



PRESS RELEASE March 8, 2006
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press contact
Ben Lilliston
(612) 870-3416 or blilliston@iatp.org

IATP Announces 20th Anniversary Gala **Event to Feature Jim Hightower, Winona LaDuke and Lucia Watson**

Minneapolis - The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) will celebrate its 20-year anniversary on Earth Day, April 22, at the Depot in Minneapolis. The gala event will feature Winona LaDuke of the White Earth Land Recovery Project and nationally acclaimed author Jim Hightower.

IATP will honor Minneapolis chef Lucia Watson for her 20-year commitment to local farmers and local foods, and Dr. Edgar Pisani for his more than 60 years of international work on behalf of farmer-friendly agriculture and democracy. The gala will take place from 6-9 pm. More details can be found at: www.iatp.org/20years.

“It’s a very exciting time for IATP as we are seeing many of the ideas we’ve been advocating for the last 20 years, such as sustainable food systems, fair trade and renewable energy become more widely adopted,” said IATP President and founder Mark Ritchie. Ritchie is stepping down this year as IATP President to run for Minnesota’s Secretary of State. “This event will kick-off our efforts for the next 20 years and it will be great to have many of our friends from Minnesota and around the world to help us celebrate.”

IATP was founded in 1986 following an international meeting of rural and farm leaders - now IATP’s board of directors - who identified the need to examine the links between global policy and local communities. Ritchie, then a trade policy analyst for the state of Minnesota, started IATP with the mission of fostering sustainable rural communities and regions. IATP now has over 35 staff with offices in Minneapolis and Geneva, Switzerland.

Over the last 20 years, IATP has been putting forward cutting edge, bold ideas on how to strengthen rural communities around the world. A few examples include: helping to found the first fair trade certification body in the U.S. and starting the Minneapolis-based Peace Coffee; supporting community-based wind and renewable energy in rural communities; promoting the value of rural landscapes; strengthening local food systems by connecting farmers with consumers; and establishing the Midwest’s first small landowners cooperative certified as using environmentally sustainable forestry.

More details on IATP’s 20th Anniversary event can be found at: www.iatp.org/20years.

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works globally to promote resilient family farms, communities and ecosystems through research and education, science and technology, and advocacy.

#