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Who:	Chefs Collaborative – local. sustainable. delicious.
What:	Melissa Kogut is named executive director and new website and blog are launched.
Where:	Coast to coast—linking chefs, farmers, producers and consumers across the country
Why:	Because consumer curiosity about issues in our food supply is at an all-time high and Chefs Collaborative provides solutions
Keywords:	Sustainable Food System, Local Food, Farm-to-Table, Sourcing Solutions for Chefs

CHEFS COLLABORATIVE NAMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Culinary Non-Profit Launches Revamped Website and New Blog

(Boston, Mass...September 26, 2007) Following a nationwide search, **Chefs Collaborative**, the national non-profit organization dedicated to giving chefs the information and tools they need to make sustainable food purchasing decisions, has named **Melissa Kogut** as its **new executive director**. Kogut will lead the Boston-based operation, including the organization’s board of overseers, staff and 1,000-plus [members](#).

“This is a critical and exciting moment in the growth of this organization,” says Kogut, who started her new post on August 13, 2007. “Public concern about the problems in our food supply is at an all-time high. We must do what we can now to expand the dialogue between consumers, chefs and producers and continue to increase recognition of not just the problems, but, more importantly, the solutions.”

Since 1993, Chefs Collaborative has published [communiqués](#) (white papers) and coordinated educational initiatives throughout the country to build awareness of important food issues and strengthen community food sourcing networks. Currently, the organization is educating chefs and culinary students with [Seafood Solutions: A Chef’s Guide to Ecologically Responsible Fish Procurement](#) and its sustainable seafood curriculum. In addition, Chefs Collaborative connects chefs with farmers and other producers through an [online sourcing guide](#), as well as through community picnics organized by [Renewing America’s Food Traditions](#) (RAFT), a project with six other culinary and conservation partners.

With a history in the restaurant industry and a deep interest in sustainable food, Kogut’s goal as the new executive director is to harness the energy and talent of the board and the organization’s many members to expand the capacity and the reach of its programs. One of her first accomplishments was re-launching www.chefscollaborative.org to include a custom database that allows visitors to search for [member restaurants](#), as well as artisan food producers, farmers and purveyors. The site also features the [Fresh from the Field blog](#), which is written by the staff and guest writers and covers news and trends from a variety of industries, including restaurants, agriculture and fishing. Like its other publications, the goal is to communicate complicated information about food supply-related issues and solutions in a user-friendly way for chefs.

As former executive director of NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts, a statewide organization that advocates for women’s reproductive freedom, Kogut honed her non-profit management skills for over a decade. She has proven to be an expert leader in a mission-driven organization, balancing infrastructure direction with program development and strategic growth. Kogut excels at building partnerships with stakeholder groups to reach shared goals. In 2006, she received the Abigail Adams Award by the Massachusetts Women’s Political Caucus, which recognizes outstanding women leaders.

If you’d like to welcome Melissa personally, please feel free to email her at melissa@chefscollaborative.org.

For a complete [list of board members](#) as well as further information about current initiatives and upcoming events, Chefs Collaborative invites members, journalists, and others to visit its website: www.chefscollaborative.org or contact the

national office at (617) 236-5200. For interview opportunities and photos, journalists can contact Nancy Civetta at Civetta Comunicazioni: (617) 577-8098 or nancy@civettacom.com.

About Chefs Collaborative

Founded in 1993, Chefs Collaborative is a national network of culinary professionals, food producers and food lovers committed to sustainability in our food supply. Its members recognize the impact that local, seasonal and artisanal foods have on our lives, on the well being of our communities and on the integrity of the environment. Chefs Collaborative is the leading culinary organization that provides its constituents with tools for running economically healthy, sustainable businesses. Through education and communication about current issues, the Collaborative inspires its members to embrace seasonality, preserve traditional practices and agricultural diversity and support local economies. Chefs Collaborative's vision is for every chef to be aware that food-purchasing choices affect the environment and their communities. For more information, visit www.chefscollaborative.org.

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