



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Local Seafood to Take the Stage at the Common Ground Fair Café Miranda & Badger Café to Face Off at the Seafood Throwdown**

Unity, ME – The Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA) and the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) have teamed up to drive the importance of locally caught seafood and community based fishermen to people's stomachs this year at the Common Ground Fair in Unity, Maine. Dubbed Seafood Throwdown will run from 10 a.m. till noon on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at the Country Kitchen Demo tent. The Throwdown promises to be a fun, educational and community driven activity designed to educate those interested in local foods about the importance of locally caught seafood.

"Even though Mainers live in a state dotted with fishing communities not everyone necessarily understands how those headlines in the paper about fisheries management measures add up to what ends up on our plates," says NAMA's Campaigns Coordinator, Andrianna Natsoulas. "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 your seafood."

"MOFGA is pleased to be working with Maine's fishing communities. The problems of fishermen and farmers are very similar. And part of the solution is building connections between those who produce food, and those who want to eat more local food. That's what the Common Ground Country Fair is all about," says Russell Libby, MOFGA's Executive Director.

The Seafood Throwdown will feature Chef Kerry Altiero of Café Miranda in Rockland and Chef Michael Greer of Badger Café in Union. Café Miranda has been operating since 1993, and was one of the first supporters of Port Clyde's Fresh Catch Community Supported Fishery. "While the fair and competition are meant to be fun and attract attention, seeing fishermen and chefs, farmers and their crops, also reminds people of how food ends up on our plates and sustainable living," said Kerry Altiero, Chef and Owner of Café Miranda. "We live in an area, which is a great source of delicious seafood, where a neighbor might be a commercial fisherman, so it is very important to think about where your seafood came from and how it got to your plate."

The Badger Café is a casual café that supports small, local businesses for their fresh meats, cheeses, beer, wine, vegetables, and breads. Michael Greer, Chef and Owner of Badger Café, is "excited to be a part of this competition. It will be fun representing the Badger, as well as, helping a worthy cause."

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The Common Ground Fair's first Seafood Throwdown will be judged by Michael Crowe, publisher and editor of The Fishermen's Voice, and William Sugg, Director of the Maine Environmental Policy Institute. Kim Libby, co-founder of the Mid-Coast Fishermen's Cooperative, will emcee the event.

Seafood Throwdown was the brainchild of the partnership between the Cape Ann Farmers' Market and the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance as a way of promoting locally caught seafood and gauging the community's interest in Community Supported Fisheries (CSF). To date, twelve Seafood Throwdowns have been held in the region. Tailored after the Community Supported Agriculture 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. The newest CSF is now operating in North Carolina with the help of the community and Duke University students. For a complete list of current CSFs please visit <http://www.namanet.org/csf/list>.

To learn more about MOGFA or to purchase tickets to the Common Ground Fair please visit <http://www.mofga.org>.

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