



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 26, 2009

PRESS CONTACT

Ben Lilliston, 612-870-3416, ben@iatp.org

IATP Applauds Mayor, City Council on Local Food Initiative Action will help expand Minneapolis' local food production

Minneapolis – The Minneapolis City Council approved a resolution today put forth by the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative to support the production, sale and consumption of local, sustainably produced foods in the city and surrounding region.

"We applaud the mayor's leadership in launching this initiative and the council's strong support today," said the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy's JoAnne Berkenkamp, who co-chaired one of the initiative's subcommittees. "This is a major step forward in expanding the local food system in the region. We have only scratched the surface in exploring the city's potential to produce its own food."

The Homegrown Minneapolis initiative began in December 2008 and met with more than 100 stakeholders within the city to develop recommendations in four main areas: farmers markets, commercially oriented urban agriculture, community/school/home gardens and commercial use of locally grown foods. In May, the initiative collected public comments on draft recommendations. You can read the full recommendations at: <http://www.ci.mpls.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp>.

With today's approval of the Homegrown resolution, a new Implementation Task Force will begin working on the formation of a city advisory committee on food policy; draft policy on community garden programs; suggestions for the City's state legislative agenda; the creation of a citywide topical plan on community gardens and urban agriculture; improved coordination among farmers markets; and a host of related initiatives.

Berkenkamp said that from the standpoint of health and the development of local, sustainable food production, the mayor's and council's action is critically important.

"Minneapolis is becoming a national leader in advancing local food systems," said Berkenkamp. "We look forward to working with the city to expand existing programs, develop new, innovative ideas, and include more community voices in this groundbreaking effort."

IATP works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. www.iatp.org.