



For Immediate Release

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Are You A Non-Taster, Medium-Taster or Super-Taster?

Specialty Coffee Association of America's Sensory Skills Workshop Coming to Berkeley, Calif.

BERKELEY, Calif. U.S.A. (March 19, 2008) – Pacific Bay Coffee Co. & Micro-Roastery joins forces with Joseph Rivera, Specialty Coffee Association of America's (SCAA) director of science & technology in offering two sensory skills workshops on Saturday, March 29. The workshops coincide with SCAA's Western Regional Baristas Competition (WRBC) held on March 28-30 at the Gaia Arts Center in Berkeley, Calif.

"We're offering the unique opportunity where attendees can determine the sensitivity of their taste buds during tasting exercises," states Kerry Laird, founder of Pacific Bay Coffee Co. & Micro-Roastery and event host and coordinator. "Participants will find out if they are a "Low-Taster", a "Medium-Taster" or a "Super-Taster" during these two unique sessions where foodies who are interested in coffee, wine, chocolate or taste in general can learn more about their individual taste sensitivities by identify varying thresholds of different tastes."

The objective is to measure the participant's ability to "taste" and identify varying thresholds of different and specific tastes. According to SCAA, typically only 25 percent of those taking the taste test will pass and fall into the medium or super-taster categories.

The test consists of three parts. Small amounts of sugar, sour citric acid and salt are added to water. The first part is meant to familiarize participants with the differences between three levels of each sample. The objective is to order the samples by intensities within their same group (i.e., sweet intensity level one, sweet intensity level two, sweet intensity level three). The answers are self corrected so everyone understands the concept. The second part of the test is trickier because unlike the first time around the samples aren't self corrected yet they must be put into categories of sweet, sour and salt and then sorted by intensity. The minimum passing score for this section is 80 percent (falling in the medium taster category). Super-tasters score 100 percent.

The third part of the test is difficult, even for super-tasters. From a group of eight cups, the samples must be identified by the number of taste elements each mixture has (i.e. sweet and sour or sweet, sour and bitter) as well as intensity level of each taste (low, medium, and high.) A passing score here is 70 percent for a medium taster and 80 percent for a super-taster. Rivera points out that that taste bud density is genetic and worrying about performance is pointless. Tasters have more taste buds than non-tasters while super-tasters have the most.

These unique workshops are offered at 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. on March 29. Seats are limited and registration forms can be found at the event website, www.wrbc2008.com.

Pacific Bay Coffee Co. & Micro-Roastery will host the WRBC, which features top baristas from throughout California and Hawaii. Competitors prepare and serve four espresso, four cappuccino and four original signature drinks of their own creation—all in 15 minutes, to four sensory judges, while being rated by two technical judges. Scores are based on drink taste, presentation, technical skills and station cleanliness. Current United States Barista Champion, Heather Perry of Coffee Klatch Roasting in San Dimas, Calif. has won the previous three WRBC events.

The mission of the SCAA's 10 regional barista competitions, including the WRBC, is to encourage and recognize the professional achievement in the art and skill of espresso preparation and service. SCAA's regional events culminate with the 2008 USBC on May 2-5 in Minneapolis, Minn. The event coincides with the SCAA's 20th Annual Conference & Exhibition.

About the SCAA

Celebrating 26 years of success, SCAA is the world's largest coffee trade association. SCAA members are located in more than 40 countries and represent every segment of the specialty coffee industry, from coffee growers to coffee roasters and retailers. The SCAA's mission is to be the recognized authority on specialty coffee, providing a common forum for the development and promotion of coffee excellence and sustainability. The SCAA's dedication to excellence in coffee is realized through the setting of quality standards for the industry; conducting research on coffee, equipment and perfection of craft; and providing education, training, resources and business services for members. The SCAA's annual conference is held in a different U.S. city each year and is the coffee industry's largest gathering and exhibition.

About the Joseph Rivera

After graduating from California Polytechnic University with a degree in food science and chemistry, Joseph Rivera began working with the Coffee Quality Institute (CQI). His role with CQI involved integrating the technical aspects of coffee chemistry with practical coffee science. His work with CQI has allowed him to play a key roll in the development if cupping and certification training for the coffee industry. In 1999, he accepted his current position as director of science and technology for the SCAA and has worked on implementing a geographical information system (GIS) map project for all of Latin America. The development of such a system will integrate advances in science and information technology by increasing consumer education and introducing a new trend in specialty coffee marketing.

About Pacific Bay Coffee Co. & Micro-Roastery

Since 2004, John and Kerry Laird and their crew of passionate coffee aficionados have offered a unique experience at the independent, self-designed, family-owned, specialty coffee house and micro-roastery, Pacific Bay Coffee Co. in Walnut Creek, Calif. Pacific Bay's coffee beans have origins from around the globe and are always roasted in small quantities to ensure freshness and optimal flavor for each variety of bean. At their new Berkeley roastery, a wholesale bean and barista training program is offered to coffeehouses, cafés and bakeries. Contact: info@pacificbaycoffee.com

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