

New England: Feeding Ourselves

2009 New England Association of
Resource Conservation and
Development (RC&D) Areas

Fall Conference

October 29, 30, 31, 2009

Eastland Park Hotel
Portland, Maine



The theme of this year's New England Association of RC&D Areas fall conference is "*New England: Feeding Ourselves*". With the steadily increasing demand for local foods and an increased interest in food safety and security, the New England Association felt it was appropriate to focus this year's conference on the region's local food system.

Our agriculture system today is represented by the large scale economies of scale typical of an industrial system. It has become very good at moving large volumes of commodities at the lowest margins possible. This has led to an increase in food safety issues and is subject to the global impacts of energy fluctuations, climate change, and water scarcity.

In order to rethink this industrial system of agriculture we need to focus on our local food system and enhance the ability of communities and regions to become more self sufficient. The conference will feature Paul Roberts, author of "The End of Food" to provide participants with a thought provoking analysis of the current food economy and what we can do to survive its effects. Conference participants will then take part in concurrent workshops focused on 8 key elements of a successful local food system: Production, Processing, Marketing, Transportation, Financing, Education, Research, and Technology Transfer. These sessions will feature expert speakers on each topic and examples of successful projects supported by the New England RC&D Councils.

The conference is formatted to provide participants an opportunity to examine our current food system, identify the gaps that exist in moving to a strong local food system, and develop actions that can be taken to move closer to a regional system that benefits both producers and consumers.

Featured Keynote Speaker

Paul Roberts, Author of "The End of Food"



A journalist since 1983, Paul Roberts writes and lectures frequently on the complex interplay of economics, technology, and the natural world. Roberts has also written for The Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, and The (UK) Guardian and has appeared in Slate, USA Today, The New Republic, Newsweek, The Christian Science Monitor, Rolling Stone, and Outside magazine. The End of Food follows the successful publication of Roberts's first book, [The End of Oil](#), published in 2004.

Roberts was a finalist for the National Magazine Award (1999) and for the New York Public Library Helen Bernstein Book Award for Excellence in Journalism in 2005.

A long-time observer of energy issues and politics, Roberts appears regularly on national and international television and radio news shows, including CNN's Lou Dobbs, the BBC, PBS News Hour, MSNBC, CBS Evening News, and on NPR's Morning Edition, On Point, Weekend Edition, and Fresh Air. He lives in Washington State.

Day One **Thursday—October 29, 2009**

Time	Event	Location
12:00 PM — 4:00 PM	Registration	Eastland Park Hotel
1:00 PM — 4:00 PM	Conference Exhibit Display Set-up and Viewing	Eastland Ballroom Balcony
4:30 PM—7:00 PM	Reception and Light Dinner	Nevelson/ Greenhouse Longfellow A
7:00 PM—9:00 PM	Key Note Speaker - Paul Roberts, author <i>The End Of Food</i> - Introduction by Leonard Jordan, Acting East Region Assistant Chief, NRCS (Confirmed)	Eastland Ballroom

Day Two **Friday—October 30, 2009**

7:30 AM—12:00 PM	Registration	Eastland Lobby
7:00 AM—8:30 AM	Awards Breakfast Joan Smith Freeman, President NARC&DC (Invited) Anne Dubey, Director RC&D/Outreach Division, NRCS (Confirmed)	Longfellow A
9:00 AM—10:00 AM	Opening Session USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack (Invited) Governor John Baldacci (Invited)	Eastland Ballroom
10:15 AM—11:15 AM	Concurrent Sessions (Production and Processing)	Breakout Spaces
11:15 AM— 11:30 AM	Break	
11:30 AM—12:30 PM	Concurrent Sessions (Marketing and Transportation)	Breakout Spaces
12:30 PM—1:45 PM	Lunch USDA Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Kathleen Merrigan (Invited)	Eastland Ballroom
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Concurrent Sessions (Financing and Education)	Breakout Spaces
2:30 PM—5:00 PM	Tour	
6:30 PM—	Dinner and Auction	Eastland Ballroom

Day Three		Saturday—October 31, 2009
Time	Event	Location
7:30 AM – 9:30 AM	NE Association Business Meeting Breakfast NRCS Chief Dave White (Invited)	Top of the East
10:00 AM—11:00 AM	Concurrent Sessions (Research and Technology Transfer)	Breakout Rooms
11:00 AM—11:15 AM	Break	
11:15 AM—12:00 PM	General Session Ag. Commissioners from 6 NE States (Invited)	Eastland Ballroom
12:00 PM—1:00 PM	Lunch	Longfellow A
1:00 PM—2:30 PM	Large Group Strategy Session (Where do we go from here)	Eastland Ballroom
2:30 PM	Conference Concludes	

About “The End of Food” from <http://www.theendoffood.com/index.html>

“In this carefully researched, vividly recounted narrative, Roberts lays out the stark economic realities beneath modern food—and shows how our system for making, marketing, and moving what we eat is growing less and less compatible with the billions of consumers that system was built to serve.

At the heart of The End of Food is a grim paradox: the rise of large-scale, hyper-efficient industrialized food production, though it generates more food more cheaply than at any time in history, has reached a point of dangerously diminishing returns. Our high-volume factory systems are creating new risks for food-borne illness—from E. coli to avian flu. Our high-yield crops and livestock generate grain, vegetables and meat of declining nutritional quality. Overproduction is so routine that nearly one billion people are now overweight or obese worldwide—and yet those extra calories are still so unevenly distributed that the sAMe number of people—one billion, roughly one in every seven of us—can’t get enough to eat. In some of the hardest-hit regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of a single nutrient—vitAMin A—has left more than 3 million children permanently blind.

Meanwhile, the shift to heavily mechanized, chemically intensive farming has so compromised the soils, water systems, and other natural infrastructure upon which all food production depends that it’s unclear how long such output can be maintained. And just as we’ve begun to understand the limits of our industrialized superabundance, the burgeoning economies of Asia, where newly wealthy consumers are rapidly adopting Western-style, meat-heavy diets, are putting new demands on global food supplies.

Comprehensive and global, with lucid writing, drAMatic detail and fresh insights, The End of Food offers readers new, accessible way to understand the vulnerable miracle of the modern food economy. Roberts presents clear, stark visions of the future and helps us prepare to make the decisions -- personal and global -- we must make to survive the demise of food production as we know it.”

Workshop Descriptions

The conference workshops will be organized around the following eight topic areas. Each workshop will feature a speaker or panel on the subject along with examples of current or completed projects that highlight successful adoption of local food practices.

Production

For example: Micro-farms, CSA's, new crops, etc.

Processing

For example: Shared Use Commercial Kitchens, Co-packing, etc.

Marketing

For example: Farmers Markets, On-line Marketing, Cooperatives, Green Grocers, etc.

Transportation

For example: Local Distribution Networks, Logistics, etc.

Financing

For example: Community Based Investment Models, etc.

Education

For example: Gardening, Canning, Alternative Agriculture, etc.

Research

For example: Extended Season Techniques, Heirloom Crops, etc.

Technology Transfer

For example: Greenhouse Technology, Vertical Farming, etc.