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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Voting is Open for Columbia's Famously Hot Chef Showdown

Premier Event Presented by the South Carolina State Fair

September 15, 2011 – Columbia, S.C.- The S.C. State Fair, in partnership with General Sales, WIS TV, the S.C. Hospitality Association, the Greater Columbia Restaurant Association, the American Culinary Federation Midlands Chapter and the All Locals Farmers Market would like to invite the public to vote on their favorite Columbia area chefs for a chance to compete in the Famously Hot Chef Showdown on October 18, 2011 on the WIS TV stage at the S.C. State Fair.

The S.C. State Fair has invited Celebrity Chef Walter Scheib, The American Chef and White House Executive Chef (1994-2005), to be the master of ceremonies and act as one of the four judges who will crown Columbia's first Famously Hot Chef in this *Iron Chef* style competition.

"The South Carolina State Fair is pleased to bring this Chef Showdown to Columbia and highlight the culinary talent in our community," said Gary Goodman, S.C. State Fair General Manager."

Restaurants and chefs will be chosen in an open public voting process that will start on September 13 and end on September 30. The voting will be conducted primarily through social media and restaurants are encouraged to have patrons vote on a daily basis. Additionally, a booth will be present at Viva La Vista and the public will be able to cast votes in person at the S.C. State Fair/Famously Hot Chef Showdown booth.

Area restaurants and chefs competing in the voting process are:

1. Blue Marlin, Executive Chef/GM Brian Dukes
2. Juniper, Chef/Owner Brandon Velie
3. Liberty Tap Room & Grill, Chef Nathan Brick
4. Mint Julep Bistro & Lounge, Executive Chef Will Descy
5. Moe's Grapevine Italian Restaurant, Chef/Owner Moe Baddourah
6. MoMo's Bistro, Executive Chef Andrew White
7. Motor Supply Company Bistro, Executive Chef Tim Peters
8. Mr. Friendly's New Southern Cafe, Executive Chef/Owner Ricky Mollohan
9. Rosso Trattoria Italia, Chef/Owner Kristian Niemi
10. Ruth's Chris Steakhouse, Executive Chef Paul Cernansky
11. Saki Tumi Grill & Sushi Bar, Executive Chef Larry Thompson
12. Sheraton Columbia Downtown Hotel, Executive Chef Neil Goodwin
13. Terra, Chef/Owner Mike Davis
14. Tombo Grille, Executive Chef Steven Blich
15. Villa Tronco, Executive Chef Nate Skipper
16. Virtu Restaurant and Bar, Chef Jeff T. Niemeyer



On October 3, the top three chefs chosen by the public will be announced by WIS TV and be asked to participate in the Famously Hot Chef Showdown on October 18. The public can vote by visiting the S.C. State Fair Facebook fan page at <http://www.facebook.com/SCStateFair> and click on Favorite Picks.

For more information on the S.C. State Fair and the Famously Hot Chef Showdown and other event partners, please contact Alana Jordan at Post No Bills at 803.254.4334 or e-mail, alana@postnobills.com.

The Famously Hot Chef Showdown is brought to you by The South Carolina State Fair and is sponsored by General Sales. The event will be the first "Iron Chef" style culinary contest to be held at the South Carolina State Fair and will feature Columbia's own "Top Chefs" battling it out live in front of fair goers using commercial grade equipment. Contestants will be judged by former White House Executive Chef Walter Scheib and three other regional culinary celebrity chefs. After the conclusion of the competition, one of the three commercial grade kitchen set ups will be donated to a local charity for their use.

The South Carolina State Fair is a self-supporting charitable organization dedicated to educating South Carolina's young adults. For more information about the South Carolina State Fair, visit www.scstatefair.org.

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