



Santa Cruz Valley
HERITAGE ALLIANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2008

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HERITAGE FOODS WORKSHOP ANNOUNCED

“Tastes of the Santa Cruz Valley” workshop dedicated to local heritage foods

TUCSON, AZ - The Santa Cruz Valley is one of the longest continually cultivated regions in the United States, with an agricultural history extending back more than 4,000 years. This agriculture heritage can still be experienced today through the local foods produced throughout the Santa Cruz Valley, from Nogales to Marana, and Arivaca to Sonoita.

To promote this agricultural heritage, the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance is hosting the “Tastes of the Santa Cruz Valley” workshop dedicated to the local heritage foods of the region. Presenters include Dr. Jim Griffith and Dr. Gary Nabhan from the University of Arizona’s Southwest Center, Janos Wilder from Janos Restaurant, Jesus Garcia from the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Carolyn Reyes from the San Xavier Farmers Coop, Suzanne Nelson with Native Seeds/S.E.A.R.C.H., and others.

The workshop brings together local food producers, restaurants, food co-ops, groceries, farmers markets, seed banks, food banks, related non-profits and the public to educate the community about the rich history of heritage foods in the Santa Cruz Valley, plan a local farm-to-chef network, and discuss opportunities for creating a regional food brand.

An important outcome of this workshop will be a new directory listing food producers in the Santa Cruz Valley and elsewhere in southeastern Arizona, and restaurants, groceries, and buying co-ops in the same region who are interested in buying locally-grown foods. This will make it easier for local producers to add diversity and stability to their businesses by forming well-chosen partnerships with restaurants and food retailers. It will also make it more convenient for chefs and grocers to offer the freshest foods possible to their customers – by buying directly from the producers that best suit their needs.

The directory will include lists of products, seasonal availabilities, and contact details for farmers, gardeners, and ranchers who are interested in selling to local restaurants and groceries. In addition, producers will find descriptions and contact details for chefs and grocery stores that are interested in buying more local foods. Other information in this directory will include background information about local heritage foods and heirloom varieties, locations and schedules of area farmers markets, and a seasonal availability chart for the Santa Cruz Valley.

The workshop will also be an opportunity to gauge interest and obtain input on the development of a regional food brand to mark food packages, grocery displays, and menu

items, which will increase consumer awareness of locally grown foods and their heritage in the Santa Cruz Valley.

Who: Local food producers, restaurants, grocers, food banks, non-profits, and the general public!

What: Tastes of the Santa Cruz Valley, a heritage foods workshop.

Where: Desert Diamond Casino

When: Saturday May 3, 2008

9am – 3pm Workshop, registration required by April 23, 2008.

3pm – 5pm Exhibition - heritage foods exhibits, samples, and sales, open to the public, no registration required.

Cost: \$25.00 - includes the workshop and a lunch featuring local heritage foods, provided by Agave Restaurant.

The registration fee covers materials for the workshop, a copy of the heritage foods directory when published, and a special lunch featuring heritage foods, provided by Agave restaurant.

For more information contact heritagefood@santacruzheritage.org or 520-429-1394, or visit www.santacruzheritage.org/foods/workshop to see the workshop agenda.

The Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization whose mission is to connect people to the cultural, historic, and natural treasures of the Santa Cruz Valley through education, preservation and promotion of its unique resources. For more information visit www.santacruzheritage.org.

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