



# EarthWatch Rhode Island



**Topic: Celebrate National Farmers' Market Week – August 3-9**

**Date: Friday, August 1, 2008**

**Location: Goddard State Park, Ives Road, Warwick**

Next week is **National Farmers Market Week** and with August being one of the best months for farm fresh crops, DEM is encouraging Rhode Islanders to help preserve the states' farm and agricultural industry by purchasing locally grown products from local farmers' markets and roadside stands.

The Department's Division of Agriculture promotes and markets 32 farmers' markets and approximately 45 roadside stands throughout the state, as well as a number of other farm viability projects and programs like Rhody Fresh Milk and local meats, etc.

Farmers' markets and roadside stands have been a source of fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables for many years. In most cases, produce is picked that morning and sold the same day. In contrast, most US produce is picked 4-7 days prior to hitting supermarket shelves resulting in produce that contains fewer nutrients. Local products are also better for the environment. Buying locally reduces the amount of air pollution from transporting products and eliminates or reduces the energy and resources needed to manufacture and dispose of packaging.

Seven farmers markets, organized by the Division, are located in state parks and campgrounds and on state properties. The **Goddard State Park** market began in 1998 and is the longest running farmers' markets located in a state park. This Friday's market included chefs from Johnson and Wales University (shown at right) who demonstrated how to prepare the many vegetables and fruits grown on Rhode Island farms, cooked up local favorites, and taught healthy cooking to market-goers.



All DEM Farmers' Markets accepts farmers' market checks from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) as well as coupons from the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program distributed by DEM through senior centers.

### More Information for Consumers

- DEM Website [www.dem.ri.gov](http://www.dem.ri.gov) (under Timely Topics), includes links to lists of RI farmers' markets and roadside stands
- Look for Rhode Island Grown Logo (right)



### Interview:

- Pete Susi, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, DEM Division of Agriculture discussed farmers' markets and the importance of supporting them



**Channel 10 photographer Bill Burns (left) prepares DEM's Pete Susi for the EarthWatch interview.**