

For Immediate Release

8/26/10

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Belo Broadcasting's Northwest Backroads Television Show To Air Culinary-Agritourism Episode on Dayton

(Dayton, WA)- The Southeast Washington Economic Development Association and the Dayton Chamber of Commerce today announced arrangements with the Washington State Department of Agriculture and Belo Broadcasting to film an upcoming episode of Northwest Backroads in the Dayton area. Filming, scheduled to take place on Monday, August 30 and Tuesday, August 31, will highlight the Dayton area's many culinary agriculture based tourism attractions.

The storyline will be based at the Montelilet's Fromagerie goat and sheep cheese farm just west of Dayton. Other segments will be shot at the Weinhard Hotel and Weinhard Café, both in downtown Dayton. Host, Grant Goodeve, will also be filmed at various other tourism sites around Dayton. The Dayton episode is part of a series of Northwest Backroads shows that focus on culinary and agri-tourism sites around the State of Washington. The series is the result of efforts by the Washington State Department of Tourism and the Department of Agriculture to assist local communities in promoting one of the fastest growing tourism categories in the state and nationwide. According to Duane Wollmuth, Executive Director of the Southeast Washington Economic Development Association and member of the Washington State Tourism Commission, "the culinary and agri-tourism category is fast emerging as a significant income producer for our counties in SE Washington, and the state as a whole." Tourism is a key component of the economy of Southeast Washington (Asotin, Columbia, Garfield and Whitman Counties) and an integral part of SEWEDA's strategic plan, generating \$6,500,000 in state and local taxes in 2008 and contributing over \$93,900,000 in total revenues to the regional economy in general (according to the Washington State Department of Tourism).

Tourism has long been a major part of the Columbia County economy. Lisa Ronnberg, Director of the Dayton Chamber of Commerce, says "the many historical sites in Dayton have attracted visitors from not only other parts of Washington State, but also from around the nation and

even internationally. These historical sites, combined now with the growing trend in agri-tourism, make Dayton a unique destination. People want to get back to the basics and learn more not only about our history, but where their food comes from as well.” Columbia County has benefited from the success of the Walla Walla Valley wine industry, having several agri-tourism sites and restaurants that have become destinations for travelers from outside the area.

The Dayton episode of Northwest Backroads is scheduled to air on Saturday, September 18.

The Southeast Washington Economic Development Association (SEWEDA) is a non-profit association consisting of Asotin, Columbia, Garfield and Whitman Counties. The mission of SEWEDA is to promote economic development in these four counties through business recruitment, expansion, retention, and start-ups. SEWEDA was formed in 1985 and relies on funding from state, federal and private sources. More information is available about SEWEDA at www.seweda.org.

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