

Slow Food Sacramento: Master Gardeners Honored

November, 2016

Congratulations to the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center (FOHC) vegetable demonstration garden Master Gardener team! Earlier this month they were honored at the Slow Food Sacramento annual harvest dinner by receiving Slow Food Sacramento's 2016 Snail of Approval Supporter award. The Snail of Approval program honors local businesses and organizations whose operations embrace, or



who support, the principles of Slow Food and contribute to the quality, authenticity, and sustainability of the food community in the Sacramento region.



Slow Food Sacramento is part of the global Slow Food network of more than 100,000 members in 150-plus countries, and is one of more than 200 chapters of Slow Food USA. The mission of Slow Food and its international project, the Ark of Taste, is to counter vanishing local food traditions, preserve at-risk foods, and educate people about the food they consume and its origin.

The Ark of Taste is designed to preserve foods that are sustainably produced, unique in taste, and part of a distinct ecological region. These foods include animal breeds and fish, fruit, spices, grains, vegetables, preserves, cheeses and dairy products, and beverages. Since 1996 when the Slow Food movement began, almost 3,000 products from over 50 countries have been added to the International Ark of Taste. Over 200 of these foods are from the United States, and more are being added.



The Ark of Taste was celebrated this past summer by devoting one raised bed in the FOHC vegetable garden to growing vegetables on the list: 'Bolita' and 'Arakara Yellow' dry beans; 'Aunt Ruby's German Green' and 'Cherokee Purple' tomatoes; and 'Canada Crookneck' winter squash (*photo at left*). The Ark of Taste theme continued by planting a bed of cool-season vegetables this fall: 'Inchelium Red' and

'Spanish Roja' garlic; 'Titoi' multiplier onions; 'Early Blood Turnip-Rooted' beets; and three varieties of lettuce (*photo at right*): 'Tennis Ball', 'Speckled', and 'Amish Deer Tongue'. 'Bodega Red' potatoes may be planted in February or March if seed potatoes for this rare variety can be found.



The Ark of Taste is a tool for farmers, ranchers, fishermen, chefs, grocers, educators, and consumers to seek out and celebrate the diverse cultural and culinary heritage in this country. It is a collection of small-scale endangered heritage food products, all catalogued and celebrated with the hope that the traditional foods can be preserved. By identifying and championing these foods, they are kept in production and on our plates. It is fun to discover the unique flavors and learn more about the cultural history of these vegetables, and next summer Ark of Taste vegetables will again be featured in the FOHC vegetable demonstration garden.

