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### Sparta Farmer's Market opens on Saturday

Local growers will offer a variety of seasonal goods, By Laurie Gordon

SPARTA — It's opening day for the Sparta Farmer's Market this Saturday, May 14.

Starting at 9 a.m., the 2011 market will kick off at the Sparta Municipal Building parking lot located at 65 Main Street in Sparta. This grass-roots-initiated farmer's market aims to connect local people directly with local producers as well as provide education, farm tour, cooking demonstrations and community outreach programs. In addition, in accordance with the think globally, act locally school of thought, it aims to bring business to local farmers.

Early season produce will be available with promise of much more to come as the vegetables grow and warmer weather arrives. The market will also feature natural meats, pork, beef, lamb, chicken, duck and eggs as well as pastries and baked goods, coffee, tea and other beverages and starter plants, flowers of all types and bedding plants.

There will also be wine and cheese.

Sparta residents Mitch Morrison and Ben Del Coro got together last year with the idea of starting the market. "We felt it was the

exact right time to do this in Sparta," said Morrison, "There are an overwhelming number of people in the area who: one, want to eat healthier foods that do not have to travel 3,000 miles to our table; two, want to know exactly where our food is grown and made; and



Area farmers will sell a wide variety of products at Saturday's Sparta Farmer's Market.

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three, want to support local economy." He added that the market's vendors were chosen to provide a variety of goods produced locally.

Opening day will also feature recycling of used batteries, and the collection of used clothing for local charities, and Porchlight CFL lightbulbs will be given out. Local vendors will include the following farms.

Fair Acres Farm

Located in Wantage, Fair Acres Farm is a community supported agriculture and market farm that will begin its first year of production for the 2011 season. It will be offering herbs, flowers and over 50 types of vegetables for sale at the Sparta and West Milford Farmers Markets.

Chururabis Farm

Named after a farm in Namibia on the west coast of Africa, Churutabis means the place with much water.

The family that owns the farm emigrated to the United States from South Africa in 1998. Chururabis Farm is located in Frankford Township, and raises Boer goats, chickens, Rouen ducks, guinea fowl and geese. They also raise specifically-requested animals. Most of their ducks and guinea fowl are raised for upscale restaurants in New York City. They also sell free-range eggs right from the farm as well as through local retail and farm-stall outlets on a seasonal basis.

Flower Creek Farms

Flower Creek Farms is located on seven acres in Andover and is the creation and passion of Barbara Antanies. All of her vegetables, herbs and berries are grown with no chemical use. Antanies also sells jams and other treats. Her slogan is: At Flower Creek Farms, vegetables and fruits are grown with love.

Mosefund Farm

Located in Branchville, Mosefund Farm was started because of a travel memory of a particularly flavorful pork. Owner G.C. Andersen was dismayed when he found that it could not be replicated in the U.S. because the pork he was looking for came from heritage breed pigs raised in old world traditions and butchered in the old world fashion. He started Mosefund Farm to revitalize those traditions here in Sussex County and to be the exclusive producer of this rare breed — Mangalista — in the Northeast.

Sparta Mountain Farm

Founded in 1998 as a tree farm, Sparta Mountain Farm is a small, family-owned-and-operated farm incorporating a love for animals, nature, and education.

The farm incorporates farm tours, educational programs and events, llama hikes, and parties into its business plan.

This fall, they began a Home School Days program designed to help homeschoolers. The farm's products include free range chicken eggs, Alpaca/Llama fiber and clothing, roosters and pullets, baby goats and firewood.

LL Pittenger Farm

LL Pittenger Farm is located in Andover on 180 acres. Owner Lou Tommaso produces and markets natural meat products and a variety of quality hay. All of the animals are humanely raised and are on a strict vegetarian diet with no use of hormones, antibiotics or steroids.

### Sparta Independent - Sparta Farmer's ...

Tommaso raises beef cattle, pigs, lambs and has been on the leading edge of farmers exploring the marketability of quality goat meat in New Jersey. Customers can shop at the farm stand by appointment or can purchase meat from LL Pittenger Farm at farmers' markets including the one in Sparta as well as at Olde Lafayette Village and Blairstown.

#### Ventimiglia Vineyard

In August, 2006, with a federal permit and New Jersey Winery license, Gene and Anne Ventimiglia started professional wine making at Ventimiglia Vineyard in Wantage. They say, "Our aim is to let you enjoy the delicious wine we share at our own table."

Hand-crafted wine is a family tradition that has been passed down through the family generations. Wine is made in small batches from specifically selected grapes. Founder and wine maker, Gene Ventimiglia, was influenced at a young age by European wine-making traditions which his grandfather, Eugenio Ventimiglia, brought to the United States at the turn of the last century.

#### Glenmalure Farm

Owned by Ireland native, Pat Kelly, Glenmalure Farm is located in Branchville. Glenmalure opened the farm after many years in the food industry and insists on grass-fed-only beef and lamb. The farm also prides itself on creating a natural setting for the animals.

#### Springhouse Dairy

Springhouse Dairy brings fresh farmstead cheese to the Sparta Farmer's Market. Located in Fredon, this family-owned business features all handmade and hand-cut cheeses made from Jersey and Guernsey cows which are known for their production of milk with a higher butter fat content.

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