

For Immediate Release  
Contact: Ellen Siegel / 301.260.2222  
esiegel@abcdesignandpromo.com

### **Attention – Calling All Locavores!**

**Who:** Passionate Promoters of Local Food – **James and Amy Ricciuti of Ricciuti’s Restaurant**

**What:** **Shop With The Chef-Farm to Table Cooking Parties Success/100 Mile Plate Program**

**Where:** Ricciuti’s Restaurant and the Olney Farmers Market in Olney, Maryland

**Why:** To Provide Community Support for Local Farmers and Demonstrate the Simplicity of Creating Gourmet Style Dining When Using Farm Fresh *Picked At Their Peak* Seasonal Produce

**When:** First Sunday of the Month July Thru October. **New Venues Added Sunday Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> - 100 Mile Plate Program Daily**

Olney, MD (September 18, 2008) – As economists and nutritionists start pushing “Buy fresh, buy local” to public policy, one restaurant in the suburbs of Montgomery County has been advocating it for years. Most recent efforts included hosting **Shop With The Chef/Farm to Table Cooking Parties** to benefit the Olney Farmer’s Market and their **100 Mile Plate** program.

*“We are thrilled at the enthusiastic response from the community!”* says James Ricciuti, who has been a long time, passionate promoter of local food. *“To be a true gourmand these days’ means knowing where your heirloom tomatoes were rooted and your salmon was swimming and we enjoy educating our customers. It’s part of what we do. The **Shop with the Chef/Cooking Parties** have been a wildly successful venue for educating and entertaining folks interested in eating well with local food! That the market and our cooking parties have been so well received proves there has been an artistry of sorts missing. People are now realizing that both farming and cooking are a craft that deserve equal appreciation!”*

James and Amy promote buying local for many reasons: It strengthens the local economy, preserves the area’s land, tastes better because the produce is naturally ripened and free of potentially harmful pesticides and preservatives – like the ones normally found in grocery store produce. He explains that the produce usually found there is laden with the preservatives that help the produce to withstand the industrial harvesting and extended travel time. *“That’s why you end up with waxy cucumbers and hot house tomatoes that never seem to ripen.”* Ricciuti explains that using produce at their peak ripeness as what is found at the market and the other local farms they support enhances the flavor of the dish long before the cooking begins.

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At the *Shop With the Chef/Cooking* events, participants shopped the Farmer's Market from a chef's perspective with Chef Ricciuti and then created the menus on the spot based upon the best produce found. (Yes, it could be a reality Food Network Show!) The group prepared the meals together in Ricciuti's professional kitchen and enjoyed the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor when they sat down for the gourmet feasts complete with wine and local cheeses. Proceeds from the events were donated to the market. Janet Terry, founder of The Olney Farmers Market, expressed sincere gratitude to Amy and James Ricciuti for their continual efforts in supporting and promoting the local farmers! October 5<sup>th</sup> is the next event. The following is a list of the menus previously created:

*JULY ~ Roasted Cherries with Greens & Shaved Parmesan Salad, Cucumber Fennel Salad, Corn & Tomato Soup, Roasted String Beans with Lemon Grass-Ginger Soy Glaze, Basil Risotto, King Salmon With Herb Butter Over Green & Yellow Squash "Fettuccine", Roasted Eggplant Pizza, Chilled Blueberry Soup With Lemon Ginger Fraiche.*

*AUGUST ~ Eggplant Caponata, Grilled Peaches with Goat Cheese, Prosciutto, Arugula, Oil & Vinegar, Peaches in Red Wine, Fresh Sliced Tomatoes With Parmesan, Basil, Olive Oil & Balsamic, Halibut with Charred Jalapeno Vinaigrette, Sweet Corn Fritters, Pizza Margarita and Sliced Fresh Melons.*

*SEPTEMBER ~ Market Vegetable Casserole, Panzanella Salad with Fresh Tomatoes, Melon with Prosciutto di Parma, Grilled Vegetable Pizzas, Penne with Sweet Sausage, Peppers and Herbs and Chilled Peach Soup!*

In addition to showcasing market produce, Ricciuti's features **The 100 Mile Plate** program, which highlights dishes composed of ingredients sourced within 100 miles of the restaurant and endorses their local suppliers through their menu and web site [www.ricciutis.com](http://www.ricciutis.com). Ricciutis is an eco-friendly restaurant committed to *sustainable practices, recycling and composting*. James and Amy have a garden that supplies the restaurant with homegrown produce as well. They are supporters of *Slow Food USA, Local Harvest and CSA's*.

Due to the popularity of Shop With The Chef/Cooking Parties, winter cooking venues have been scheduled for Sunday November 16<sup>th</sup> when Thanksgiving Appetizers will be the focus and Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> with the focus on Seasonal Cocktails and Sweet & Savory Treats. Reservations are required and the cost is \$45.00 per person.

Ricciuti's plans to continue bringing awareness of the symbiotic relationship of farmers, chefs and consumers and hopes to continue having fun while doing so. For more information, photos and recipes visit [www.ricciutis.com/press](http://www.ricciutis.com/press) or call James at 301.570.3388. Be sure to visit their Blog on the web site! Ricciuti's is located at 3308 Olney-Sandy Spring Road Olney MD 20832.

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