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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**High Country Chefs Embrace Local Food, Working With ASAP to Expand Offerings**

**ASHEVILLE, NC (August 25, 2011)**—Forty: That's the number of High Country farms currently listed in Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's (ASAP) *Mixing Bowl* and currently ready to supply area food buyers with fresh local food. That's music to the ears of area chefs, who've long-embraced local sourcing and are now working to increase the amount of local food on their menus.

ASAP's 2011-2012 *Mixing Bowl* reached the hands of eager chefs, farmers, wholesalers, grocers, hospitals, and schools in late July. This year marks the second printing of a High Country edition, which includes sellers and buyers in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, and Wilkes counties, as well as a few in Burke, Caldwell, and Yancey counties. ASAP has published a WNC mountains edition for the past five years. The farm-to-business trade directory helps farmers form partnerships with food buyers specifically seeking local products and buyers find the freshest food available for their customers.

In response to increased chef interest in and demand for local food, ASAP is also expanding their Get Local program to the High Country. The year-round initiative highlights one featured local food each month. The highlighted ingredients are chosen when at their peak in the season, and chefs are encouraged to use the ingredients to create their own unique dishes that reflect our region's changing seasonal harvest.

"This is an exciting time for local food in the High Country and the perfect time of year to find farm-fresh products on restaurant menus," says Hollis Wild, a local farmer and ASAP's new High Country Program Coordinator. "Farmers are ready to get their products onto the menus of area restaurants and chefs are using these local ingredients in exciting dishes. I look forward to helping connect even more farmers to chefs and our community in the future."

A monthly calendar of featured foods can be found on the Get Local page of [asapconnections.org](http://asapconnections.org). There, you'll also find a list of participating restaurants, which is expected to grow in the coming months. (High Country eateries currently signed on are listed below.)

Interested in being a part of Get Local? Want to get your copy of the *Mixing Bowl*? Contact Hollis Wild, ASAP's High Country Program Coordinator at (828) 278-9566 or [hollis@asapconnections.org](mailto:hollis@asapconnections.org). You can also browse the *Mixing Bowl* online at [buyappalachian.org](http://buyappalachian.org); search by region and select 'High Country.' Stay tuned to [asapconnections.org](http://asapconnections.org) and follow ASAP on Facebook and Twitter for more information about the organization's work.

*[Photo: “Chef Samuel Ratchford of Vidalia in Boone was one of the first High Country chefs to get his hands on the 2011-2012 Mixing Bowl High Country edition. ‘I like to use fresh local ingredients to make good food and fun times,’ he says.” For additional photos, or to connect with growers and participating restaurants for future stories, contact Communications Coordinator Maggie Cramer at [maggie@asapconnections.org](mailto:maggie@asapconnections.org).]*

**Get Local at the following participating High Country eateries:**

Bare Essentials Natural Market, Boone  
Bistro Roca & Antlers Bar, Blowing Rock  
Crippen’s Country Inn & Restaurant, Blowing Rock  
Gamekeeper, Boone  
Hob Nob Farm Cafe, Boone  
Joy Bistro, Boone  
Knife and Fork, Spruce Pine  
The Manor House Restaurant at Chetola Resort, Blowing Rock  
The Painted Fish Cafe, Banner Elk  
Proper, Boone  
Reid’s Catering Company, Banner Elk  
Storie Street Grill, Blowing Rock  
The Table at Crestwood, Boone  
Vidalia, Boone

**ABOUT APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT (ASAP)**

ASAP’s mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food. To learn more about ASAP’s work in the region, visit [asapconnections.org](http://asapconnections.org), or call (828) 236-1282. Browse ASAP’s *Local Food Guide* online at [buyappalachian.org](http://buyappalachian.org).

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