



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“IS TOURISM THE THIRD PILLAR TO BUILDING OUR LOCAL ECONOMY?”**

**KEY TOPIC FOR COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS LEADERS AT THE**

**2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL SAN JOAQUIN RIVER VALLEY TRAVEL AND TOURISM SUMMIT**

**MODESTO, CA** - Business, industry and community leaders will come together for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual San Joaquin River Valley Travel and Tourism Economic Summit on Monday, October 27 from 9 am to 1 pm at the Gallo Center for the Arts in Modesto. A series of speakers and presentations will highlight the importance of travel and tourism to stimulate economic development and how the region can come together as a whole to brand and market the San Joaquin Valley and its abundant resources, from the San Joaquin River to Ag Tourism.

The San Joaquin Valley is the world leader in agricultural commodities and is often referred to as the “bread basket of the world.” But what else does the region represent?

With California Travel and Tourism spending exceeding \$109 billion dollars annually, this one day session will offer valley leaders steps the region can take to brand and market its resources to visitors regionally, nationally and internationally. The goal is to help Valley businesses and communities secure a larger share of the state’s travel and tourism spending. Active interaction and Q&A between the event attendees and presenters will be emphasized with featured exhibits from organizations and companies in both the public and private sectors throughout the San Joaquin River Valley.

Ben Duran, President of the Great Valley Center, states, “we need to start looking at ways that we can grow and diversify our local economy in the valley. Tourism is definitely an area that we should be paying more attention to and looking at how our region can create more opportunities for job creation and expansion”.

**FACT: SJ River Valley (Fresno to San Joaquin County) travel spending for the five counties in 2010 was \$2.6 billion. Total employment was 27,000 and total tax revenue was \$167 million.**  
**Dean Runyan Associates**

**Featured Speakers:**

Former El Dorado County Supervisor, Bill Center, will share his experience and best practice model of how El Dorado County was able to create a robust tourism industry utilizing the American River as the backdrop to create and stimulate El Dorado County's economy.

Traci Ward, Director of Consumer Marketing for Visit California will highlight the new initiative recently launched with the California Department of Food and Agriculture on increasing AgTourism in California.

The Summit will also feature panel discussions from the Convention and Visitor Bureaus throughout the San Joaquin Valley on latest trends and activities to increase tourism to the region.

The event is open and free to the public. For more information go to  
<http://sjrivervalley.com/tourism-summit/>  
or call 209-483-6991

Space is limited and advance registration is required.

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