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## FOODS Flavor Finds at the Southern Artisan Cheese Festival

POSTED BY CHRIS CHAMBERLAIN ON MON, OCT 3, 2011 AT 8:40 AM

Last Friday's inaugural **Southern Artisan Cheese Festival** was a resounding success with over 700 local foodies coming out to the Nashville Farmers' Market to enjoy cheeses, wine, beer and other specialty foods products from around the region. Organizer Kathleen Cotter gracefully managed the event with the help of many volunteers who helped set up the festival area and assist the vendors.



Cheesemistress Kathleen Cotter orchestrating the event.

Lines were long as people not only sampled the wares, but took the time to interact with the artisans and learn about their products. I saw a lot of commerce going on as well, so hopefully the companies who exhibited will consider the event a financial success for them and return next year as the event gets even bigger.

An old Night Market stalwart and a newcomer in market were two of my favorite treats of the evening. Sarah Souther of **Bang Candy Co.** set up her Prosecco bar like she does at almost every night market and poured delightful cups of the Italian elixir flavored with some of her Bang Co. syrups. With a line that was at least 20 people deep all night long, the winsome Sarah kept a smile on her face while she kept the people happy by mixing up sparklers that employed her array of add-ins. Particularly popular were prosecco with ginger/rosemary, habanero/lime and "syrupprisingly," celery.

The national media has also taken notice of Bang Candy Co. as she was featured in a nice writeup by *Garden & Gun's* "Talk of the South" e-newsletter. Good for Sarah!

My other favorite find was Ron Marks and his **AtlantaFresh Artisan Creamery**, a two year old company that is the only producer of Greek yogurt in the southeast. They make all their products in small batches and use only milk from local hormone-free cows. This fresh milk is delivered the day that it comes out of the cow and is processed into AtlantaFresh's delicious yogurt products within a few days.

The yogurts come in three different versions, whole milk, 2% or no fat and are available either plain or with natural flavors mixed in. I was part of the problem that was holding up the slow crawl of the line around the Market Hall as I had to try just about every flavor. I'm generally not a huge yogurt fan, but these rich creamy delights didn't have the tartness that normally turns me off.

I particularly enjoyed the cups with Peaches and Ginger and the Wildflower Honey version. I'm sure some folks would also like the Chocolate Rocket with it's afterbite of cinnamon and Ancho Chile. The Black Cherry and Port Wine was also quite nice.

AtlantaFresh products are now available in the dairy section of Whole Foods in Green Hills and Franklin or via their website. They cost a little bit more than most other yogurts, but for fresh regional ingredients, they are definitely worth checking out.



How could you not buy yogurt from these two guys?

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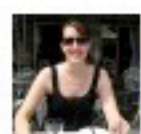
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I thought it was a smashing success! And definitely was the most charmed/intrigued by the yogurt fellows. They were so mobbed all night I only got a quick taste, but I went and picked up some of their wares from Whole Foods Saturday and enjoyed the Tropical Sweet Heat flavor this morning. Pineapple, mango, habanero! Whoa!

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