

# TRADITIONS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF SLOW FOOD SONOMA COUNTY CONVIVIUM

**T**HIS ISSUE OF TRADITIONS focuses on two of the foundations of Slow Food: food justice and the Ark of Taste. Our convivium, Slow Food Sonoma County, North, provides activities that fall within each of these areas.

Please go to [www.slowfoodsonomacounty.org](http://www.slowfoodsonomacounty.org) for more information.



## FOOD JUSTICE

**F**OOD JUSTICE TAKES a collective approach to achieve what is called “food security”. The basic goal is that everyone should have enough food regardless of economic constraints or social inequalities. Slow Food USA would like to see a food system that goes one step further, which is: everyone should have access to a particular kind of food—GOOD, CLEAN, and FAIR food. This approach views food security and food quality as basic human rights. The core of the food justice movement is the belief that it is not food that is lacking, but the political will to fairly distribute food, regardless of the recipient’s ability to pay.

Food justice work focuses on issues such as hunger and access (food banks, soup kitchens, food delivery services and advocacy organizations); youth development through agriculture, urban farms and community gardens; worker rights (especially farm laborers and restaurant workers); food sovereignty (local solutions that empower the community); and food policy (currently, the Child Nutrition Act and the Farm Bill).

*[The above paragraphs are excerpted from the Slow Food USA website.]*

## UPDATES ON OUR CONVIVIUM’S FOOD JUSTICE PROJECTS

*(Please see the September 2009 newsletter at [www.slowfoodsonomacounty.org](http://www.slowfoodsonomacounty.org) for full descriptions of these projects.)*

### Slow Harvest

Since the inception of this gleaning project last summer, 7400 pounds of fruits, vegetables and bakery goods have been gathered and donated to Food for Thought food bank, the Healdsburg Food Pantry, local senior centers, Redwood Gospel Mission, and Redwood Empire Food Bank. Community canning and baking sessions produced and donated 1,000 tamales, 400 pints of tomato sauce, and 240 pints of Gravenstein applesauce to the food banks. This gleaning effort was conceived and is led by convivium Board member Aletha Soule. Contact her to help with gleaning and participate in other Slow Harvest activities at: [slowharvest@gmail.com](mailto:slowharvest@gmail.com).

### School Garden Project

Eight schools are currently working with our convivium to develop and sustain a school garden. The long-term aim of the gardens is to contribute to the health of youth by teaching them to grow and eat good, clean, and fair food. We are assisting them by providing materials, labor, and expertise. And now we have funds to purchase resources that cannot be donated by convivium members. In November 2009, we held an auction at the Artisanso festival and raised \$7,000 for these school gardens!



The following schools are benefiting from our convivium's School Garden Project:

- Cloverdale Elementary
- Geyserville Elementary
- Alexander Valley School (Healdsburg)
- Healdsburg Elementary
- Fitch Mountain Elementary (Healdsburg)
  - Westside School (Healdsburg)
  - Cali Calmecac (Windsor)
- Luther Burbank Elementary (Santa Rosa)

*Slow Food Auction Items at Artisano* ➤



## Sonoma-Guatemala Food Traditions Exchange

Slow Food Sonoma County, North has an ever-deepening relationship with AMIDI, an association of 40 Mayan women in Pachay las Lomas, Guatemala. Our connection began eight years ago when we nominated the group for the 2002 Slow Food Award in Italy. They won the award, 10,000 euros, and the respect of the national press in Guatemala. Ana Maria Chali Calan, AMIDI's leader, credits Slow Food for calling attention to the work of AMIDI. Since then, visitors from Mexico and Central America have come to Pachay to learn how to build and sustain an association of indigenous women. In addition, Ana Maria has been a guest speaker at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala City.

The AMIDI women have continued their culture's centuries-old tradition of back strap weaving. Their masterful weavings are usually for sale in Guatemala's National Textile Museum. However, the worldwide recession has severely affected tourism in Guatemala. Few people are visiting the museum and sales are minimal.

Last fall, our convivium asked the AMIDI women to weave items for the table—placemats, napkins, and runners. We had seen the high quality of their weaving and felt confident about marketing their fine table linens in Sonoma County. In December, Slow Food members Marilee Wingert, Steve Wingert, and Barbara Bowman

visited Guatemala and picked up the exquisite, made-to-order weavings and brought the collection to Healdsburg. With the help of Board member Stephanie Chiacos, the weavings were presented for sale to an enthusiastic group, following a Slow Food class on making holiday tamales. Nearly all the weavings were sold! We will continue to sell AMIDI's weaving at other convivium events. Contact Barbara at [msbrix@aol.com](mailto:msbrix@aol.com), if you are interested in purchasing weavings from Pachay las Lomas.

During the December visit to Pachay, Barbara presented AMIDI members with plant seeds researched with help from Seed Savers Exchange, Native Seed/SEARCH, and Baker Creek, a seed bank in Petaluma. Their research identified heirloom, open-pollinated seeds for tomato, bean, squash, beets, carrots, and peppers. A few of the varieties originated in Guatemala and have been preserved by American seed savers.

*Table runners*





## ARK OF TASTE

The Ark of Taste is an international catalog of foods that are threatened by industrial standardization, the regulations of large-scale distribution, and environmental damage. The goal is to preserve these foods by cultivating consumer demand. Since 1996, more than 800 products from over 50 countries have been added to the International Ark of Taste. The US Ark of Taste profiles over 200 rare regional foods, and is a tool that helps farmers, ranchers, fishers, chefs, retail grocers, educators, and consumers celebrate our country's diverse biological, cultural, and culinary heritage.

To qualify for the US Ark of Taste, food products must be: outstanding in terms of taste, as defined in the context of local traditions and uses; at risk biologically or as culinary traditions; sustainably produced; culturally or historically linked to a specific region, locality, ethnicity, or traditional production practice; and produced in limited quantities, by farms or by small-scale processing companies.

The Slow Food USA biodiversity committee evaluates Ark of Taste nominations on an on-going basis. A recent nomination, the Bodega Red Potato, was initiated by Elissa Rubin-Mahon, Slow Food Sonoma County, North.



## OUR CONVIVIUM'S ARK OF TASTE ACTIVITIES

### Ark Display

Ten years ago our convivium developed a portable display of a selection of Ark foods so that people may see and touch some of these heirloom seeds, beans, syrups, and fruits. The display is brought to Slow Food and other environmental, agricultural, and food related events. It is primarily used by our convivium but may also be rented by appropriate organizations. Our website has detailed information about our display, as well as instructions for groups to create their own: [www.slowfoodsonomacounty.org](http://www.slowfoodsonomacounty.org)

### Ark Dinner

Every year our convivium hosts an Ark of Taste dinner featuring a meal created from Ark products, sale of Ark foods, and an auction. The dinners are festive and delicious sit-down meals planned, prepared, and served by a team of talented convivium members. A portion of the proceeds from these dinners help to send delegates whom we nominate to attend the semi-annual Terra Madre in Turin, Italy.

### Grow-Out

We also participate in a "Grow-Out" of heirloom seeds, for which we purchase and give seeds from Seed Savers Exchange to farmers and chefs who wish to grow Ark fruits and vegetables. This year farmer Zureal Bernier will grow his seeds and donate a portion of the seedlings to our school gardens. Students will then be able to taste these heirlooms varieties and learn how important it is to save them on the Ark.



## 2009 *in Review*

*Photos from our events*

There were memorable moments with Slow Food Sonoma County, North members last year. We hope that some of these images will inspire you to concoct some new events and activities for others to enjoy in 2010.



*Todd Muir teaches how to make gnocchi at Bill Hawn's home.*



*Marie Giacalone and Bill Bowman make sausages at Cynthia and Jim DeMartini's*



*Susan Mall teaches about raising "backyard" chickens.*



*Mushrooming at Medlock-Ames Winery with Elissa Rubin-Mahon*



*Zureal Bernier teaches about planting at the Labor Day Eat-in for the national Time for Lunch campaign.*

## *&* OUR FOLD INCREASES

An unusually large number of new members have joined our convivium in the last several months.

Some of the contributing factors include: in the fall of 2009 Slow Food USA launched a campaign to increase membership by offering memberships at any price for a limited time; new members may now choose to belong to multiple chapters; we also held the Time for Lunch Eat-In and the auction at Artisano, both of which were open to the public.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



Susan & Fidel Aragon, Windsor  
Ara Armstrong, San Rafael  
Gary Arsham, San Francisco  
Annabel Ascher, Santa Rosa  
Karen Auroy, Novato  
John Banta, Geyserville  
Elizabeth Barnes, Santa Rosa  
Amy & Lucas Bebervanzo, Petaluma  
Gary Benson & Cat Picard, Cotati  
Natalie Brinkley, Rutherford  
Stacey Bruno Migale, Novato  
Kathleen Burns & Lisa Vasse, Sausalito  
Pam & Robert Burns-Clair, Sonoma  
Vicki Carroll, Templeton  
Max Caruso, Sebastopol  
Michael Cobb, Healdsburg  
Dave Crawford, Sebastopol  
Natasha Deakins, Santa Rosa  
JoEllen DeNicola, Sebastopol  
Carol & Manuel Diaz, Windsor  
Stephen Encarnacion, Petaluma  
Serena Figueroa, Santa Rosa  
Leah Flaks, Vallejo  
Theresa Fogolini, Santa Rosa  
Carole Geier, Santa Rosa  
Les Goodman, Healdsburg  
Nancie Greer, Petaluma  
Sharon Grossi, Santa Rosa  
Arielle & Katrin Guest, Yountville  
Judith Hadley, Santa Rosa  
Emily & Daryl Heinzelman, Santa Rosa  
Ann Hernday, Santa Rosa  
Tami Hildebrand, Twain Harte  
Brent Jackson, Rohnert Park  
Patricia Johnson, Sebastopol  
Sharon Katz & Matt Paille, Healdsburg  
Devin Kellogg & Natalie Horner, Upper Lake  
Paula Koneazny, Sebastopol  
Sarah Kramer, Santa Rosa  
Linda Mac Elwee & Andy Balestracci, Boonville  
Ariel Mahon, Santa Rosa  
Christopher Majer, Santa Rosa  
Alison Malisa, Sebastopol  
Keith Marshall, Santa Rosa  
George Martin, Rohnert Park  
Steve Mayne, Brooklyn, NY  
Lynn McCarthy, Forestville  
Linda McSweyn, Cloverdale  
Melinda Mills, Annapolis  
Franni & Glenn Minervini-Zick, Sebastopol  
Kori Morehouse, Santa Rosa  
Christina Nelson, Healdsburg  
Jana Niernberger-Muhar, Santa Rosa  
Rebecca Obretenov, Fairfax  
Gaetano Patrinoastro & Kimberly Strain-Patrinoastro,  
Sonoma  
Richard Perman, Glen Ellen  
Tyffani Peters, Santa Rosa  
Sarah Piccolo, Sebastopol  
Tina Poles, Cotati  
Karen Preuss, Cotati  
Monique Roblin, Guerneville  
Pamela Rudd, Burlingame  
Linda & Richard Ruge, Sebastopol  
Valerie Sapienza, Mill Valley  
Caitanya Scott, Sebastopol  
Vicki Serianni  
Anne & Brad Smith  
Gretchen Specht, Cloverdale

## UPCOMING EVENTS

There will be many more events added to our calendar throughout the year, many initiated YOU and the events committee. Please watch our website and future newsletters for new dates and changes as they are posted.

### FEBRUARY

- **February 18**  
Community Cooking at Relish  
Culinary School for Slow Harvest  
Healdsburg

### MARCH

- **TBA**  
Lost Recipes Dinner  
Santa Rosa
- **March 21**  
Spring Gleaning:  
Building Awareness & Support  
Healdsburg

### APRIL

- **April 10**  
Annual Membership Meeting
- **TBA**  
Olive Tour, Tasting & Cooking  
at DaVero Estate  
Healdsburg

### JUNE

- **June 19**  
Ark Dinner

Amelia Spigler, San Rafael  
Carrie Starner-Keenan, San Francisco  
Gillian & Ross Stromberg, Healdsburg  
Vrenae Sutphin & David Gray, Santa Rosa  
Jeanette Swanstrom, Santa Rosa  
Patrick Tafoya, Santa Rosa  
Jean Tate, Sebastopol  
Karys Teitzah  
Janet Texas, Healdsburg  
Kristin Viguerie, Sonoma  
Gordana Vuckovic, San Francisco  
Grace Waldo, San Jose  
Rachel Wallick, San Francisco  
Virginia Wang, San Francisco  
Katja West, Healdsburg  
Steve West, Penngrove  
Shiaosan Williams-Sheng, Oakland  
Emily Winfield, Santa Rosa  
Ashourina Woods, Windsor  
Larissa Worth, San Ramon