



**HSGA Summer Conference & Variety Trials
Sept 10 & 11, 2008 - Chico, CA**

ITINERARY

TUESDAY September 9

EVENING:

Arrive in Chico. Our hotel is the comfortable Hotel Diamond, located in the historic downtown area. We're staying in the heart of Chico, a lively college town where you'll find lots and lots of great activities for everyone. Tuesday evening: settle in, attend the opening reception at 7:00 pm hosted by Wild West Seed and spend a little time with fellow attendees.

WEDNESDAY, September 10

MORNING: Up early to beat the heat, we will review HGSA member company's comparative variety trials at the **Seeds by Design** home garden, including a garden breakfast. Later, Patty will give us a personally guided tour of Seeds by Design's extensive vegetable trials in Maxwell.

Lunch: Catered event featuring a local Maxwell restaurant prepared in a comfortable air-conditioning setting with time to assess what we have seen.

AFTERNOON: Roundtables and Discussion Sessions:

I. Roundtable with local Master Gardeners

We've invited the Colusa Gardening Club for a home gardener's panel. Here's an opportunity to talk to the folks who not only buy lots of seed packets themselves, but also advise other home gardeners. Let's find out what they do and don't like about the seed packet industry and what they'd like to see from us in the future. We will ask them why they do or don't grow from seed, talk about their buying habits, gardening trends, etc. This is a motivated group we can learn a lot from!

II. Roundtable discussion - How do we take advantage of and benefit by the incredible new upsurge in growing vegetables and gardening?

We've all read about it and most of us have experienced a sharp up turn in vegetable sales this season. Becoming a gardener has taken on a new cachet and growing your own food may be the "next best thing". Let's all brainstorm about what our organization and industry should be doing to take advantage of this trend, what the future holds for our own companies, and how we are planning to take advantage of promoting and expanding this great new trend in our markets.

DINNER: A very special private dinner created for us by well-known local chef at his signature restaurant the Red Tavern. He will focus on showing us just how the great produce from this part of California translates into fabulous bistro style dining. A wine pairing with the seasonal menu will be hosted by Seeds by Design.

THURSDAY, September 11

MORNING: Another early start, with breakfast on the run. On our way to Davis we will stop by and view Emerald Farms' almond harvesting and vine crops processing. The Northern Sacramento Valley is one of the largest seed production areas in the world. It is estimated that 60% of the world's vegetable seed are produced in this region. Our second stop is a comprehensive and always impressive tour of Chico Nut processing facility in Williams. California is known for being the world's largest producer of Almonds. Chico Nut is a local producer and processor of all nut crops.

Lunch will be a working affair, including our annual HGSA membership meeting at the Biotech Institute in Davis, on the UC Davis campus.

AFTERNOON:

III. Roundtable: Perception Is Everything

A round table discussion including the public's perception of home garden seed and what we can do about controversial topics. Many home gardeners across the country are very concerned about GMO's, Multinational Corporations controlling seed sources, Terminator genes, organic seed availability, etc. etc. Some of us get emotion - filled questions about these topics and where we stand on them every day. How do we address customer concerns and dispel a lot of the misinformation that abounds in the public arena? Do we want to take any positive action as a group?

A brief tour of the Biotech Institute and Transformation Center at UC Davis. Before our departure we will have a brief wrap up session.

EVENING:

Thursday Night Market:

Stroll just a few blocks from our hotel and enjoy one of California's best outdoor markets: Downtown Chico's Thursday Night Farmers Market offers the season's freshest assortments of fruits and vegetables, cut flowers, nuts, herbs, along with vendors & authentic crafts and artwork, handmade clothing and jewelry and, most importantly Delicious Food! Located on Broadway and 2nd and 5th Streets.

FRIDAY -- DEPART