has a Wii or you take expensive vacations every year. It sounds to me like he's coming straight out of a big mess. He wants and needs someone to put their arms around him, tell him he's a good guy, and teach him how to grow into a strong man.

Doing some affordable family things once in a while is okay, if you can make it work with your budget. But I wouldn't spend a bunch of money to try and prove that you love him. You've already proven that by bringing him into your home and making him part of your family. Continue helping your finances. Then, when you've actually got some money to spend, you all can do some really cool stuff together.

—Dave

COLLEGE OR THE HOUSE?

Dear Dave,
My wife and I make about \$100,000 a year combined, and we're debt-free. Recently, we got an insurance settlement of \$95,000. We have an \$89,000 mortgage and a 19-month old baby. Should we use the settlement money to pay off the house, and use the rest to start a college fund for our son?

Michael

Dear Michael,
Absolutely! Then, if you guys save the equivalent of a house

payment until your son is ready for college, he could travel the world while he's studying. If I'm in your shoes, I'd pay the house off tomorrow. In fact, I do it today if there's still time to get to the bank.

Being completely debt-free, and with your income, you guys have the money to do just about anything. You can start the kid's college fund, save for retirement, and you'll have the money to build wealth, too.

Don't let this great opportunity to change your family tree pass you by, Michael.

—Dave

PRE-NUP ... YES OR NO?

Dear Dave,
How do you feel about pre-nuptial agreements?

Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,
When I first started financial counseling, I told people to

never get a pre-nup under any circumstances. Basically, I felt the whole process was like planning your divorce in advance. I still feel that way to a degree, because if money is more important to you than the person you supposedly love, then you don't really love them and you have no business getting married.

I've changed my stance a little bit, though, and now I feel a pre-nup may be in order under one condition: If there are substantial assets in one person's name. By "substantial," I mean \$2 million or more. I've counseled several wealthy people, some of whom were heading into a second marriage. It's not that wealthy folks are weird or necessarily greedy, but sometimes they attract weird and greedy people.

—Dave

* For more financial help, please visit daveramsey.com.

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