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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Santa Rosa County Fair Puts a Twist on Economic Gardening**

MILTON, Fla.- The first 1,000 Santa Rosa County Fair goers will receive free seed packets this year through a partnership between the Panhandle Fresh Marketing Association (PFMA), Manning's Feed and Seed and the Santa Rosa County Fair Board of Directors. Seed packets will be available while supplies last on Thursday during the Santa Rosa County Fair.

The Panhandle Fresh Marketing Association, a program of TEAM Santa Rosa Economic Development Council, encourages local growers to produce high quality, locally-grown fruits and vegetables meant to serve the needs of area residents by supplying local grocery stores through local farmers.

The Santa Rosa County Fair celebrates annually the last frost and the arrival of the planting season each year at the Fairgrounds in East Milton.

"This year, with rising fuel and food costs, we wanted to encourage our guests to support agriculture while reconsidering the age old tradition of planting every spring," Rick Paschall, Santa Rosa County Fair Board Member. "Programs like PFMA help build the agricultural industry in Santa Rosa County by supporting local farmers. In many ways it's contributing to local economic gardening."

"We are happy to co-promote local suppliers of seed as we work to develop a broad base of suppliers of high quality, locally grown produce for our area," said Panhandle Fresh Marketing Association's Brand Manager, Andrea Sutrick. "When our local farmers are successful, the County benefits economically."

PFMA's primary advertising goal is to create awareness within the community about buying locally grown produce. With this promotion, Manning's Feed and Seed is giving away a variety of southern vegetable seeds.

Andy Bell, proprietor of Manning's Feed and Seed in Milton, stated that in today's economic environment, "it makes all the sense in the world that our community would work together to encourage the development of this type of business." He goes on to say, "I am particularly excited about the Fair's plan to help develop the "AGRI-PLEX" in East Milton."

Collaborative agreements continue to develop between the Santa Rosa County Fair Association, the University of Florida, the Santa Rosa County Tourist Development Council and TEAM Santa Rosa to develop a multi-use Agricultural Complex in the northern East Milton Park.

The Santa Rosa County Fair opens its gates at 3:00 p.m. each day this week. For more information regarding the Panhandle Fresh Marketing Association please visit [panhandlefresh.com](http://panhandlefresh.com).

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