

Neighbors square off at Seafood Throwdown

By Times Staff

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A local builder and the director of a local seafood group are taking on the challenge of tomorrow's Seafood Throwdown from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the Cape Ann Farmers Market off Harbor Loop.

Michael Tocantis, who works in stone, metal, wood and concrete, put his cooking chops to work for the likes of Deluxe Catering, the largest motion picture caterer in Los Angeles, and on-location catering for Martha Stewart.

Niaz Dorry, director of the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA), the organization that co-sponsors the Seafood Throwdown with the Cape Ann Farmers Market, refers to her cooking as an "experiment." She decided to cook this week so she can practice what she preaches and experience what all the chefs and cooks NAMA has recruited for the Throwdown experience.

Tocantis and Dorry will each design a meal around a mystery seafood ingredient. They will have 15 minutes and \$25 to spend at the market, then an hour to prepare, cook and serve the meal to randomly chosen customers from the Farmers Market crowd.

Judges are Gloucester's Nina Groppo, whose recipes are included in the "Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Cookbook," and Gary Strack of Central Kitchen and the Enormous Room in Cambridge.

Seafood Throwdown is the brainchild of the partnership between the Cape Ann Farmers Market and NAMA to promote locally caught seafood and ecologically sound fisheries management, and gauge the community's interest in Community Supported Fisheries (CSF). Tailored after the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model, a CSF brings freshly caught local seafood to our kitchens while providing fishermen with a better price on less catch. CSF members give the fishermen financial support in advance, and in turn the fishermen provide a weekly share of locally caught seafood to their shareholders.

To date, the Seafood Throwdowns have generated over 80 potential shareholders for a Gloucester/Cape Ann CSF. Community meetings will be announced for this fall and winter for fishermen, potential shareholders and the larger community who want to help shape the CSF.

The finale of Seafood Throwdown at Cape Ann Farmers' Market for this season will be Oct. 9 with special appearances by past participants.

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Photos



Jack Rudnicki of Montreal tries the bluefish meal prepared by Alchemy Cafe and Bistro chef Rob O'Neill in the first Seafood Throwdown at the Cape Ann Farmers' Market. O'Neill was given \$25 and 15 minutes to search for local items at the market and an hour to prepare the meal. Gloucester Daily Times