

**Registration for exhibitors begins and
spokesperson is announced for the 17th Foire Gourmande of ATNEO**

Ville-Marie, March 22, 2018 – The Foire Gourmande of Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Northeastern Ontario is proud to unveil its official spokesperson for 2018 while launching the registration period for exhibitors for the 17th edition of the event.

The Foire Gourmande of ATNEO gets a spokesperson in 2018

Celebrated chef Stefano Faita will be the official spokesperson for the 17th edition of the gourmet event, which is slated to take place in Ville-Marie on August 17th, 18th and 19th. Stefano, who grew up in Montréal's Little Italy district, inherited his passion for cooking from his mother, and this passion has found expression in many ways throughout his life. Chef Stefano teaches the secrets of Italian cuisine at the *Mezza Luna* cooking school which he co-founded with his mother. He is also co-owner of three Montréal restaurants: *Impasto*, *Pizzeria Gema* and *Chez Tousignant*. His desire to pass on his love of good food has inspired him to publish four cookbooks: *Entre Cuisine et Quincaillerie*, *Entre cuisine et Bambini*, *Je cuisine italien* and *In the Kitchen*. The public can follow him through his various media appearances. His career has included stints as a food columnist at the *Journal de Montréal*, resident chef on the Radio-Canada show *Kampaï* and host of the show *Al Dante* on the Casa channel, where he shared personal stories and his family's passion for food. He also left his culinary mark on the show *Deux filles le matin* and hosted the shows *In the Kitchen* on CBC and *Arrive en campagne* on TVA. True to his Italian roots, he launched his own line of pasta sauces.

The Foire Gourmande of Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Northeastern Ontario is honoured to welcome this renowned chef who has such an inspiring story. For festival president and co-founder Line Descoteaux, naming a spokesperson for this 17th edition of the Foire Gourmande has many benefits. *"We are proud to have Stefano Faita as spokesperson. Stefano will bring a national status to the Foire Gourmande of Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Northeastern Ontario. We get to show him our regional products and the public can see him at work throughout the weekend event."* As for Stefano Faita, he is pleased to accept this role. *"I can't wait to be part of this agrotourism event that I've heard so many good things about! Being the spokesperson of the Foire Gourmande will give me the opportunity to have many friendly exchanges with participants and visitors alike in the enchanting setting of Ville-Marie."*

Registration period opens for agri-food exhibitors

The announcement of Stefano Faita as spokesperson of this 17th edition of the Foire Gourmande coincides with the launch of the registration period for growers, agro-processors and microbreweries. This year, the organization is aiming for 50 exhibitors. Hundreds of invitations have been sent in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Northeastern Ontario and many other regions in Quebec and Ontario. Agri-food businesses who want to take part in the event can also contact the coordinator for more details. The full program will be launched in May and we promise more surprises will be in store. The 17th Foire Gourmande of ATNEO will take place on August 17th, 18th and 19th in Ville-Marie, in Abitibi-Témiscamingue.