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NEWS RELEASE

**For More Information**

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**Bio-Agricultural Expert Launches SFCC Sustainability Lecture Series**

**Santa Fe, NM, March 9, 2009** — On March 17, [Dr. Johannes Lehmann](#), a leading soil scientist and associate professor with Cornell University, presents a lecture on the science of biochar, a potent “superdirt” based on an ancient method of soil enhancement that is garnering global attention for its fertile and sustainable qualities. The public lecture is free and takes place from noon to 1 p.m. inside the Santa Fe Community College Jemez Room 3, 6401 Richards Ave, Santa Fe.

The St. Patrick’s Day-talk launches “Let’s Talk Green,” the first in an ongoing community series on sustainability and environmental issues put on by SFCC’s [Sustainable Technologies Center](#). The SFCC lecture is an encore presentation for Lehmann, who on March 16, presents at Los Alamos National Laboratory, the sponsor of Lehmann’s New Mexico visit.

Lehmann is one of the foremost leaders in the science of [biochar](#), a charcoal-like substance produced through burning, or rather smoldering, biomass under the exclusion of oxygen. Known traditionally as [Terra Preta de Indio](#), or Indian Black Earth, the modern practice was inspired by an agricultural method of soil enrichment originally utilized by farmers in the Amazonian region of South America between 500 and 7,000 years ago. Although the science is still emerging, Lehmann’s work suggests that biochar holds considerable promise as a tool to mitigate climate change and improve environmental health. The carbon-rich soil also holds promise for sustainability and productivity in modern farming practices, particularly when it comes to the world’s arid and semi-arid land (including New Mexico), much of which is under the threat of desertification.

Lehmann’s research and work experience has led him to Sudan, Togo, Tanzania, Kenya, Malawi, Brazil, Columbia and Ecuador. His work has appeared in more than two-dozen scientific journals and publications including “[National Geographic](#),” “Science Magazine,” “[Time](#)” and most recently, the “[Financial Times](#).” Lehmann earned his doctorate from the University of Bayreuth, Germany in 1997 and has served as associate professor of Cornell University’s Department of Crop and Soil Sciences since 2001.

Lehmann is available for preview interviews. For more information, call 428-1641.

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### **About Santa Fe Community College**

Now celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> year, Santa Fe Community College is the gateway to success for individuals and the community by providing affordable, high quality educational programs that serve the social, cultural, technological and economic needs of a diverse community. The college serves more than 14,500 students per year in its credit, noncredit and adult basic education programs. For further information, visit [www.sfccnm.edu](http://www.sfccnm.edu) or call (505) 428-1000.

### **About the SFCC Sustainable Technologies Center**

The Sustainable Technologies Center integrates 21<sup>st</sup>-century trades with advanced technologies and "green" curricula to promote a sustainable economy. The STC will work with community, state and national partners to further develop and expand the renewable energy industry cluster in the Santa Fe region while being recognized as a state, regional and national resource. The college's Sustainable Technologies Center will continue to develop with a new 36,000 square foot trades and advanced technology facility, slated for completion in 2010. The center will offer credit and non-credit courses and program and customized workforce development as well space for industry and technology demonstrations and seminars, symposiums and special events.

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