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**ELLIE KRIEGER TO CELEBRATE HEALTH BENEFITS OF CHERRIES –
“AMERICA’S SUPER FRUIT”**

Nutrition Expert to Highlight Nutrition of Cherries at National Cherry Festival

LANSING, Mich., June 10, 2009 – Celebrity chef and registered dietitian Ellie Krieger will join the 2009 National Cherry Festival in Traverse City, Mich., to showcase the health benefits and culinary applications of cherries, “America’s Super Fruit.”

“Cherries are an all-American favorite that deliver a powerful combination of antioxidants and great taste,” says Krieger, New York Times bestselling author of *The Food You Crave* and host of the Food Network’s “Healthy Appetite.” “The National Cherry Festival provides a fun backdrop to celebrate cherries and educate people from all over the country and world about the health benefits, versatility and unbeatable flavor of cherries – I am excited to be a part of it.”

The National Cherry Festival has celebrated “America’s Super Fruit” for 83 years in the heart of the Cherry Capital of the World. Festival goers will find cherries tucked into everything imaginable during the eight day event, from ‘just picked’ fresh sweet cherries, to cherry salsa and sauces. With over 150 events in all, there’s simply something for everyone! From a not-to-be missed July 4th Air Show over West Grand Traverse Bay to dozens of children’s events (including the famous ‘Make & Bake’ Cherry Pie activity) and Bay Side Music, Festival goers will enjoy a celebration filled with cherries and fun for the entire family July 4 through 11.

What makes cherries so nutritious? In addition to being a good source of vitamins A and C, potassium, magnesium iron, folate and fiber, studies have shown that the antioxidant compounds – called anthocyanins – that give cherries their RED color provide a host of health benefits from lessening inflammation to reducing belly fat to lowering risk factors for heart disease.

Cherries are not only good for you, they deliver a homegrown advantage for consumers looking to “buy local.” About ninety-five percent of cherries consumed in the U.S. are grown here, with most coming from Michigan, Wisconsin, Utah, Washington, Oregon, Pennsylvania and New York.

Food and nutrition experts, including Krieger, say the homegrown advantage, coupled with powerful health benefits, make cherries “America’s Super Fruit.”

While the Cherry Festival celebrates the cherry harvest and fresh cherries, tart cherries can be enjoyed all year long and are available in dried, frozen and juice forms.

To learn more about the health benefits of cherries and to find recipes and tips, visit www.choosecherries.com. There you can also download a copy of the Cherry Nutrition Report, a compendium of the more than 65 published studies on the potential health benefits of cherries.

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The Cherry Marketing Institute (CMI) is an organization funded by North American tart cherry growers and processors. CMI’s mission is to increase the demand for tart cherries through promotion, market expansion, product development and research. For more information on the science supporting the unique health benefits of cherries and for cherry recipes and menu ideas, visit www.choosecherries.com.

The National Cherry Festival is a non-profit event dedicated to celebrating the Cherry industry, tourism, and community spirit des corps. For a complete up-to-the-minute schedule of events visit www.cherryfestival.org.