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Pride of Prairie event reflects UMM's ag history, embraces global food concerns

Summary:

(February 2, 2004)-by Anne M. Borgendale, UMM senior and Pride of the Prairie Expo coordinator

Reaching back to its agricultural roots and embracing current local and global concerns surrounding foods, farming, and eating, the University of Minnesota, Morris will again host a series of events to educate and to focus on steps toward a local and more sustainable way of eating.

The first of these events is "Fast Food World: Perils and Promises of the Global Food Chain," a web cast panel discussion sponsored by The Knight Program in Science and Environmental Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. This is a re-broadcast of a panel discussion that took place at UC Berkeley in November 2003. Its featured speakers are Wendell Berry, farmer and author of *The Unsettling of America* and *Citizenship Papers* Carlo Petrini, president and founder of Slow Food International Michael Pollan, contributing writer, *New York* magazine and professor, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism Eric Schlosser, journalist and author, *Fast Food Nation* and Vandana Shiva, activist and author, *Monocultures of the Mind* and *Biopiracy*. This event will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, in Edson Auditorium of the UMM Student Center. It is free and open to the public.

One week later, from 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 17, the 5th Annual Pride of the Prairie Community Food Expo will be held in the UMM Student Center. This is the first year that the Expo will feature a Farmer's Market. A sample of foods and goods that will be for sale are grains, root vegetables, flax, lentils, beans, meat, honey, yarn, wool, and more. Over 20 west central Minnesota farms will be represented along with local organizations that are involved in agricultural, environmental, and food issues. These include The Land Stewardship Project, Sustainable Farmers Association, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, Mid-West Food Alliance, Pomme de Terre Foods, and Pride of the Prairie.

"It is quite exciting to see how the Expo has evolved into a hands-on educational event for UMM and west central Minnesota communities," commented UMM senior Anne Borgendale who is helping to organize the Expo. "Now people have the opportunity to both sample and buy locally produced goods from the farmers that raised them."

Following the Community Food Expo, the Pride of the Prairie Spring Meal will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 17. The locally produced meal will be prepared by Sodexo Campus Services at UMM and has a "Breakfast at Dinner" theme. The menu for the evening will include whole wheat and raisin muffins, herbed cornmeal muffins, tossed wheat berry, red bean salad, bacon, Swiss and mushroom strata and vegetarian Swiss and mushroom strata, whole wheat pancakes with organic butter and real maple syrup or apple compote and real whipped cream, country sausage with pepper and onions, oven browned potatoes, baked penne pasta with three cheese sauce, apples, milk, and apple cider.

A number of the products are from farms that are part of the Midwest Food Alliance, widely recognized as one of the nation's leading certification organizations for environmentally friendly and socially responsible agricultural practices.

The featured Minnesota farms that are supplying food for the meal are Dry Weather Creek, Mark and Wendy Lange, Milan: whole wheat flour, white flour, and wheat berries EarthRise, Kay and Annette Fernholz, Madison: corn meal, kidney beans, and potatoes PastureLand, southeastern Minnesota: Swiss, gouda, and cheddar cheese Pastures a'Plenty, Jim and LeeAnne, Josh and Cindy VanDerPol, Kerkhoven: sausage and bacon Pepin Heights Orchard, southeastern Minnesota: apples and apple cider and Pride of Main Street, Sauk Centre: milk.

Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$6 for off-campus students and children, children 5 and under – free. On-campus students can use their regular meal plan. Tickets will be available at the door or in the UMM Student Center lobby from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on February 12, 13, 16, and 17. The meal will be served from 4:45 to 6:30 p.m. at UMM's Food Service building across Second Street from the Regional Fitness Center. The meal will also feature live, locally produced music.

For more information about locally produced foods, west central Minnesota farms, and the Pride of the Prairie, visit: www.prideoftheprairie.org/.

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