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**Contact:**

Heather Groll | [heather.groll@ogs.ny.gov](mailto:heather.groll@ogs.ny.gov) | (518) 474-5987

**NEW YORK STATE'S ANNUAL FOOD FESTIVAL PRESENTED BY ALLSTATE WILL BE HEADLINED BY THE BAND CRACKER ON AUGUST 12**

***Full day of food, drink, and entertainment will feature more than a dozen NYS beers, wines and spirits.***

New York State Office of General Services (OGS) Commissioner RoAnn Destito today announced the lineup for the annual New York State Food Festival, which will be held from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, August 12 at the Empire State Plaza in Albany. Due to construction, the stage has been relocated to the north end of the plaza, and seating will not be available on the museum staircase. People are encouraged to bring their own chairs.

“Our annual food festival pairs amazing New York State craft brews, wines, and spirits with a great variety of food to eat and an exciting lineup of entertainment that’s not to be missed,” Commissioner Destito said. “This is our most flavorful and one of our most popular events of the summer, and I want to thank Allstate and all our other sponsors for their support of this special festival.”

The festival will begin with the popular plaza farmers market, offering locally grown fruits and vegetables, along with breads, pastries, and many other specialty items. The entertainment will begin at noon, with a lunchtime Made in the Shade of the Egg performance by The Ajkun Ballet Theater. The show will provide a peek behind the scenes of the process for creating their dance works including “America” and “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

Be sure to catch lunch or dinner at one of more than 40 food vendors who will be serving up a wide variety of delicious international and domestic fare, from Indian, German, Greek, South American, Cuban, Lebanese, and Jamaican cuisine to sliders, wood-fired pizza, ice cream, and crepes. There will be something to satisfy most everyone’s palate.

One of the main attractions of the festival is the Taste New York tent with wine, spirits, and other specialties produced by some of the most highly sought-after beverage and specialty food makers from regions throughout the state, including Nine Pin Ciderworks, Pazdar Winery, Thousand Islands Winery, Yankee Folly Cidery, Mud Road Sugar House, Adirondack Distilling Company, Nani’s Iced Tea, Nut Zez Gourmet Almond

Butter, Old School Favorites, Cheeky Monkey, Gatherer's Granola, JNB Foods, Adirondack Rhubarb Traditions.

Although alcoholic beverages purchased in the tent are not for consumption on site, there will be a beer garden where adults with proper identification will be able to sample at least a dozen New York State beers, including Brooklyn Lager, Captain Lawrence IPA, Keegan Ales Mother's Milk Stout, Brown's Cream Ale, Olde Saratoga Lager, Adirondack Bear Naked Ale, Lake Placid Ubu Ale, Empire White Aphro, Saranac Pale Ale, Saranac Oktoberfest, Utica Club, and Ithaca Beer Company Cascazilla.

Those attending the event will be entertained by an exciting lineup of musical acts, headlined by Cracker. Cracker has been described as a lot of things over the years: alt-rock, Americana, insurgent-country, and have even had the terms punk and classic rock thrown at them. But more than anything Cracker are survivors, having produced gold records and hits for almost a quarter of a century such as "Low," "Euro-Trash Girl," "Get Off This," and "Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out With Me."

Music on the festival's main stage will start cooking at 5 p.m. with a performance by Soul Sky. Soul Sky is a bluesy, jammy rock and roll band formed in late 2012. It was formed out of the merger of two great Northeast bands: Folding Sky, led by Blues Hall of Fame member Mark Emanatian and Right Coast Soul, led by the dynamic Jeremy Walz. Together they form a band that combines great original songs with unique versions of classic blues, rock, and soul tunes.

Next to hit the stage will be Gedeon Luke and the People. Hailing from the streets of Memphis, soul music flows through Gedeon Luke's veins in rainbow colored hues. Weaned on the gospel infused sounds of Sly Stone, Curtis Mayfield and Al Green and inspired by the rock 'n roll passion of The Beatles and The Rolling Stones, Gedeon is here to crash through the boundaries of music and society, to bring love, peace, and soul to the world.

**Performance schedule:**

Noon Made in the Shade of the Egg The Ajkun Ballet Theatre  
5:00 Soul Sky  
6:15 Gedeon Luke and the People  
7:45 Cracker

Free parking will be available after 2 p.m. in the cathedral and museum visitor lots, both off Madison Avenue, and Grand Street lots, and after 5 p.m. in the East Garage on the on Philip Street off Madison Avenue. Parking is also available for \$5 at the visitor or V-lot underneath the plaza after 4 p.m.

For event updates, people can follow @plazaevents on Twitter, visit Empire State Plaza on facebook, or call (518) 474-4759. For additional information, including ground rules, visit our website at [www.ogs.ny.gov](http://www.ogs.ny.gov).

Sponsors of the New York State Food Festival include Allstate, New York Lottery, I Love New York, DeCrescente Distributing, Inc., Taste NY, BlueShield of Northeastern New York, County Waste, PYX 106, Times Union, Cricket Wireless, Albany.com, and Holiday Inn Express.

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