



Deputy Ag Secretary Speaks On Local Food At UNH Jan. 29

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DURHAM, N.H. – Kathleen Merrigan, United States Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, will visit the University of New Hampshire Friday, Jan. 29, 2010, to discuss the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) local food initiatives. Merrigan will give a public presentation on the USDA's "Know your Farmer, Know your Food" program at 10 a.m. in DeMeritt Hall, room 240, on the UNH campus. The speech is free and open to the public.

The "Know your Farmer, Know your Food" initiative emphasizes the need for a fundamental and critical reconnection between producers and consumers. The effort builds on the 2008 Farm Bill, which provides for increases and flexibility for USDA programs in an effort to promote local foods. Consumer demand for locally grown food in the United States is expected to rise from an estimated \$4 billion in 2002 to as much as \$7 billion by 2012.

Merrigan's visit to UNH is part of a nationwide tour of colleges and universities with the goal of educating the next generation of farmers, ranchers and consumers by participating in the national conversation about how to develop local and regional food systems to support small and mid-sized farms and reinvigorate rural communities. For more information, go to www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer.

Kathleen Merrigan holds a Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in environmental planning and policy, a master's in public affairs from the University of Texas and a bachelor's degree from Williams College. In 1999, she was appointed administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service by then-President Clinton. Prior to that, Merrigan was a senior analyst at the Henry A. Wallace Institute for Alternative Agriculture and an expert consultant at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome. Most recently, she was the director of the Agriculture, Food and Environment M.S. and Ph.D. Program at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, Boston.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.