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SUSIE Q'S BRAND FEATURED IN "RENEWING AMERICA'S FOOD TRADITIONS"

New Book on Regional Cuisine Calls Santa Maria Style Barbeque "A Mainstay of California's Culinary Heritage"

Santa Maria, CA—Susie Q's Brand, the original maker of artisan foods dedicated to Santa Maria Style Barbeque, is one of a select group of purveyors featured in the new book *Renewing America's Food Traditions: Saving and Savoring the Continent's Most Endangered Foods*.

Calling Santa Maria Style Barbeque "a mainstay of California's culinary heritage," the book states that "if you can't make the trip to Santa Maria...Susan Righetti offers pinto beans and Santa Maria-style seasonings through her specialty foods company, Susie Q's."

"Preserving and celebrating the flavors of Santa Maria Style Barbeque has always been the mission of Susie Q's Brand," Righetti said. "It's quite an honor to be recognized for this in such a prestigious book."

Renewing America's Food Traditions also praises the Far Western Tavern restaurant, which Righetti's parents founded 50 years ago and which today remains a landmark of Santa Maria Style Barbeque, a regional culinary tradition rooted in the Santa Maria Valley wine country on California's Central Coast. "After experiencing this California classic cuisine, you'll be pining to taste it again," the book concludes.

The origins of Santa Maria Style Barbeque date back to the mid 1800s, when local rancheros would host Spanish-style barbecues each spring for their vaqueros, or cowboys, as well as family and friends. Traditional Santa Maria Style Barbeque begins with top-block sirloin or tri-tip, a cut discovered in the Santa Maria Valley. The beef is seasoned with a special garlic salt and pepper mixture, and then grilled over coals of red oak, which is native to the region. The meat is accompanied by pinto beans—little pink beans that are indigenous to the valley—as well as bread, salsa and dessert.

Susie Q's Brand Santa Maria Style Seasoning is not only essential for preparing genuine Santa Maria Style Barbeque, it's also a savory all-purpose, all-season accent for vegetables, eggs, salads, soups, poultry and more.

"Our seasoning has quite a cult following," Righetti said. "Some customers have told us that they go to great lengths to protect their seasoning secret from others. It's very easy to use, but it adds a lot of style and flavor to a dish."

Other signature Susie Q's products include Pinto Beans with Seasoning and California Red Oak Grilling Chips.

Renewing America's Food Traditions is authored by members of the Renewing America's Food Traditions collaborative, which was founded "on the premise that chefs, gourmands, consumers and others in the 'food chain' can play positive roles in the conservation, restoration and celebration of the food traditions unique to the North American continent." Founding partners include Slow Food USA, Chefs Collaborative and Seed Savers Exchange.

The book classifies America's food traditions as belonging to 13 regional food "nations." The Santa Maria Valley's pinto bean belongs to the "Acorn Nation," which stretches along the Pacific coast of northern Baja, California and most of Alta California.

In celebrating America's indigenous flavors, the authors declare that "these unfamiliar products from our own country's regional food traditions can be every bit as compelling as the exotic foods we import from afar."

Susie Q's Brand products are available at a variety of retailers, as well as online. For more information, visit the new Susie Q's Brand web site at www.SusieQBrand.com

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