



For Immediate Release

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Seed Savers Exchange Names George DeVault President and Executive Director

Decorah, Iowa, August 6, 2008 The Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of George Donald DeVault as President and Executive Director of the **Seed Savers Exchange**. He succeeds Kent Whealy, a co-founder and former Executive Director.

In speaking for the Board, Chairman Amy P. Goldman commented that the confirmation of Mr. De Vault as President and Executive Director is “a boon for Seed Savers Exchange because we searched for someone who could be a bridge between our members and the broader national and international community of organizations working to preserve the world’s endangered garden and agricultural biodiversity. His entrepreneurial and community-minded spirit and leadership, combined with his experience as editor of prestigious farm journals at Rodale, author of books on farming, W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food and Society Policy Fellow, and owner and operator for 24 years of his own 20-acre organic farm, make him the perfect choice to expand SSE’s membership and funding while steering the organization into a greater role in the sustainable agriculture movement.”

In accepting the position, Mr.DeVault said, “For me, this is not just a job. It’s more a mission. Seed Savers combines the best of everything I have worked for all of my life as a journalist, organic farmer and gardener. It’s a natural fit. I have known Seed Savers’ founders, Kent and Diane, personally for going on 20 years, and have nothing but the highest respect for their pioneering spirit, vision, and accomplishments. Seed Savers is doing more than preserving and passing along our garden heritage. It is safeguarding our future food and our food future. Becoming the steward of Seed Saver’s legacy is both a great honor and a truly awesome responsibility.”

Seed Savers Exchange, or **SSE**, is a non-profit organization based in Decorah, Iowa whose mission is to safeguard the world’s diverse but endangered garden heritage for future generations by preserving heirloom plant varieties and educating the public about the value of agricultural diversity. Founded in 1975, Seed Savers Exchange operates an 890-acre certified organic farm known as Heritage Farm, with an annual budget of \$2,500,000, where more than 25,000 rare fruit, vegetable, and plant varieties are regenerated and preserved in a central collection.

SSE has a member base of approximately 7,500 worldwide, from home gardeners and farmers to research scientists—a very active network of people committed to collecting, conserving, and sharing heirloom seeds and plants. From its inception, **SSE** members have passed approximately one million samples of rare seeds to other gardeners. In December 2007, **SSE** made an inaugural deposit of nearly 500 seed varieties to Norway’s Svalbard Global Seed Vault, the only citizen-led group in the United States to contribute for opening day.