



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

Department of Community Health and the Environment

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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24 CARROT AWARD WINNERS SET “GOLD” STANDARD

St. Charles County Rewards Eateries for Outstanding Food Safety, Stewardship

St. Charles County, Missouri – Today, the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment announced its **24 Carrot Gold Food Safety Excellence Award** winners for 2011 – eight local eateries that demonstrated excellence in food safety, sanitation and successful employee education this year. Presented by the Division of Environmental Health and Protection, this marks the fifth consecutive year that the 24 Carrot Gold awards have recognized the county’s food service establishments for raising the industry standard in food service and stewardship.

“Public concern about food safety, harmful products and dangerous germs has increased with food-borne threat incidents occurring throughout the United States,” said **Pieter Sheehan**, director of the Division of Environmental Health and Protection. “We instituted the 24 Carrot Gold awards program to recognize that food service facilities in St. Charles County place a high importance on consumer health and safety. While all establishments in our community meet necessary requirements, the fact that we’ve had different winners each of our first five years from a variety of food service industries shows that a large number of them exceed the standard.”

The following local eateries were chosen as **24 Carrot Gold Food Safety Excellence Award** winners for 2011:

- **DAIRY QUEEN** – 702 Church St., Wentzville
- **DONUT KING** – 662 First Capitol Dr., St. Charles
- **FUJIYAMA GRILL AND SUSHI** – 8632 Mexico Rd., O’Fallon
- **GARDEN VILLAS OF O’FALLON** – 7092 S. Outer Rd. 364, O’Fallon
- **IMO’S PIZZA** – 1127 West Pearce Blvd., Wentzville
- **LONGHORN STEAKHOUSE** – 2102 Highway K, O’Fallon
- **ST. PETER CATHOLIC SCHOOL** – 201 First Capitol Dr., St. Charles
- **THE MORGAN SCHOOL** – 7401 Highway N, Dardenne Prairie

(MORE)

(24 Carrot Award Winners – p.2)

“As you can see through our list, we have an eclectic mix of winners in 2011,” Sheehan noted. “We’re proud to recognize a multi-generational donut shop that brings back memories of Sunday morning outings with Grandpa, an ice cream shop that is a must-visit destination on many a hot summer’s day, a favorite neighborhood pizza joint, a school that prides itself on being ‘nut-free’ to accommodate students with allergies and many more locally operated facilities.”

These organizations’ outstanding commitment to go beyond safe food services and enhance our community is illustrated in many ways. For example, *Imo’s* provides schools with coupons for students that achieve high grades, and *Dairy Queen* sponsors several area sports teams. Another highlight is *Donut King*, which has been a fixture in St. Charles for more than 30 years and where it’s common to see three generations of customers dining together. *Garden Villas* enhances community partnerships in many ways, and most recently, sponsored the annual Firefighters Award banquet and the O’Fallon Independence Day celebration.

To be eligible for consideration, recipients of the 24 Carrot Gold Awards cannot have any critical violations in the last 12 months, and no more than six non-critical violations over the same time period. In addition, at least 90 percent of the food facility managers at the establishment must possess valid food safety certification. The facility must also have a valid St. Charles County Food Establishment Permit and be in good standing with the department.

To help customers recognize establishments’ food service ratings, the department has placed a QR code on newly issued establishment stickers. Posted at entry doors, drive-thru windows or other convenient locations, customers can now use their smart phones to scan these codes and view the establishment’s latest ratings. Alternatively, customers may visit www.scchealth.org, and click on “Know the Score” to view these ratings. The division inspects all food service establishments in St. Charles County, except those located within the City of St. Peters.

Throughout the year, members of the Division of Environmental Public Health and Protection work with area businesses and organizations to promote healthy conditions in our community. To learn more ways the division helps to ensure public safety, please call 636-949-1800 or visit www.scchealth.org.

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