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October Morris Community Meal features local foods

Summary: The free event seeks to build connections between members of the community.

(October 19, 2010)-Morris Community Meal is continuing its tradition of increasing access to healthy food in the community by offering free, freshly prepared meals on the last Monday of each month. Sponsored this month by Morris Healthy Eating, an all-local foods meal will be served on Monday, October 25, from 5:30 until 7 p.m. in the Morris Senior Community Center located at 603 Oregon Avenue in Morris. University of Minnesota, Morris Healthy Lifestyles floor residents are donating their time as co-sponsors of this event.

All members of the Stevens County community are invited to enjoy a free, hot meal and to connect with others in the community. The October menu includes a baked vegetable dish, a meat dish, homemade bread, and apple crisp.

Clara Dux, Morris Healthy Eating intern, extols the value of local foods. “Food that travels a shorter distance from farm to plate not only tastes better but is more nutritious and better for the environment. It’s exciting to be able to offer such fresh and healthy food to Morris residents,” she says.

“While we always try to obtain as many items as possible from local producers,” explains Argie Manolis, Office of Community Engagement coordinator, “ninety-eight percent of the ingredients for this meal will be purchased directly from local farmers, and the other two percent from the Pomme de Terre Food Co-op and Willie’s. One of the goals of Community Meal is to build connections among members of the community who might not otherwise interact. The idea of getting to know the farmers who cultivated the foods is an extension of that goal.”

The food is cooked at the Senior Center. People of all ages are welcome to come and help with the cooking and cleanup. Volunteers are needed for the October meal from noon to 9 p.m. on Sunday, October 24, and from 1 p.m. until 9 p.m. on Monday, October 25 spending any amount of time convenient for them. Workers for this meal are especially needed on Sunday. Organizers appreciate a phone call or e-mail from anyone available to participate.

Community Meal is a collaborative program of the UMM Office of Community Engagement, the UMM Civic Engagement Floor, and community partners. Willie’s Super Valu and the Pomme de Terre Food Co-op are sustaining community members.

Organizers are seeking businesses and community organizations interested in being meal sponsors, as well as volunteer cooks. Interested community members may come to the Morris Senior Community Center between 1 and 5 p.m. on the day of the meal to help prepare the food. To get involved as a sponsor or volunteer, contact the [Office of Community Engagement](#) at 320-589-6276.

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