

# *South Carolina Department of Agriculture*

Hugh Weathers, Commissioner

**Media Contact:**

Emily Brady at 803.238.3767 [Emily.Brady@cnsd.com](mailto:Emily.Brady@cnsd.com)

Stephen Hudson at 803.734.0648 [Sdhudson@scda.sc.gov](mailto:Sdhudson@scda.sc.gov)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SC Department of Agriculture Expands Partnership with Piggly Wiggly to Promote Certified SC SCDA & Piggly Wiggly Expand Statewide Partnership Promoting Locally Grown Produce and Products**

**Columbia, S.C. – June 11, 2010** – Today the South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) and Piggly Wiggly announced that they will expand their statewide partnership to help consumers better identify all local products in their South Carolina stores, including grocery, meat, deli and dairy in addition to produce.

The announcement was made during a three-stop media tour at Piggly Wiggly stores across the state in Columbia, Florence and Isle of Palms, where South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture, Hugh Weathers, thanked Piggly Wiggly for the company's support and explained to customers the myriad benefits of buying local.

“Agribusiness contributes \$34 billion to our state’s economy each year and employs more than 200,000 South Carolinians,” said Weathers. “With continued support from Certified SC retail partners like Piggly Wiggly and our local farmers and producers, we can increase this to \$50 billion by 2020,” he added. “Our extended, statewide partnership with Piggly Wiggly will certainly give a large boost to our promotional efforts, and we are hopeful that our increased presence will cause awareness for the Certified SC brand to increase dramatically.”

Piggly Wiggly has been a member of the Certified SC program since its inception in 2007, promoting locally grown produce with signage in all of their SC stores, and with the newly expanded program, it will be even easier for buyers to identify locally grown produce and products.

“At The Pig, we stay true to our South Carolina roots so it’s only natural that we would partner with the Certified SC program to do business locally- with our state’s vendors, farmers manufacturers and business partners,” said Tommy Guthrie, spokesperson for Piggly Wiggly. “We are very proud to provide and promote the freshest, highest quality local produce and products to our consumers at reasonable prices,” he added.

South Carolina farmers representing Clayton Rawl Farms in Lexington, S.C., McLeod Farms in McBee, S.C., and Gruber Farms in St. George, S.C., also spoke at the events, explaining their relationships with Piggly Wiggly and the Certified SC program.

Piggly Wiggly encouraged customers to shop at their stores on Saturday, June 12, and take part in the Piggly Wiggly farmer’s markets featuring Certified SC Grown produce as well as samples, specials, free food, games and prizes for families.

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### About Certified SC

Piggly Wiggly's partnership with SCDA is an extension of the SCDA's Certified South Carolina program, an exciting cooperative effort among producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and the SCDA, to brand and promote SC produce and products. The program is based on the idea that when presented with the option, South Carolinians will buy local because- Nothing's Fresher, Nothing's Finer than South Carolina products and produce.

Additional information about the SCDA and its branding programs, including a Certified SC Grown directory, may be found online at [www.agriculture.sc.gov](http://www.agriculture.sc.gov) and [www.certifiedscgrown.com](http://www.certifiedscgrown.com).

### About Piggly Wiggly

Piggly Wiggly Carolina has become the largest employee-owned, privately operated retail company in South Carolina, servicing over 100 retail stores with a workforce of over 4,000 employee-owners throughout South Carolina and southeastern Georgia. For more information about Piggly Wiggly visit [www.thepig.net](http://www.thepig.net).

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