Culineer Launches to Close the Gap Between Local Farms and Home Cooks Across the Mid-Atlantic

The free platform connects home cooks with farmers markets and local producers across Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, showing what to do with local food.

HARRISBURG, PA, UNITED STATES, September 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Culineer, a free platform connecting home cooks with local farms, farmers markets and food producers, is expanding across Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland with more than 700 producers now listed and a directory covering hundreds of markets and farm stands throughout the region.

The platform exists to solve a problem that shows up in almost every piece of research on local food buying: people want to eat from local farms, but the path from intention to habit is full of friction.They struggle to find farms and markets nearby. They forget when the market is open. And when they come home with an unfamiliar vegetable, they have no idea what to cook with it.Culineer brings the local food directory and the recipe together in one place. Discovering local food sources nearby and knowing what to do with what you buy become a single, seamless experience - and that friction disappears.

Research conducted by Culineer across four Pennsylvania farmers markets, alongside a national study of more than 5,000 shoppers, found that between 73 and 78 percent of farmers market shoppers say they would buy more from local farms if they were given recipe suggestions. That single finding shapes the entire platform. Roughly 90 percent of shoppers say they are willing to try an ingredient they have never cooked before, but around a third want guidance before they commit. Culineer is built for exactly that moment.

The company began life somewhere different. Culineer started as a mobile recipe app, built to rescue family recipes from binders, cookbooks and photo albums, with a scanning feature that turned handwritten cards into digital ones. The pivot came during the pandemic, when the team noticed a pattern in how people talked about their farm boxes. Standing at pickup, holding a share of vegetables they had paid for, customers kept saying a version of the same sentence: I do not know what I am going to do with this.

"That sentence told us where the real gap was," said Jodi Frank, founder and CEO of Culineer. "People are not short of good intentions about eating local. They are short of information at the moment it matters. They do not know what is ready this week, they do not know which farms

near them are selling it, and when they get it home they are not sure how to cook it. We built Culineer to answer all three."

The platform now works across three connected areas. Home cooks can browse local farms and food producers near them, follow the ones they buy from, and save recipes from any source into a single collection, with collaborative cookbooks for sharing between family and friends. Farmers markets and producers get a free profile that lets them show what they have available, publish recipes for the ingredients they sell, and communicate with the customers who follow them. Across both sides, seasonal ingredient information tells people what is in season right now in their own state, rather than in an abstract national calendar.
The regional focus is deliberate. Rather than launching as a thin national directory, Culineer has concentrated on Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland - building real depth in Central PA, the Lehigh Valley, and Pittsburgh before expanding to Philadelphia, Central New Jersey, and the Baltimore corridor.
Every listing carries firsthand detail about the farm behind it. The kind of information that doesn't exist anywhere else online - and that no aggregator holds.

This matters more than it once did. There are more than 8,700 farmers markets in the United States and while roughly 80 percent of Americans shop at least one market per year they don’t make it part of their routine shopping habit. The reason cited most often is forgetting. Small farms are notoriously hard to reach. Websites are outdated, phone calls go unanswered, and emails disappear. For a shopper willing to drive twenty minutes for better food, a dead listing means a supermarket run instead.

Seasonality is another real hurdle. Farmers market attendance peaks in summer - around 71 percent of shoppers visiting monthly - then falls through autumn and drops to roughly 10 percent by midwinter.Culineer is working to flatten that curve. Most people don't realize that storage crops, winter markets, and CSA shares are available well into the cold months - or that winter CSA shares are sold in autumn. Culineer makes that visible.
Culineer is free to join — and free means something here. Home cooks, farmers, and markets get access to a genuinely useful feature set from day one, not a stripped-down preview designed to push them toward a paid plan. Paid tiers unlock additional capabilities for producers and markets that want more reach and more tools, but the free experience is built to stand on its own.

The platform runs as a responsive web app, making it as easy to use at the market as it is at home. It is developed by What's for Dinner Technologies, LLC, based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Culineer's stated mission is to build a more sustainable world by making it easier for people to eat locally produced food. The company takes an explicitly neutral position on the debates surrounding how food is grown and processed — focusing instead on explaining what labels and farming terms actually mean so that members can make their own informed decisions.

For more information, to find local food near you, or to list a farm, market or food business, visit

culineerapp.com.

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