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UTSA's East Asia Institute Presents "Kimchi Festival"



October 22, 2011 - The East Asia Institute (EAI) will host the inaugural Kimchi Festival from 2:00-4:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 22 in the Denman Room (UC 2.01.28) at UTSA's main campus. The event is free and open to the public.

During the festival, there will be presentations on Korea and *kimchi*, performances, activity booths, *kimchi* making demonstrations, games, music, art, crafts and free Korean food tasting.

The Korean American Association of San Antonio is a major contributor for the Kimchi Festival by supplies artists for the performances and for staffing some of

the activity booths.

Kimchi is a staple of Korean cuisine and is commonly eaten at every meal as a side dish. Korean *kimchi* is considered to be one of the healthiest foods in the world. The common ingredients found in *kimchi* are cabbage, red pepper powder, salt, pickled shrimp, Korean radishes, green onions, and sesame oil.

Fiber in cabbage helps the digestive system and allows food to easily pass through the intestinal tract that prevents constipation and intestine cancer. Various micro-organisms that are being produced during fermentation have vitamin A, B, C as well as calcium and lactic bacterium, which are also very beneficial to the human body.

In 2010, the popular side dish was no longer free and/or sold at many Korean restaurants at times. This was caused by a drop in both cabbage and radish production that was the result of the abundant rain as well as land loss caused by river reclamation. The price of ingredients rose and many families who traditionally made *kimchi* at home were forced to make less. In order for Koreans

to have this dish, many started to order from sellers in other countries, which then creates more trade between Korea and other countries.

With Texas being one of the top trading states with Korea in America, Korea's goal is to bring more business and increase trading with Texas. Korea has the 15th largest economy in the world and is Texas's fifth largest export market. Texas and Korea have a steadily growing partnership and because of the Korea-United States Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) more than 80 percent of Texas' exports to Korea will be duty-free. The KORUS FTA has the potential to increase both trade and economies between Korea and Texas.

Having a partnership with Korea, it is very important to know as much as possible about their culture and background. As well as being a dietary staple, *kimchi* is also a culture that represents the national sentiment of Korea.

For more information regarding the event, please contact the East Asia Institute at 210.458.4943, eai@utsa.edu, or visit the EAI's homepage at <http://www.utsa.edu/eai>. You may also contact the Korean American Association of San Antonio by phone at 210.781.5181.4943 or see their homepage at <http://www.sakaa.org>.

The UTSA East Asia Institute's mission is to promote appreciation and understanding of East Asian societies and cultures both on campus and in the community through research, outreach, networking, education, student/faculty exchange, and business development and cooperation. The East Asia Institute organizes seminars, workshops, lectures, conferences, film festivals, visual art exhibitions as well as bringing in performing art groups from China, Japan, Korea, and other Asian nations. It also encourages faculty research collaborations both within UTSA and with participating East Asian university researchers.