

For Immediate Release

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Fishermen Join Farmers to Announce 2008 FarmAid Concert

July 15, 2008. Boston, MA –The Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA) joined FarmAid organizers for the first time as they announced the upcoming 2008 FarmAid fundraising concert scheduled for September 20 at the Comcast Center in Mansfield, Massachusetts. This announcement coincides with the start of NAMA’s *Loaves and Fishes* campaign aimed at connecting family farms and community-based fishermen.

“*Loaves and Fishes* is about connecting family farmers and community-based fishermen,” states NAMA Executive Director Niaz Dorry. “The policy decisions that have turned farms into food production machines with grave ecological, health and economic consequences are also mirrored on the marine side. Fishing is being turned into a highly extractive industry with similar consequences.”

By building alliances, participating fishermen and farmers aim to help protect food-production ecosystems, governing themselves and building local economies. Consumers contribute to this effort eating local foods and supporting local food providers. The goals of this effort include:

- Healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods by small-scale producers who define their own food systems;
- Producers distributors and consumers at the heart of food systems and policies instead of the demands of commodities markets and corporations;
- A strategy to transform the current directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems to ones that are determined by local producers;
- Prioritization of local economies and markets that empower family farms, small-scale fishing and pastoralist-led grazing, as well as food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Through the *Think Global; Eat Local Seafood* strategy, NAMA is building a market for the catch of ecologically responsible, local fisheries that will build a base of support for the long-term health of the marine ecosystems that sustain the economic health of small-scale fishing communities. This approach will strengthen local fishing communities through a better return on less catch, creating market appreciation for locally caught seafood through Community Supported Fisheries (CSF). NAMA supports the growing number of CSF programs in communities such as Port Clyde, Maine that provide fresh, Maine-caught shrimp and groundfish to the local community, and advocates the creation of more CSFs in other New England communities. Both NAMA and the Midcoast Fishermen’s Association – the organization behind

the Port Clyde-based CSF – also provide consumers and fishermen with the tools necessary to develop their own CSF programs and to establish programs that educate the consumers and end users of the economic and ecological benefit of locally caught seafood by community-based fishermen.

These efforts advance NAMA’s mission of restoring and enhancing an enduring marine system that supports a healthy diversity and an abundance of marine life and human uses through a self-organizing and self-governing organization. For the past decade, NAMA has set the standard for effective collaboration. “We look forward to opportunities for partnering with family farmers and their advocates,” says Dorry, “We are absolutely committed to transforming the policies that have undermined the economic viability of our communities and ecological viability of the land and sea that sustain us.”

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