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UCSB Conference Focuses on Issues of Food Sustainability and Security

With international conflicts over hunger, food prices, and genetic engineering, the matter of food has become central to both environmental and economic policymaking. A three-day conference at UC Santa Barbara will bring together scholars from around the country to address topics related to the global food system.

Titled "Food Sustainability + Food Security," the conference begins at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 5, in the McCune Conference Room, 6020 Humanities and Social Sciences Building. It consists of talks, panel discussions, a film screening, and a photography exhibition. Most events are free and open to the public.

"This is a truly interdisciplinary conference," said Allison Carruth, an Arnhold postdoctoral fellow in English at UCSB and an assistant professor of literature and environment at the University of Oregon. "We've had enthusiasm not just from the UCSB campus, but from the entire Santa Barbara community."

Participants include scholars in the fields of anthropology, sociology, literary and cultural studies, geography, history, sustainable agriculture, marine biology, and environmental studies, as well as regional food leaders.

The keynote address will be given by Darra Goldstein, editor-in-chief of the food and culture journal *Gastronomica*. She will speak on the topic "Can Food Be a Force for

Social Change?" on Thursday, February 5, at 4:30 p.m. A screening of "The Garden," an award-winning independent film by Scott Hamilton Kennedy, which documents current conflicts over a South Central Los Angeles community garden slated for commercial redevelopment, will take place at 8 p.m. A question-and-answer session with Kennedy will follow the screening.

In addition, an exhibition of photographs by Barron Bixler, titled "A New Pastoral: Views of the San Joaquin Valley," will be on display throughout the conference in the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center (IHC) seminar room, 6056 Humanities and Social Sciences Building.

"This conference will gather some of the country's leading food scholars -- many of whom are affiliated with the UC system -- to examine the meaning of food sustainability in particular regional contexts from Africa to the Middle East to the Americas," said Carruth. "It will offer an opportunity for scholars from the humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences -- along with activists and farmers -- to talk about the global food system in both contemporary and historical contexts."

The conference is part of the IHC's "Food Matters" series, which examines food production and consumption, food as a commodity, the global food crisis, environmental aspects of food production, slow food, gardens, sustainability, farmers markets, diet, and the cultural history of food. The series will continue with talks by Allen James Grieco of the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies; Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, a professor of sociology at Columbia University; and Marion Nestle, Paulette Goddard Professor in the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health at New York University, and author of "What to Eat."

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