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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Largest Taco Festival in the USA Returns this Fall to Scottsdale, Arizona***

**A Southwest Foodie Classic:**

**Salt River Fields Presents 7th Annual Arizona Taco Festival**

**Serving 30,000 Fans 150,000 Tacos Oct. 15 & 16, 2016**

**...50 Taco Teams Compete for \$10,000 in Awards**

**Scottsdale, Ariz. (June 23, 2016)** – The 7th Annual Arizona Taco Festival is set to bring another year of fiesta fun with more than 50 teams from throughout the country competing for \$10,000 in cash, while an expected 30,000 attendees nosh their way through more than 100 types of tacos throughout the weekend.

Arizona Taco Festival, Sat. and Sun., Oct. 15 & 16, 11am-7pm, earned its star status as an event that offers \$2 tacos in chicken, pork, beef, seafood, veggie, dessert and anything-goes varieties. Salsa, guacamole and other Mexican fare also are celebrated and devoured at the event each year.

Last year, restaurants, caterers, amateurs and nightclub/food spots sold more than 100,000 tacos at this now annual classic.

“Once again, Salt River Fields is proud to host Arizona Taco Festival,” said David Dunne, General Manager, Salt River Fields. “We’re always enthusiastic about it because it’s a major crowd-pleaser, and the largest taco event in the country. 2016 marks its seventh great year, and we’re happy to say it’s on our calendar for at least another three years, which indicates the strong tradition Arizona Taco Festival has become. Plus, we’re nearing completion of improvements to our event site, so we are ready.”

**SALT RIVER FIELDS AT ‘TALKING STICK.** Salt River Fields is the award-winning Spring Training venue of MLB’s Arizona Diamondbacks and the Colorado Rockies. The complex is situated within the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community which identifies ‘Talking Stick’ as the area within the community where many entertainment options are available to thousands of visitors each year, including shopping, restaurants, resorts and more. Salt River Fields has enjoyed multiple awards over the years as a favorite Spring Training venue as well as best event venue.

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## **SRF Hosts Seventh Annual Arizona Taco Festival / 2**

In addition to baseball, Salt River Fields hosts several major community events, even concerts, on adjacent grassy fields. The site is so popular that it has undertaken official event site improvements on the west side of the Salt River Fields complex, featuring more than 15 acres of lush, green grass for patrons to enjoy. Improved restrooms, fencing and other amenities are underway to deliver the best experience at an outdoor venue. The capital improvement plan also allows for events like Arizona Taco Festival and many others to grow and accommodate increased attendance.

Arizona Taco Festival humbly began on a dirt lot in the heart of downtown Scottsdale and has since moved to the multi-acre grass field at Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, the Spring Training home of the Arizona Diamondbacks and Colorado Rockies. Arizona Taco Festival is believed to be the world's first taco festival and the fastest growing culinary event in the state.

**Good Tacos, Serious Competition & 50 Taco Association Judges.** Arizona Taco Festival is a fabulous foodie event and simultaneously a serious taco competition. More than 50 National Taco Association judges are sequestered to determine winners in double-blind tests in a closed tent for anonymous scoring. Points are awarded and weighted for presentation, taste and texture. Cumulatively, scores lead to an overall Grand Champion as well as \$1,000 prize checks presented both days.

**Eating & Fun.** Outside the judge's tent, this exciting festival features live Lucha Libre wrestling, a now-legendary Tequila Expo featuring more than 30 brands and live 'surf' and 'salsa' bands on the Main Stage. Contests for prettiest Chihuahua, hot chile-pepper-eating and taco-eating round out the fun. In addition, a super Kids Zone sponsored by Nationwide Insurance keeps children active and happy throughout the day.

**Tequila Expo Tent, Sat., Oct. 15.** The popular Tequila Expo offers patrons the chance to sample from more than 100 tequilas. A tasting pass is \$20 for 10 samples of fine tequila.

**Ay Chihuahua! Beauty Pageant, Sun. Oct. 16.** Sunday at 2pm, watch more than 15 sassy Chihuahuas – yes, of the canine variety -- strut their four-legged stuff across the Main Stage.

**Live Lucha Libre Wrestling.** Enjoy live Lucha Libre wrestling all weekend long from comfortable seating around the ring. Also, get a change to meet the wrestlers themselves during the meet-and-greet.

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In addition, the diverse foodie event features:

- **Taco Judges.** 50 certified judges using a double-blind scoring system created by the **National Taco Association** will award cash and trophies for each category.
- **Main Stage.** The Main Stage will offer constant live music from surf to salsa.
- **Decked-out Lounges by Local Businesses.** Whether it's shaded seating or a party tent for dancing, local restaurants and bars are making it more festive than ever this year to turn the Arizona Taco Festival into the biggest party of metro Phoenix.

**Tickets & FREE Parking.** General admission tickets are \$12 online, \$15 at the gate; kids 12 and under FREE. General admission two-day passes are \$20 online. VIP tickets are \$100 and include limited drinks from the VIP bar, taco tokens and private restroom facilities. Parking is **FREE**. Tickets at [www.SaltRiverFields.com/events.aspx](http://www.SaltRiverFields.com/events.aspx)

**About Salt River Fields at Talking Stick.** Salt River Fields is a central landmark within the Talking Stick Destination. Completing its sixth MLB Spring Training season in 2016, the world-class, LEED Certified Gold venue serves as Spring Training home of the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Colorado Rockies, and was named #1 Spring Training Destination by Sports On Earth featured on MLB.com. The facility is surrounded by some of the world's most beautiful mountain panoramas, and is a popular year-round destination for major community events. Salt River Fields is an enterprise of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and has earned multiple awards including Ballpark Digest *Ballpark of the Year*, Trip Advisor *Certificate of Excellence* and multiple *Best Spring Training Field* by Arizona Foothills Magazine. Visit [www.SaltRiverFields.com](http://www.SaltRiverFields.com)

**About Arizona Taco Festival.** The Arizona Taco Festival was founded by David Tyda and Rick Phillips of Affordable Food Festivals. They have a combined 30+ years experience in media, publishing, marketing and promotions. In reaction to high-priced, exclusionary culinary events, the duo formed a company that orchestrates events with three components: a food competition, low price of entry and lively festival atmosphere. They also produce Arizona Barbecue Festival, Scottsdale Beer Palooza, the most recent Taste Tequila and run the popular food blog EATERAZ.com.

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