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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Local Growers' Network Returns for Second Year: Eat Healthy - Eat Local Farmstand Opens for Business Saturday Mornings: mid-May through October, 9 AM to 2 PM at Oak Run

Knox County, IL – May 2, 2009 -- The Local Growers' Network is proud to return for its second year. Started in 2008 by a group of families with small farms from the Dahinda, Williamsfield, Elmwood & Aledo areas, this group had great success and its customers are anxiously awaiting the start of the growing season. The Local Growers' Network even received acclaim this past January with an article printed in *The Radish Magazine*. The magazine honored us with the Radish Award given for an innovative program.

Delicious and nutritious, locally grown, farm fresh produce is available to consumers weekly mid-May through October. Customers can choose when and what they want to purchase -- no up front costs like those associated with a CSA. The Local Growers' Network sends out a **Weekly eHarvest Update** which features a list of locally grown, pesticide-free, fresh produce and locally produced value-added products that they can select from. Orders can be placed via email or fax and picked up conveniently at *Vintages, 57 S. Seminary Street in downtown Galesburg*. We are planning to send out emails on Thursday evenings, customers submit their orders by Monday and pick up their orders the following Thursday. That gives our growers enough time to pick and deliver the freshest product. Our customer list has topped 135 names and is still growing. Orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. For individuals' living in the Dahinda/Oak Run area, delivery is available for \$1.

The Local Growers' Network is proud to provide fresh produce for restaurants and food service operations. We provided Walt at Q's Cafe with fresh tomatoes throughout the 2008 season and plan to provide Knox College with a few specific products this Spring and a wide assortment of vegetables for the coming Fall semester. We are also gearing up to work with interested students from Knox College to create an on-farm apprentice program, which we are quite enthusiastic about.

The Local Growers' Network also can be found every Saturday morning from 9 AM to 2 PM in the parking lot at the Oak Run Food Mart, near the golf course...just 4 miles North of US Hwy 150 off of County Hwy 12. We'll probably be able to start mid-May, weather permitting.

It's so much more than just quality food! The principles that the Local Growers' Network are founded on can play a vital role in reinvigorating the family farm, supporting stewardship and revitalizing our rural community. The Local Growers' Network is committed to consumer education, product quality and supporting Knox County by selling produce grown locally by family farms. We choose to sell high quality, fresh food near our farms, so it doesn't have to travel many miles to our customer's tables.

We are pleased to introduce you to our members/growers who are looking forward to supplying you with fresh, flavorful produce and other products:

Basil's Harvest -

Basil's Harvest in Elmwood offers menus based on food that is nutritionally complex, with a local emphasis, and non-synthetically grown. If you went back to the time of the "Great Depression" food was grown locally, organically, and prepared with attention to the details. Erin Meyer, owner of Basil's Harvest is working to help all of us experience real food once again. All food is prepared using produce and meats that are organically grown by local growers. Soups, vinegars, sauerkraut, artisan breads & quick breads, jams, and rubs are some of the featured prepared products that will be available to you through the *eHarvest Update* without going all the way to Elmwood!

Blue Hills Farm -

Tom Arnold started Blue Hills Farm in 2000 as a sustainable fruit and vegetable farm on eight acres of neglected farm lot and pasture. Currently, about two acres are in use for the fruits and vegetables, with the main crop being blueberries, which began producing in 2006. There are eight varieties of blueberries being grown, which allows harvesting from July to September. Other fruits being grown include raspberries, blackberries, and apples. He has engaged in vegetable gardening most of his life, and more intensively in tomato and pepper gardening since 1992, so vegetables are available spring, summer, and fall. Tom wants to continue to produce quality fruits and vegetables on his farm, and to raise new and different varieties. His farming practices do not include use of harmful chemicals on the plants in his fields and orchard.

Simmental Cattle & Farm Fresh Produce

Tom & Ann Collopy have grown vegetables and herbs for many years solely for their own use. Three children and four grandkids along with one great grandson enjoy their fresh vegetables and fruit. Since many families are looking for garden fresh vegetables grown locally, they decided to expand their garden area to grow more varieties. Three years ago they planted 4 heirloom tomato plants to experiment. Last year they had 32 tomato plants consisting of 14 varieties along with many other kinds of vegetables. In 2009 they will have a huge variety of produce for this coming season.

Frog Pond Farm –

Robert Haugland is a graduate of the 2007 Central Illinois Farm Beginnings program. He and his wife Julie are Chicago transplants who moved to Dahinda in May of 2006, when Julie opened Vintages, a retail wine shop in historic downtown Galesburg. Robert has always been an avid gardener and is blissfully happy with his 22 acres of land on top of the windiest ridge in Dahinda. They believe in the benefits of bio-sustainable and eco-friendly practices. It is their desire to be self-sustainable and to share their excesses with others. Their little farm includes 1 dog, 1 duck, 1 alpaca, 2 roosters, 3 goats, 3 Holsteins, 7 hens, 4 baby ducks, 10 baby chicks and 20 cats. Not quite the ark.

Nyman's Harvest Corner -

A U-PICK strawberry farm along with other seasonal offerings of asparagus, blueberries, honey, rhubarb and popcorn. Open end of April thru early July at 390 Knox Cty Rte 6, Mondays-Saturdays 8 am to 5 pm and Sundays 8 am to 3 pm. Call first: 309-462-5242.

CommonScents -

Randy & Cyd Pelotte have been gardening together for 15 years. They grow a large selection of fresh herbs and heirloom variety veggies along with many flowers. They are culinary wizards and enjoy utilizing their pesticide-free harvests in the kitchen to make gourmet meals for their family and friends.

Spoon River Landscaping/Fritzy's Herb Farm –

Andrew Fritz is a young farmer from Williamsfield with many talents. What started out as Spoon River Landscaping is now evolving into a nursery with the addition of a greenhouse. After realizing the pitfalls of retail stores selling nursery products grown in southern locations Andrew plans to provide locally grown nursery products and quality seasonal food to area folks.

Trillium Dell Farms -

Rick Collins and Brian Tibbets are longtime vegetable farmers who are very interested in sharing sustainable products and organic produce with the community. Rick owns and operates Trillium Dell Timberworks, a company whose philosophy and products are consistent with the sustainable building movement. Rick and Brian are focusing on organic potatoes and other produce this year and will look to expand on more products in the near future.

Twisted Chicken –

Leslie Schenkel is a seasoned farmers' market seller and shares her talents with the Local Growers' Network. As a licensed egg producer and glass bead artist, she offers other products that can be found at her farm in Elmwood. For her contribution to local, fresh food, she'll be offering a wide range of heirloom tomatoes, tomatillos, gourmet salad greens and other delicacies.

The Walker Farm -

Ken & Debbie Walker send a big hello to all the fresh vegetable and/or meat eaters in our great country. They have been raising and selling vegetables, flowers, beef and lamb on their 80 acre farm for 30 years. Their specialty is sweet corn, green beans, blackberries and squashes. They also have field corn, soybeans, wheat and alfalfa grass hay. They started putting in fruit trees and berry plants this year, for down-the- road business.

Walnut Grove Farm –

Historic Walnut Grove Farm is probably best known for hosting special events, but they also grow a great variety of flowers for drying and for fresh cut use in weddings and retail sales events. In the past, they have participated in farmer's markets but time constraints with the events at the farm has made that increasingly more difficult. The LGN concept facilitates sharing their farm products with customers more frequently and consistently. Jan King has been gardening since childhood without the use of pesticides. She and her partner, Rich Wood, grow flowers, vegetables and herbs. Flowers will be their main offering for LGN.

If you are interested and would like to receive our *Weekly eHarvest Update* via email, please opt-in by replying to this email or emailing us at lgnfarmstand@yahoo.com.

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Local Grower's Network is a business run under Vintages Tasting Room, owned & operated by Julie Haugland.
For the purposes of clarification, as of 2009, Amy Brucker no longer is involved in any way with LGN or the Local Growers' Network.