



Compass Group Broadens their 'Eat Local' Programs to Support Family Farms

Ag in the Middle, the 10% Campaign and 'It Takes You-Eat Local' Brings Local Produce to over 10,000 Accounts

CHARLOTTE, NC (June 16, 2010) – Compass Group North America announces the expansion of its 'Eat Local' programs across the United States. As part of their commitment to sustainable agriculture and wellness, Compass Group will be broadening its efforts this summer to source fresh fruits and vegetables from mid-size farmers and educate consumers about the merits of eating local.

For Compass Group, 'local' is defined as food grown within a 150 mile radius of where it is consumed. With over 10,000 foodservice accounts in the U.S., Compass Group has supported 'buy local' food initiatives for over a decade. In 2009, they purchased \$17 million of local products.

Three initiatives are being launched or expanded this summer:

Ag in the Middle

The Ag in the Middle initiative is working to keep mid-size farmers on the land through closer relationships among growers and Compass Group's national network of independent produce distributors. The focus is on mid-size, independent farmers who rely on their farm for their primary income, a segment of the farming community whose numbers have dropped precipitously in recent years.

Launched in 2009 through pilots in Minnesota, North Carolina and the Washington, D.C. area, the initiative is being rolled out nationally in 2010. Compass Group's partner on Ag in the Middle is the Minneapolis-based [Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy](#) (IATP), a non-profit organization that supports fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems.

According to JoAnne Berkenkamp, Local Foods Program Director at IATP, "This initiative is about building mutually beneficial relationships between growers and buyers and fostering a different way of doing business with the farming community. We are pleased to partner with Compass Group in making that commitment a reality."

10% Campaign – North Carolina

As Compass Group North America's headquarters are located in North Carolina, they have partnered with the [Center for Environmental Farming Systems](#) (CEFS) on the [10% Campaign](#), with a goal to encourage consumers to commit 10 percent of their existing food dollars to support local food producers. Compass Group is developing a parallel model 'farm to institution' buying program and will source 10 percent of the produce it serves in its North Carolina accounts from local farmers in the state.

It Takes You - Eat Local

These efforts will be complemented by a company-wide 'It Takes You - Eat Local' campaign. Cafés around the country will feature locally grown produce, conduct on-site farmers markets, sponsor farm tours and promote menu selections that feature local ingredients in an effort to provide visibility to the many benefits of buying locally. Last year's promotion tallied \$2,926,708. This year, the program will be expanded to a month-long campaign slated for September 2010.

Marc Zammit, Vice President of Corporate Sustainability Initiatives and Culinary, concludes, "These programs support the continued viability of regionally-focused, mid-sized farmers. We can help support those farms' success, while fostering sustainable agricultural methods and enjoying regional flavors. Food

miles are significantly reduced when we buy locally, not to mention the many health benefits of eating fresh foods harvested at their peak point of nutrition. It's a business model that not only works but is the right thing to do."

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About Compass Group North America

Based in Charlotte NC, Compass Group North America is the leading foodservice and support services company with \$9.2 billion in revenues in 2009. With 386,000 associates worldwide, its parent company, UK-based Compass Group PLC had revenues of £13.4 billion in the year to September 30, 2009.

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