Seafood Throwdown Coming to the Grand Army Plaza Greenmarket
Locally Caught Seafood Takes Center Stage

New York, NY – Seafood Throwdown, a unique cooking competition that highlights the importance of local seafood in restoring a healthy ocean ecosystem, is coming to the Grand Army Plaza Greenmarket on July 14, 2012 from 11am to 1pm. In this Iron-Chef inspired program, Brooklyn restaurants Applewood and Cheryl’s Global Soul will face off against each other in a heart-pounding race to transform a secret seafood ingredient with other foods from the farmers market vendors into culinary delights. Judging this spectacular competition will be Blue Moon Fish’s Alex Villani, food and style writer Ralph DiGennaro, Iain Kerr of the spurse artists collective and Nancy Romer of the Brooklyn Food Coalition. Erin Fairbanks, Director of the Heritage Radio Network, will emcee the event giving the play-by-play of all the action.

This marks the second Seafood Throwdown at Grand Army Plaza. In 2011, Chef Nate Courtland of iCi Restaurant in Ft. Greene, Brooklyn and Chef Rebecca Weitzman of Park Slope’s Thistle Hill Tavern came face to face with Alex Villani’s locally caught bonito (watch video http://bit.ly/BrooklynThrowdown2011). This year’s event is a collaboration between Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA), GrowNYC/ Greenmarket and New York Sea Grant. It promises to be another fun, educational and community-driven activity linking the importance of locally caught seafood to the health and resilience of our ocean.

“NAMA’s not-so-secret agenda is to raise awareness about the ecological and economic importance of locally caught seafood in our efforts to rebuild commercial fisheries, ensure our access to locally caught and sustainable seafood, and protect the marine environment,” said Brett Tolley, NAMA’s community organizer. “Our source of food from the ocean is in danger of being taken over by industrial food production models like agribusiness. We know that level of industrialization will endanger our environment, food safety, food sovereignty and food security, not to mention the economic and social fabric of the communities involved in putting food on our tables. The family fishermen are going the way of the family farm leaving the ocean to the highest bidder, and turning fishermen into sharecroppers. These are lessons we have learned from food grown on land and need to apply to the food we get from the ocean.”

“We think about where our tomato comes from, who grew it, how they grew it and how far it traveled before it ended up on our plates. We need to think the same way about our shellfish and seafood,” said Liz Carollo, GrowNYC/Greenmarket Publicity Manager.
New York Sea Grant is working to increase awareness about the role of fishermen in feeding New Yorkers. Antoinette Clemetson, Fisheries Specialist said “Fishermen share many commonalities with small farmers and we are seeking ways to work with fishing businesses to establish community supported fisheries programs such as those models that have been successfully applied on small farms.”

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