

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**FOR MORE INFO, CALL JIM BRIGHT AT 864-979-2658**



## **SC CHILI COOK-OFF CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER SCORES AGAIN AT WORLD FINALS**

**ANDERSON, SC**—Belton’s Matt Lusk, who won the 2011 SC Chili Cook-off Championship People’s Choice award this past April, did South Carolina proud when he nabbed third place in the Kraft People’s Choice Challenge during the International Chili Society’s World Championship Finals in Manchester, New Hampshire this past weekend. He came home with \$1000, a plaque, and the satisfaction of knowing his chili is, if not the world’s *absolute* favorite, pretty darn close.

“I think what sets my People’s Choice chili apart is the flavor,” says Lusk. My recipe incorporates a blend of spices and peppers that tantalize every tastebud in your mouth.” He admits to including a bit of chocolate and cinnamon to “create a sweet undertone when the chili initially hits your palate. Then the heat of the peppers—not a lot, but just enough—sneaks up in the back of your throat.”

In addition to his win in the People’ Choice competition, Lusk also made the Final Table in the Red Chili category, with his team placing eighth out of 163 entries. “When I entered the South Carolina cook-off two years ago, I had no idea how fun and addictive this would be.” Vice President of Sales at Superior Engineering when he’s not stirring a pot of chili, Lusk has his ladle set for a “hat trick” in 2012. “I qualified for the World Finals in two out of three categories this year,” he says. “Next year, I want to compete in all three.”

The SC Chili Cook-off Championship was well-represented at the World Finals, with a number of its winners and contenders bringing home awards. Julie Netser, SCCCC's 2011 second-place Salsa winner, made the Final Table in the Salsa category, and Don Stuewe, 2011 first-place Chili Verde winner made the Final Table in the Chili Verde category. Jeff Nester, a judging room aide in the 2011 cook-off in Belton, and John Blackwell, who competed in both the 2010 and 2011 events, made the Final Table for Chili Verde. Georgia and Jim Weller, third place Chili Verde winners in SCCCC's 2011 event, placed fourth and fifth in the Red Chili category, respectively.

Jim Bright, co-founder of the SCCCC, says, "This just shows how good a field of cooks our competition is attracting." Invited to help judge Final Table entries in this year's World Finals Chili Verde and Salsa categories, Bright and the cook-off committee have worked diligently over the past three years to gain the attention and respect of ICS officials. "It's our goal to make our South Carolina cook-off the best family-friendly event in the country. It's a great way to raise money for our nonprofit beneficiaries, it's a boost for the economy of our community and our state, and it's a lot of fun."

The 2012 SC Chili Championship Cook-off will be held in downtown Belton on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Sponsorship and vendor opportunities are now open, as is contestant registration for Red Chili, Chili Verde, Salsa, and People's Choice categories. For more information, please visit [www.upstatechilicookoff.com](http://www.upstatechilicookoff.com).

###