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NEW ROSTER OF HOPEFULS VIE FOR CULINARY STAR-DOM IN SEASON NINE OF PRIMETIME COMPETITION SERIES *FOOD NETWORK STAR*

**Alton Brown, Giada De Laurentiis and Bobby Flay Return as Mentors/Judges in
Season Premiere on Sunday, June 2nd at 9pm ET/PT**

**Audience Vote Will Determine Winner, To Be Announced in Season Finale on
Sunday, August 11th at 9pm E/PT**

****FOR ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THE RELEASE PLUS PHOTOS AND MORE, CLICK LINK BELOW****

<http://www.multivu.com/players/English/58430-food-network-star-season-9/>

NEW YORK – April 18, 2013 – Food Network’s long-running competition series *Food Network Star* returns for a ninth season this summer with fresh talent, intense challenges, and culinary icons **Alton Brown**, **Giada De Laurentiis** and **Bobby Flay** leading the charge to discover the best and brightest new faces in food television. In the one-hour season premiere on Sunday, June 2nd at 9pm ET/PT, the twelve contestants arrive in Los Angeles, ready to kick off the biggest audition of their lives to find out who has the personality, on-camera charisma and kitchen chops to follow in their idols’ footsteps and helm their own show. In new twists, focus groups of Food Network fans will also have their say on contestant performances and one finalist will be brought back after elimination for another chance at victory. Viewers will again be able to vote online or via phone before the August 11th finale to determine who will win the ultimate prize: their own show on Food Network.

“Alton, Bobby and Giada are not only enduring stars, but also star-makers, so they are the ideal mentors to bring out the best in our talented cast,” said Bob Tuschman, General Manager and Senior Vice President, Food Network. “These newcomers are competing to achieve their dream, and their journey is fascinating to watch.”

The finalists are: **Nikki Dinki** (New York); **Andres Guillama** (Waynesville, NC); **Rodney Henry** (Baltimore); **Chris Hodgson** (Cleveland); **Connie “Lovely” Jackson** (Los Angeles); **Russell Jackson** (San Francisco); **Danushka Lysek** (New York); **Daniela Perez-Reyes** (Haleiwa, Haw.); **Viet Pham** (Salt Lake City); **Damaris Phillips** (Louisville, Ky.); **Stacey Poon-Kinney** (San Diego) and **Chad Rosenthal** (Ambler, Penn.).

Each episode before the finale features a first-round Mentor Challenge, second-round Star Challenge and an elimination determined by the selection committee, including returning judges Food Network executives **Susie Fogelson** and **Bob Tuschman**.

In the season premiere, Alton, Giada and Bobby greet the finalists and immediately kick off their life-changing Star journey. Each finalist is challenged to refine their personal point of view and film a pitch tape in the season’s first Mentor Challenge, and convincingly explain why they are the best person to win their own show. In the second round Star Challenge, each contestant must prepare and present one dish to Food Network executives Susie Fogelson and Bob Tuschman and a focus group of Food Network fans.

Upcoming episodes feature a *Chopped*-themed mystery ingredient challenge before *Chopped* judge **Alex Guarnaschelli**; an anything-can-happen live, on-camera test with E! News co-anchor **Terrence Jenkins**; a fresh Italian-themed challenge with a twist using Buitoni® products; a pantry cook-off with Kellogg’s® Special K® Cereals and Snacks; a Star-making screening evaluated by *The Hollywood Reporter* Editorial Director **Janice Min** and Senior Writers **Gary Baum** and **Leslie Bruce**; and guest appearances by **Guy Fieri** and **Robert Irvine**.

For more *Food Network Star*, fans can visit www.foodnetwork.com/star all season long for on-set video, exclusive interviews and insider blogs, behind-the-scenes footage, photo galleries, peeks into finalists’ personal journals, online polls, interactive quizzes, sweepstakes and more. Launching Memorial Day Weekend, fans can vote in the “Star Summer Showdown,” pitting summer recipes from *Star* winners and judges against recipes from *Chopped*. Fans can also connect with one another and the show’s stars on Facebook at facebook.com/foodnetwork and on Twitter with the hashtag #FoodNetworkStar.

All season long, Food Network will offer the *Food Network Star* TV SYNC EXPERIENCE. Partnering with Yahoo!’s second-screen mobile application, [IntoNow](#), Food Network is creating a custom experience that will bring fans into the world of *Food Network Star* like never



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before. This unique two screen offering will allow viewers access to exclusive content from the set including commentary, photos, exclusive video, behind the scenes details, live polls, interactive trivia and special culinary tips. Fans can download the IntoNow app from the [iTunes App Store](#) or [Google Play](#), then sync the app with the broadcast. The experience will also work when synced with encores and when watching the episode on DVR, VOD or online streaming.

Food Network Star is produced by LEG/Triage Entertainment.

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FOOD NETWORK (www.foodnetwork.com) is a unique lifestyle network, website and magazine that connects viewers to the power and joy of food. The network strives to be viewers' best friend in food and is committed to leading by teaching, inspiring and empowering through its talent and expertise. Food Network is distributed to more than 100 million U.S. households and averages more than 9.9 million unique web users monthly. Since launching in 2009, *Food Network Magazine* has tripled its rate base and delivers a circulation of 1.5 million. Headquartered in New York, Food Network has a growing international presence with programming in more than 150 countries, including 24 hour networks in Great Britain, India, Asia and Africa. Scripps Networks Interactive (NYSE: SNI), which also owns and operates Cooking Channel (www.cookingchanneltv.com), DIY Network (www.diynetwork.com), Great American Country (www.gactv.com), HGTV (www.hgtv.com), and Travel Channel (www.travelchannel.com), is the manager and general partner.