FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Raleigh man wins vegetable growers recipe contest at N.C. State Fair

RALEIGH – Le’CHOP Soup took first place Sunday in the North Carolina Vegetable Growers recipe contest at the N.C. State Fair. Domino Ireland of Raleigh earned $200 for the winning recipe.

Veggie Packed Cajun Peppers, entered by Emily Forrest of Chapel Hill, received second place and $150. Third place and $75 went to Susan Kamm of Efland for her Hearty One-Pan Butternut Squash Veggie Chili. The judges also awarded honorable mention and $25 to Gail Fuller of Raleigh for Roasted Vegetable Enchiladas.

Each recipe had to include 1 1/2 cups of fresh vegetables that were grown in North Carolina. Recipes were judged on taste, creativity and ease of preparation.

The winning recipe follows:

Le’CHOP Soup

2 tablespoons of avocado oil
1 leek, light green and white parts, finely chopped
1 cup of swiss chard stems, finely chopped
1 habanero, seeded and finely chopped
1 sweet yellow onion, finely chopped
4 cups of chicken stock, divided
1 potato, diced
1 cup of buttermilk
1 tablespoon of onion powder
1 tablespoon of garlic powder
Salt and pepper to taste

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Directions:

1. In a Dutch oven, heat avocado oil then add the leak and swiss chard. Cook for about 3 minutes to soften. Add habanero and onion then cook until onion becomes translucent. Move contents to a bowl.

2. With the Dutch oven still hot, deglaze with ½ cup of chicken stock. Add remaining chicken stock and bring to a light boil adding potatoes then cooking for about 15 minutes. Reduce heat to low and stir in the onion and garlic powder then add cooked vegetable mixture from the bowl. Simmer for about a minute. Remove from heat.

3. Pour half into a food processor. Blend and remove to a large bowl. Add remaining mixture to the food processor and blend while slowly adding the buttermilk. Combine all back in the Dutch oven, add salt and pepper, stir then put heat on low to warm it back up.

4. Garnish with chives and a small dollop of sour cream if available.

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