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NEWS RELEASE

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Photos available—Download links and sample captions at end of release

A delight for foodies this Saturday at the FEAST! Festival in Rochester

Rochester, MN — FEAST! Local Foods Marketplace, the largest local foods festival in the tri-states, returns for a sixth year Saturday, Dec. 7, at Mayo Civic Center, Rochester, MN.

More than 100 of the region's farmers and culinary artisans will bring their inspired food and beverage creations to Rochester this Saturday for the public to sip, sample and shop. Preview the products online at local-feast.org/2019vendors.

There's fun for the whole family! Arts activities will fill the lobby, made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund. First, there's live music throughout the day. Next, the "Vegetable Alfombra" is a life-size mosaic you can help construct out of locally-grown produce, curated by local artist Susan Waughtal. Then, weave a yarn through the "String Survey" by artist Arlene Birt to dig into thoughts about local food. Videographer Ross Ballinger will be capturing the fun.

Cooking demos with award-winning chefs throughout the day will help you get inspired for the season of entertaining, including Erik Kleven of Bleu Duck Kitchen at 11:30, Shari Mukherjee from MasterChef Season 10 at 12:30, and James Beard Award Winner Beth Dooley at 2:30.

Children will enjoy an activity area featuring Kids' Choice Veggie Voting with Mayo Clinic Dietetic Interns, meant to reinforce positive attitudes towards sampling new fruits and veggies, and offering strategies to parents.

Festival attendees can vote for their favorite booth for a chance at a local foods gift basket, with winners announced throughout the day and the People's Choice Award winning vendor announced at 3:45 pm.

The Rochester Farmers Market will have a popup winter market inside, moving their location from Graham Park to the Mayo Civic Center for the day.

From meats and wine to desserts and coffee, you'll find new discoveries and familiar favorites. Buy your favorite local foods right from the foodmaker to stock your pantry and find delectable treats as perfect holiday gifts. FEAST! vendors offer clean labels with features such as gluten-free, non-GMO and locally-grown ingredients.

Visit local-feast.org/festival2019 for details and to buy discount tickets. Regular admission is \$8/adults and \$2/kids, or \$25 for a wristband to sample a selection of the region's best wine, cider, and craft beer. Wristband ticket holders may purchase up to six bottles of wine or cider.

FEAST! is brought to you by the FEAST! Local Foods Network and premier partners, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, Renewing the Countryside, and Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

To learn more about FEAST! visit local-feast.org/, join in the conversation on [Facebook](#), and follow @Local_Feast on [Twitter](#) and @localfeast on Instagram.

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Photos and suggested captions:

Shari Mukherjee:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=13kqmDwmsHPhKcrkDGDjbiAOL8kg6yUV6>

Sample caption:

Local phenom Shari Mukherjee, seen here at the October launch of the *FEAST! Local Foods Magazine*, received national acclaim as a top-six contestant on MasterChef Season 10 and will offer a cooking demonstration during this year's festival.

Photo: Elena Byrne

Susan Waughtal:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_hhlHDgt8Dcen47mlrrm4Qw_O3Ca7SJz/view?usp=sharing

Sample caption:

Local artist Susan Waughtal, who also attends FEAST! with her husband for their business, Squash Blossom Farm, will curate the creation of the Vegetable Alfombra at this year's festival.