



GOOD FOOD – MILES BETTER
localdifference.org



Taste the Local Difference®
148 E. Front Street – Suite 301
Traverse City, MI 49684
231.941-6584

Media Release
For Immediate Release

Date: September 15, 2015

Contact: Bill Palladino, bill@localdifference.org, (231) 590-1685

Taste the Local Difference® partners with Think Local First to serve Washtenaw County

TRAVERSE CITY – Taste the Local Difference®, Michigan’s local-food branding and marketing program, is adding Washtenaw County to its service area with the help of Ann Arbor based nonprofit Think Local First.

Beginning in the fall of 2015, Taste the Local Difference® (TLD) will expand its popular program to Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor and all of the Washtenaw County community. TLD is in its 12th year of providing branding and marketing services to food businesses. The program originally focused on 10 counties in northwest Lower Michigan, and this milestone marks TLD’s first expansion to other communities. The move into southeast Michigan is made possible by through the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development (Act 88) funding.

Taste the Local Difference® is a social enterprise of the Traverse City-based Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities. For more than 20 years, Groundwork has focused on three areas to create stronger, more vibrant, and resilient communities: transportation, clean energy, and food and farming. Groundwork’s Taste the Local Difference® program is a recognized leader in developing new models for local food systems in Michigan and elsewhere.

TLD will collaborate with nonprofit partner Think Local First to deliver services and ensure sustainability of the program. The Washtenaw County-based organization’s mission is to “support and cultivate locally-owned, independent businesses in Washtenaw County, Michigan, that are committed

~OVER~

to making our community a healthier and more vibrant place to live.” It’s a perfect partnership between an organization with deep roots in Washtenaw County and a program focused on helping to sell more locally grown and processed food.

In the first year of this Washtenaw County effort, Taste the Local Difference® and Think Local First plan to launch several important local food marketing services:

- They will provide access for Washtenaw County farms to sign on to TLD’s farm and producer database for free. This database provides consumers with a searchable online system to discover who is growing and producing local food—and where to find it.
- Food production businesses, retailers, wholesalers, restaurants and institutions will be able to sign up for TLD’s comprehensive array of local-food marketing tools and services.
- They will also begin working with Washtenaw County food retailers to use TLD’s in-store marketing materials to differentiate local food on store shelves. This effective solution makes it simple for those who sell local food to consumers to use an umbrella brand under which to include many local food items.
- They will provide workshops, classes, and support services to local food businesses helping them to learn sure-fire methods to get their own brands in the public eye.
- They will accomplish all this while creating a self-sustaining financial model for this work.

Farms and food businesses are encouraged to sign-up using our online form at, <http://www.localdifference.org/tld-partners/sign-up.html>.

Taste the Local Difference® and Think Local First are proud to announce this new program to help Washtenaw County food businesses sell more locally grown and produced food and to educate consumers on the important role local foods play in a community’s health and economic vitality.

For more, information, please contact Bill Palladino at 231.590.1685, bill@localdifference.org, or visit <http://localdifference.org>.

###