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## **Good Food Economy Transforming Northland**

***Local hospitals, universities, businesses announce series of effort to create statewide model for food and health.***

At Norway Hall, regional food, educational and health organizations made a series of announcements laying the foundation for the transformation of the regional food and health economy. Essentia announced their support for the Superior Compact a 20% by 2020 local food purchasing goal, becoming the second hospital and first hospital system in Minnesota to make this commitment.

This commitment builds on Essentia's leadership in the [Western Lake Superior Food Hub](#), a local food sourcing collaboration of Duluth based anchor institutions and regional producers, initiated by the Institute for a Sustainable Future. Their commitment solidifies the burgeoning demand for local, sustainable food by area restaurants, businesses and local institutions.

In addition, *a collaborative effort of Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Minnesota Grown Program and the Lake Superior Chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association (LSSFA) launched a new regional food label.* The Minnesota Grown/Superior Grown logo is a new way for local consumers who care about buying local to recognize and support regional producers. The logo builds upon the statewide brand equity of the Minnesota Grown logo and allows the Superior Grown region to build upon its regional identity (see attached logo and FAQ).

"Our region leadership in the new food and health economy is creating a model for Minnesota and the country, stated Jamie Harvie, Executive Director of the Institute for a Sustainable Future and member of the Good Food Network Steering Committee. "Collectively, investments in the local food economy and promotion of healthy food environments are reaping significant rewards in terms of jobs, food access, health and the environment".

"Essentia has been innovative with its business practices to the benefit of our farm and the farming community," stated Food Farm owner Janaki Fisher-Merritt. "Last summer Essentia offered to pay for a portion of their produce in advance to help offset our investments in seed and labor. Most farms run on tight margins and limited cash flow; their commitment to partnering in this way is an indication that they're serious about local purchasing." "The new Superior Grown

label will be a tremendously important tool for producers and consumers working to support their shared interest in the local food economy”, he added.

A wide variety of healthcare, colleges, restaurants and food businesses from across the region were recognized for their support of the Superior Compact, the 20% purchasing commitment at a community reception Friday night (see attached list).

A recent report by ISF documented that the Duluth Grill is already purchasing 26% of its food from within our bioregion. Using an established local economic multiplier effect of 5 this equates to 1.2 million dollars of local economic activity from the Duluth Grill alone.

“Support for our local food economy is good for tourism, good for jobs and good for our regional economy”, stated St. Louis County Commissioner, Frank Jewell. “As well, our farmers are vital for the stewardship of our land and the health of our community”.

A variety of studies demonstrate economic and social benefits from local food system investments. University of Minnesota Duluth researchers found the economic potential of over 1 billion dollars for a local food diet in the Western Lake Superior Region.

<http://www.goodfoodnetwork.org/superiorcompact/lakesuperiorfoodsystem.html>

A study of the Central Puget Sound region of Washington State, *Why Local Linkages Matter* <http://www.sustainableseattle.org/images/Programs/LocalFoodEconomyStudyLFE%20REPORT%20FINAL-2.pdf> explains why we should care about our spending choices when it comes to sustainability. A shift of 20% of food dollars into locally directed spending would result in a nearly half billion dollar annual income increase in King County alone and twice that in the Central Puget Sound region.

In a similar study by the Cleveland Foundation similar increases in jobs and economic activity were reported. These are highlight in their report, *The 25% Shift - The Benefits of Food Localization for Northeast Ohio & How to Realize Them*.

<http://www.neofoodweb.org/sites/default/files/resources/the25shift-foodlocalizationintheNEOregion.pdf>

The City of Duluth, area labor organizations, Northland College, Lake Superior Medical Society, churches and others have also endorsed the Good Food Charter, a shared vision for a healthy, regional food system (attached). These efforts are a community response to the multiple impacts of our current industrial food system and the shared interest in health and local socio-economic development.

ISF is a not-for-profit organization working to support and improve ecological health, through advocacy, research, consultation and education. ISF provides expertise on environmental toxins, health care design and healthy food systems and has presented and consulted internationally.

The Good Food Network is an emerging collaboration of organizations working to support a local, food system that is healthy, green, fair and affordable.

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REINTRODUCING...

# SUPERIOR GROWN REGIONAL LABEL

*Developed as a collaborative effort of Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Minnesota Grown Program and the Lake Superior Chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association (LSSFA), the new logo is a reinvigoration of the Superior Grown ([www.superiorgrown.org](http://www.superiorgrown.org)) effort that's been around for many years. Because of this effort, wholesalers and consumers in the Superior Grown region who want to buy local will have an easy way to identify their go-to producers.*

## **I'm a Producer. . .**

### **Why should I use this logo?**

The Minnesota Grown/Superior Grown logo is a new way for local consumers who care about buying local to recognize and support you. Using the logo supports the goals of the Lake Superior Good Food Charter and Superior Compact by building up our local food system. The logo builds upon the statewide brand equity of the Minnesota Grown logo and allows the Superior Grown region to build upon its regional identity. Minnesota Grown has recently developed regional versions of its logo for Northwest Minnesota and North Central Minnesota. More than 1,200 Minnesota farms and farmers markets are already members of the program which has been growing steadily since its creation more than 25 years ago.

### **What do I need to do to use the logo?**

All you need to do is be a producer within the eight Minnesota counties that are a part of the 15-county Superior Grown bioregion and become a member of MN Grown. Membership (an annual license to use the logo) is \$20.

### **OK, so what else do I get for my \$20?**

Besides the right to use the MN Grown-Superior Grown logo members of Minnesota Grown get FREE promotional stickers, price cards and other materials. Once you start using the logo, you'll be the beneficiary of MN Grown's statewide advertising efforts that promote MN Grown products.

- Minnesota Grown offers a one-time reimbursement up to \$200 for including the logo on your printed labels, boxes, bags, tags or delivery truck.
- Minnesota Grown offers a cost share program that can reimburse you up to 50% of the cost of sampling your products in grocery stores and coops.
- If you sell to restaurants, grocery stores, schools or other wholesale accounts, you can list your farm and products at no additional charge in our online wholesale database ([www.MinnesotaGrown.com](http://www.MinnesotaGrown.com) and click on the "wholesale database" box on the left side of the page.

### **Who can I contact for more info?**

Leah Nelson, Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association: 218-940-2138 or [leah.nelson@hotmail.com](mailto:leah.nelson@hotmail.com)  
Jessica Miles, Minnesota Grown Program: 651-201-6170 or [jessica.miles@state.mn.us](mailto:jessica.miles@state.mn.us)

### **I'm in Wisconsin! What does this have to do with me?**

Growers in Wisconsin are considered within the Superior Grown bioregion and can identify as such, but they are outside of the Minnesota Grown service area. LSSFA looks forward to working to develop a comparable labeling option for our Wisconsin members. Please contact us if you would like to be involved!

## **I'm a Consumer. . .**

### **How do I find MN Grown/Superior Grown Producers?**

[www.SuperiorGrown.org](http://www.SuperiorGrown.org) remains our local directory service. Growers who are members of Minnesota Grown can be listed in the MN Grown online and printed Directory for an additional \$40 fee. 190,000 copies of the printed Directory are distributed annually and another 225,000 unique visitors per year use the online Directory! Early in the summer of 2013 MN Grown will be launching a greatly improved website that will be mobile phone friendly.

## **I'm a Retailer/Restaurant. . .**

**I buy local; can I use the MN Grown/Superior Grown label?**

Glad you asked! Retailers who sell any product that was grown or raised by a member farmer in the eight county MN area can use the logo on displays, menus, ads, etc. to proudly identify products grown by Superior Grown/MN Grown growers. Retailers do not need to register or become a member to use the logo.



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# Good Food Charter Signatories

Institute for a Sustainable Future

Growing Farms

Community Action Duluth

League of Women Voters

CHUM

UMD Office of Civic Engagement

UMD Sustainable Agriculture Project

Duluth Community Garden Program

Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association

Lake Superior Medical Society

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Duluth (UUCD)

Duluth AFL-CIO Central Labor Body

Ecolibrium3

Duluth LISC

Elsewhere Farm

Northwoods Food Project

Zeitgeist Arts Cafe

Tomato Man Project

City of Duluth

Northland College

Ehlers General Store

Chequamegon Food Co-op

Prairie Kitchen Specialty Foods

St. Luke's

Office of Civic Engagement

Sustainable Agriculture Project @ UMD

Whole Foods Community Co-op, Inc.

Elsewhere Farm

Duluth LISC

Sassy Nanny Farmstead Cheese

Sustainable Twin Ports  
Northland College  
Ehlers general store  
Food Magic LLC  
Lake Superior Honey Company  
Spirit Creek Farm  
University Dining Services – UMD  
Essentia Health

## **Superior Compact Signatories**

Duluth Grill (Duluth)  
At Sara's Table/ Chester Creek Café (Duluth)  
Whole Foods Community Co-op, Inc.(Duluth)  
Zeitgeist Arts Café (Duluth)  
St. Luke's (Duluth)  
Angry Trout (Grand Marais)  
Cafe Coco (Washburn)  
Burrito Union (Duluth)  
Tycoon's (Duluth)  
Fitgers BrewHouse (Duluth)  
Lutsen Resort (Lutsen)  
Northland College (Ashland)  
Ehlers General Store (Cornucopia)  
Chequamegon Food Co-op (Ashland)  
Prairie Kitchen Specialty Foods (Duluth)  
Sassy Nanny Farmstead Cheese (Herbster)  
Food Magic LLC (Duluth)  
Spirit Creek Farm (Bayfield)  
Essentia Health (Duluth)

# The Lake Superior Good Food Charter

**We recognize** the influential role of Lake Superior and our bio-region on agriculture and our diet. Moreover, we understand that how our food is grown, processed, delivered, sold and consumed plays a critical role in the overall health, security, and prosperity of our communities and environment. We recognize that many systems, policies and individual choices affect the availability, affordability and quality of food. Moreover, we recognize that the development of a vibrant, dynamic local food system is an integral foundation to ensure the health and prosperity of our region. As such we will advocate for the following principles and values:

## Economic Resilience

- Invest in our regional food infrastructure, including processing, storage and distribution.
- Create new local and regional employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Expand local purchasing and engage anchor institutions in local procurement.
- Protect farmland and promote policies that support regional production.
- Align public policy to support local food security.
- Support and increase producer access to markets and distribution.

## Community Health and Food Justice

- Ensure access for all to nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate food.
- Make nutritious foods the default choice in all institutional settings with a priority in school food environments.
- Facilitate access to nutritious, affordable, and safe food for all through income, education, employment, housing, and transportation policies.
- Recognize the importance of healthcare and community institutions in modeling and promoting a healthy food system.
- Encourage the development of community-wide food security through gardens, yard gardens, urban fowl, and other initiatives.
- Support safe, livable wage jobs from farm to fork.

## Food Knowledge and Culture

- Support community-wide education on gardening, food preservation, basic cooking skills and healthy eating.
- Value the diversity of food cultures and traditions in connecting community.
- Provide educational tools necessary to make informed decisions around food choice and food policy.
- Protect and encourage access to wild foods obtained by fishing, hunting and gathering.

## Ecological Health

- Encourage food diets and distribution that decrease climate impact.
- Promote sustainable agriculture production methods and regenerate ecosystem health.
- Protect and preserve the role of communities in the use, protection and stewardship of our seeds, water and agricultural lands.
- Promote zero-waste strategies and ecologically preferable packaging, composting and recycling.

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name

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date



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# The Superior Compact



**WHEREAS**, a local food system can create farming, processing and distribution jobs and increased regional economic resilience; and

**WHEREAS**, building a local food system can provide fresher and healthier foods that can address the obesity epidemic that has resulted in increased food related diseases such as heart disease and diabetes; and

**WHEREAS**, building a local food system can reduce food transportation, soil erosion and ground water contamination with an increased direct relationships between the farmers and the consumers; and

**WHEREAS**, building a local food system can revive small towns, rural schools, businesses, and support the development and diversification of the rural infrastructure throughout our region; and

**WHEREAS**, the Western Lake Superior region has the agricultural potential to produce adequate supplies of healthy food necessary for a balanced diet.

**Our organization supports the local food purchasing goal of 20% by 2020.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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