

Whole Foods Market® Launches Farm-to-Market Photo Blog

The World's Leading Natural and Organic Foods Supermarket Hires Kate Medley to tell the Story Behind Southern Growers and Producers

Atlanta, GA (August 8, 2007) – Whole Foods Market recently launched its Farm to Market Photo blog, (www.wfmlocalsouth.com) telling the rich stories of local farmers and producers throughout the Southeast. Photojournalist Kate Medley has one of the hottest summer jobs—literally—in the food business: she's hitting the back roads and heading out to the farms, bringing the people and places behind local and regional foods to life.

Originally from Mississippi, Medley studied journalism at the University of Montana and recently finished her masters degree in Southern Studies from the University of Mississippi.

Noted projects she has worked on include a photo/audio project about the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and in New Orleans, and a film project documenting the history of desegregation of The University of Mississippi.

While enrolled in graduate school, she became involved with the Southern Foodways Alliance – which is housed at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi. It is through this organization that she became interested in documenting the stories surrounding food culture and traditions in the south. It is also through this organization that she met Cheryl Galway, regional marketing coordinator of Whole Foods Market, and thus, was recruited to help create the farm-to-market photo blog.

Medley's first assignment with Whole Foods Market was to visit Will Harris' Cattle Farm in Early County, Georgia. She had several weeks to prepare for her trip and to prepare for how she would politely explain to a cattle farmer that she was a 10-year vegetarian and wasn't interested in tasting his product!

"As a Mississippi girl, I was practically raised on meat and potatoes. But I made the decision to stop eating meat after learning enough about the meat industry to know I didn't trust it. I wanted to be cognizant of the full process of raising cattle (chickens, hogs, etc.) before I became a consumer and, as we all well know these days, you practically have to be a private investigator to trace the roots and processes of industrial beef."

After spending two full days, sun up to sun down, trekking around Will's farm in a jeep, listening to him talk about (and demonstrate) his own processes of raising cattle, she sat down with the family that evening and ate a (very small) hamburger. And, thought it was great! It was after this she made the decision at the beginning of the summer to taste as she traveled.

"Through my job with Whole Foods Market, I have the opportunity to be very close to the agricultural processes of some of the best and most conscientious growers in the southeast. And, I'm taking advantage of that!" Her first taste of pork came from Mike Jones' hog farm in Louisburg, NC and her first clam – albeit cooked in a microwave – came right off the boat at Stella Maris Seafood in Charleston, SC.

Medley has already visited the farms listed below and plans on visiting many more by the end of the season.

- White Oak Pastures in Bluffton, Georgia
- Jones Family Urban Farm in Birmingham, Alabama
- Lee's Bees in Mebane, North Carolina
- Parker Hog Farms in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina
- Cherry Point Seafood in Wadmalaw Island, South Carolina
- Belle Chevre Cheeses in Elkmont, Alabama

Lane Orchards in Fort Valley, Georgia

The photo blog is available on the Whole Foods Market website (www.wfmlocalsouth.com). The field-to-market blog features foods that are sold at Whole Foods Market stores throughout the Southeast, and which meet the company's strict quality standards.

About Whole Foods Market®:

Founded in 1980 in Austin, Texas, Whole Foods Market (www.wholefoodsmarket.com) is the world's leading natural and organic foods supermarket and America's first national certified organic grocer. In fiscal year 2005, the company had sales of \$4.7 billion and currently has more than 190 stores in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The Whole Foods Market motto, "Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet"™ captures the company's mission to find success in customer satisfaction and wellness, employee excellence and happiness, enhanced shareholder value, community support and environmental improvement. Whole Foods Market, Harry's Farmers Market®, and Fresh & Wild® are trademarks owned by Whole Foods Market IP, LP. Whole Foods Market employs more than 44,000 team members and has been ranked for ten consecutive years as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work For" in America by FORTUNE magazine.

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Contact: Marissa Jennings

Marissa@melissalibbypr.com

404-816-3068

Darrah Horgan

Darrah.horgan@wholefoods.com

770.667.8878 ext 3428