

Milwaukee perch on menu at Obama fundraiser

By [Karen Herzog](#) of the Journal Sentinel

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When President Barack Obama kicks off his re-election campaign in Chicago on Thursday, he may get a taste of sweet, yellow perch raised in an old factory building in Milwaukee's Bay View neighborhood.

Sweet Water Organics has delivered 10 pounds of yellow perch to MK Chicago restaurant for the \$35,000-a-plate fundraiser, one of three fundraisers in the president's hometown scheduled for Thursday.

The Sweet Water Organics perch will be cut into thin pieces, lightly breaded, deep-fried and served with tartar sauce as an hors d'oeuvre, said Michael Kornick, chef-owner of MK Chicago.

The perch is raised about a mile from Lake Michigan at an urban fish and vegetable farm that mimics the Earth's natural ecosystem in an industrial building Harnischfeger Industries once used for shipping mining cranes. Sweet Water Organics is the first commercial test of Milwaukee urban farmer Will Allen's innovative aquaculture model.

Of course, the urban farm got its fish on the presidential fundraiser menu because it has the right connections.

Megan Jeyifo, office manager at MK Chicago, is the daughter of James Godsil, co-founder of Sweet Water Organics.

Sweet Water also has a first family connection: Michelle Obama's alma mater, Whitney M. Young Magnet High School in Chicago's West Loop. Sweet Water set up a miniature version of its aquaponics system for students at the first lady's alma mater to raise their own fish and vegetables while learning about science and the environment.

Godsil said Sweet Water is working to build more relationships in Chicago to spread the reach of urban agriculture.

Chef Kornick's wife, Lisa Koch, has joined the Sweet Water Foundation board.

MK Chicago has hosted the president twice before -- for Michelle Obama's birthday, and for a fundraiser during Obama's presidential campaign.

Obama will officially launch his re-election campaign Thursday with an event at Navy Pier. Tickets for that event start at \$250 apiece. Two other events -- with higher price tags -- are planned at MK Chicago and another Chicago restaurant, Nine. All money raised goes jointly to the Democratic National Committee and Obama's campaign.

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