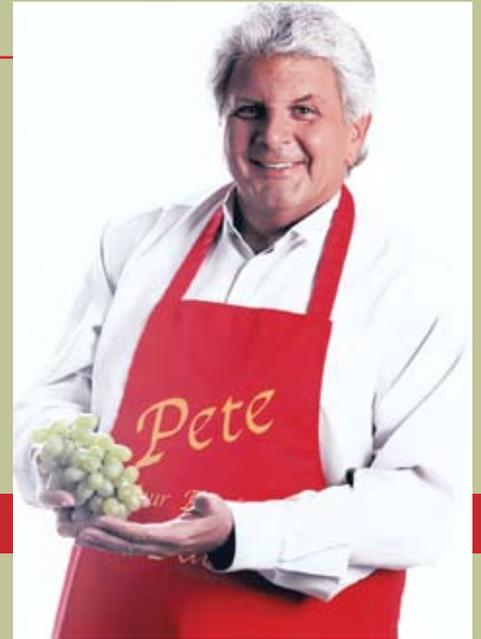


## Homegrown Hero: “Produce Pete” Promotes the Garden State’s Bounty

by Susan Bloom



“Produce Pete” Napolitano will be the first to admit that he doesn’t understand all the hype that surrounds him. “I’m always amazed,” he laughs. “I’ll meet celebrities I’m in awe of who tell me they’ve always wanted to meet me!”

For all his modesty, Napolitano has certainly had his share of celebrity moments. A well-known fruit and vegetable aficionado, author, and former owner of his family’s legendary business, Napolitano’s Produce, in Bergenfield, he currently appears in a weekly segment on NBC’s *Weekend Today in New York* every Saturday morning. He is also a print and broadcast spokesperson for the A&P family of supermarkets and has appeared on such shows as *The View*.

A contagiously exuberant and ardent ambassador of the Garden State, “Produce Pete” Napolitano is extremely supportive of the growth of farmers markets, which he feels are instrumental in bringing people back to nature and to the roots of the food we should be eating. “The farmer is the backbone of our economy,” he explains, noting that in today’s produce business, where items often travel a great distance and are subject to the negative effects of fluctuating temperatures and time, “buying local is critical to preserving freshness, flavor, and the strength of our area market.”

Napolitano developed his strong connection to fruits and vegetables as a child growing up in northern New Jersey. The son of a produce peddler, he began working for his



**DR. JASON FRIGERIO**  
NATUROPATHIC DOCTOR  
LICENSED ACUPUNCTURIST

4 Village Road New Vernon, New Jersey  
[www.njnaturalmedicine.com](http://www.njnaturalmedicine.com)  
973 267 2650

*“It is not only refreshing but I believe necessary to find a practitioner who takes a holistic approach and treats mind, body and spirit as well as Dr. Frigerio does.”*  
- Gwen P





**Conditions**

- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Auto Immune Disease
- Cancer
- Chronic Fatigue
- Colds/Flu
- Diabetes
- Hepatitis
- Hormonal Balancing
- Intestinal Disorders
- Menopause
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Osteoporosis
- Skin Conditions

**Services Offered**

- Acupuncture
- Bio Resonance Therapy
- Diagnostic Testing
- Facial Rejuvenation Therapy
- Fertility Enrichment
- Nutritional Counseling
- Preventative Medicine
- Pre and Post Natal Care
- Therapeutic Body Work
- Weight Loss Programs



father at the age of four, selling produce door to door. His father eventually opened Napolitano's Produce in 1959, a business that Pete bought from him ten years later and ran for more than 25 years. "Growing up," he says, "fruits and vegetables were like comfort foods to us. Even today, if you offered me the choice of a lobster or a plate of escarole and beans, I'd choose the escarole and beans." Pete fondly recalls how, when money was tight at Christmas, his mother would wrap fresh oranges and other fruits in colored foil and give them to Pete and his siblings as gifts. "And we were always so excited to get them!"

These days, in addition to instructing viewers on which fruits and vegetables are in season and how to get the maximum flavor and benefit from them, Pete takes great satisfaction in helping kids enjoy the natural bounty around them and adopt healthy eating habits. He regularly visits area schools to promote the importance of eating produce with every meal, advocating putting fruit on top of cereal for breakfast, having an apple or peach during the day as a snack, adding lettuce to a sandwich at lunch, and having a potato with dinner. "Eating healthy is a lifestyle choice that should be taught to kids early so they start these good habits when they're young," he recommends. "Parents should encourage their kids to try everything and should also avoid overcooking vegetables, which may be why kids complain that they don't like them."

Does Pete Napolitano view himself as a hero, someone who embodies the values of the hard-working small-business owner upon which New Jersey was built, or the spokesperson who is working to promote the Garden State's bounty? "I really like people and I love what I do," he shrugs. "In the end, nothing is more important than your health."

*A freelance writer and corporate communications consultant, Susan Bloom writes weekly health and food features for the Asbury Park Press and specializes in topics related to nutrition, fitness, and healthy lifestyles.*

**Julia's Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, LLC**  
 Basking Ridge, N.J.

**May Benefit:**  
**Autism, Cerebral Palsy,  
 Cerebral Hypoxia, Lyme Disease,  
 Chronic Fatigue, Traumatic Brain Injury,  
 PTSD, Multiple Sclerosis, Sports Injury,  
 Stroke, RSD**  
**\$75.00 per Session**

- 100% Pure Oxygen
- To promote increased circulation and a healthy immune system

**205 Stonehouse Road, Basking Ridge, NJ**  
**908.616.0279 (phone) • 908.542.9285 (fax) • www.juliashbot.com**

**The Health Shoppe**  
 66 Morris Street . Morristown, NJ . 973-538-9131

*Celebrating  
 57 Years in  
 Business*

*Natural & Gourmet Deli\**

All Organic Produce <sup>†</sup>	Advanced Formula Vitamins, Minerals, Herbs & Whole Food Supplements
Mostly Organic Salad Bar* <sup>†</sup>	Raw Foods
All Organic Juice Bar* <sup>†</sup>	Whole Grain Bakery
Wheat-free, Gluten-free	Vegan & Gluten-free Items Baked on Premises
Free Range & Organic Meats, Poultry & Game*	Hot Fresh Organic Coffees & Teas
Gourmet Prepared Foods (hot, cold)	Books, Music & Information

~ We Accept Special Orders ~

\*Available in Morristown only    †Available 365 Days a Year

**Visit Our Two Other Locations**

<b>Montclair</b> 539 Bloomfield Ave. Louis Harris Building 973-746-3555	<b>Chester</b> Chester Springs Shopping Center Rt. 206, near ShopRite 908-879-7555
--	--