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CREATIVE LOAFING FOOD EDITOR BESHA RODELL SELECTED AS JAMES BEARD AWARD FINALIST

ATLANTA — *Creative Loafing*, the Southeast's largest alt-weekly, celebrates the nomination of Food Editor Besha Rodell to receive the James Beard Foundation Journalism Award. The finalists were announced Monday, March 19.

The award is for Feature Writing about Restaurants and/or Chefs with or without a Recipe. *Creative Loafing* is the only newspaper to be a finalist in the category for two straight years.

The James Beard Award is the premiere contest for the nation's food writers. Rodell's "From the farm to your table," which anchored the 2006 Food Issue, was named a finalist along with stories generated by the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Arizona Republic*. Says *CL* Editor in Chief Ken Edelstein, "It's a high compliment to Besha's talent and drive that she was named a finalist in her first year as a staff writer."

Rodell was one of three writers with Atlanta connections to be named a finalist. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution's* John Kessler, and John T. Edge, a Mississippi-based writer who wrote a freelance story for the *AJC*, were named finalists in other categories. Winners will be announced May 6.

Arts and Entertainment Editor David Lee Simmons, who edited the 2006 Food Issue, says, "It says something that Besha is being mentioned in the same breath of such veteran, South-based food writers as John Kessler and John T. Edge. Add to that the fact that Besha was coming off an exhaustive project for the Best of Atlanta Issue, and it places this nomination in its proper context."

Rodell joined *Creative Loafing* in March 2006, from Durham, N.C., where she was the restaurant writer for the *Independent Weekly*. The complete 2006 Food Issue is available online at atlanta.creativeloafing.com/foodissue2006.

