



Gaia Herbs Announces Support for AHPA Research *Company Advances Commitment to People, Plants & Planet*

BREVARD, NC (MARCH 5, 2014)—As part of its ongoing commitment to sustainable sourcing and practices, [Gaia Herbs](#) has announced support for a multi-year field study by the American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) Foundation for Education and Research on Botanicals ([AHPA-ERB Foundation](#)). The project will determine the long-term sustainable rates of harvest for wild populations of Osha, *Ligusticum porteri*. Gaia will donate funds over the next two years to support the research, which has been conducted by the University of Kansas Biological Survey and Environmental Studies Program since 2012 and will continue for another three years.

Based on the results, AHPA will develop a manual on best practices for harvesting and conservation of Osha, which will allow for better understanding of the plant and how ethical harvesters can be engaged. Findings from the first year of the study are available at <http://www.ahpafoundation.org/Osha.html>.

Bill Chioffi, Gaia's newly appointed VP of Global Sourcing, shared that Gaia is proud to continue its tradition of supporting research that sheds new light on sustainability and the dynamic connection between people, plants and planet.

Gaia owns and operates one of the largest certified organic medicinal herb farms in the U.S.—with 300 acres under cultivation—and is one of the few herb companies that operates with a true seed-to-shelf commitment, including growing, harvesting, quality testing in a full on-site analytical laboratory, and manufacturing.

“To Gaia, quality means much more than a high biomarker and clean QA lab report,” explained Chioffi. “We never buy conventionally grown herb material, which is plentifully available at a much lower monetary cost than the organic material—but at a much higher cost to the earth. We believe in the development of local organic agriculture and sustainable treatment of the tilth of the earth. We feel it is crucial to

have a direct connection with our growers and suppliers to ensure that we are procuring high quality and ethically valid herbal material,” he said.

Gaia Herbs’ commitment to sustainability extends beyond sourcing, and includes programs that are both global and local in nature to support communities in need. Over the past two years, Gaia has grown and donated over 25,000 pounds of certified organic produce to the Bread of Life Free Community Kitchen, which provides free meals for the underprivileged and homeless in their home community of Brevard, NC. This same program provided over 50,000 pounds of Gaia farm-grown organic produce to Gaia employees, making it possible for many to feed their families with free, fresh organic food throughout the growing season

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About Gaia Herbs

Gaia Herbs is a certified organic grower and nationally branded manufacturer of liquid herbal extracts based in western North Carolina. The company cultivates 300 acres of medicinal herbs which, along with all operations at its 45,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, are organically certified each year by Oregon Tilth under USDA’s National Organic Program. The company offers herb ingredient source information and test data validation through its groundbreaking, industry-first traceability platform called MeetYourHerbs®. Gaia Herbs’ line of all-natural herbal products is carried by independent health food retailers and co-ops, national and regional natural products retail chains, and healthcare professionals. To learn more, call 800.831.7780 or visit www.gaiaherbs.com.