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### **ADD A SLICE OF VACATION TO YOUR FAVORITE RECIPES**

*Newly Formed Mango Board Offers Tropical Recipes for a Getaway Any Day*

**Orlando, FL (May 17, 2007)** – Nothing says vacation like a *Mango Margarita*, but you don't have to travel to get a taste of the tropics. In fact, recipes using the world's most popular fruit transform everyday dishes into something special. Incorporating mangos into savory or sweet recipes is easy too, and provides a flavor reminiscent of a sun-drenched beach.

While exotic in appeal, the mango is available any time of year. Don't be fooled by a mango's skin color, it has little to do with the ripeness of the fruit. Regardless of external color, the flesh of the mango promises to be juicy and flavorful at point-of-sale.

Also contrary to popular belief, mangos are available year-round. There are six major varieties of mangos available in the U.S. at overlapping seasons throughout the year. They vary in size, shape, and color, but the flavors are fairly consistent. One might be slightly more sweet or vibrant, but the overall essence is constant so variety doesn't matter when used as a recipe ingredient.

Not surprisingly, mangos are naturally good for you. The mango is an excellent source of vitamins A and C, and a good source of fiber. Mangos have a variety of antioxidants including beta carotene which is responsible for the mango's brightly colored flesh.

The National Mango Board (NMB) is anxious to educate U.S. consumers on selection and preparation of the world's most consumed fruit. Since 1995, mango consumption has increased by 100 percent in the U.S.\* However, approximately only 30 percent of U.S. households consume mangos today.

\*USDA Outlook Report 2004

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“The newly formed board plans to educate consumers about the mango and its many uses,” says William Watson, Executive Director of the NMB. “Though mangos have become more popular in the U.S., our research shows that consumers are more likely to purchase mangos if they know how to select, store, ripen, cut, and use mangos.” In response, the NMB offers the following suggestions:

#### Selecting Mangos

- Color is not a determining factor of a mango’s ripeness. The best way to determine if the fruit is ripe is to squeeze it gently. The mango should give slightly, but not be too soft.
- It should have a sweet, fruity scent. If there is no scent, there will probably be less flavor.

#### Ripening and Storing Mangos

- When ripening, mangos should be stored on the counter at room temperature. They will continue to ripen becoming sweeter and softer.
- To ripen faster, place mangos in a paper bag with bananas or apples.
- Ripe mangos should be stored in the refrigerator, as cold storage slows down the ripening. Store ripe mangos for up to five days in the refrigerator wrapped in a plastic bag.
- Frozen mango may be peeled, cubed and stored in an airtight container for up to six months.

#### Cutting Mangos

- Begin by peeling the mango.
- A mango has one seed in the center of the fruit.
- Cutting off the sides: place the mango with one of its narrower sides facing up. Starting ¼ inch from the stem, slide along each side of the pit to cut off the “cheeks.” Peel skin from cheeks and slice or dice as needed. (See photos on separate sheet.)
- For a decorative cut, cut the cheeks as noted above. With the skin side of the cheeks on a cutting board, cut the flesh criss-cross being careful not to cut through the skin. Press the skin so the fruit cube pop outward. With a spoon or knife, scrape off the mango cubes.
- Several mango splitters are now available at specialty stores.

#### Usage Ideas for Mangos

- Fresh mangos are most frequently eaten plain, either whole or sliced. Some enhance the flavor of the mango with salt or lime juice and chili pepper.
- Mangos have tenderizing properties, making them a perfect ingredient for marinades.
- Mangos compliment coconut, pineapple, raspberries, chicken, and pork.

Visit the NMB’s new Web site, [www.mango.org](http://www.mango.org), for additional facts and recipes.

**National Mango Board**

The National Mango Board is a national promotion and research organization supported by production assessments from both domestic and imported mangos. Per-capita consumption of mangos nearly tripled since 1992 reaching 1.9 pounds in 2005. Official figures for 2006 have yet to be released, but the year's record crop is expected to push per-capita figures above 2.0 pounds. Mango imports to the United States in 2006 reached 638 million pounds. The board was designed to drive awareness and consumption of fresh mangos in the U.S. Mangos are an excellent source of vitamins A and C and a good source of fiber.

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