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NEWS RELEASE

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Trees for Life Launches Online Scientific Journal

Free Forum Will Expand Global Knowledge about Beneficial Plants and Trees

WICHITA, KS— A new, online scientific journal focused on traditional knowledge and scientific studies of beneficial plants launched today, announced Balbir Mathur, president of the non-profit Trees for Life. *Trees for Life Journal: A forum on beneficial trees and plants* will be a free, open electronic forum, to bring together international articles from traditional wisdom, small-scale field studies and scientific investigations of flora that could benefit humanity. The journal is available online at www.tfljournal.org.

“Our journal aims to bridge the gap between grassroots knowledge and scientific research,” Mathur said. “By publishing formal and informal studies on beneficial plants and trees, we hope to advance the use of these vital resources worldwide.”

Trees for Life is a non-profit organization that helps plant fruit trees in developing countries as a low-cost, self-renewing food source. The movement’s philosophy of “education, health and environment” will be evident in *Trees for Life Journal*, which aims to expand global knowledge about the medical and nutritional value of plants, in order to educate citizens of third world countries.

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The idea for the journal was born from societal claims about the nutritional, medicinal and other beneficial properties of the tree *Moringa oleifera*. Every part of the tree is edible or used as traditional medicine, from the leaves to the bark to the seeds. It grows wild in poor soil and provides vitamins desperately lacking in diets of impoverished people. Trees for Life recognized the need for a forum to publish and discuss scientific studies and communal knowledge of this tree, in order to promote its cultivation in the developing world.

“People whose lives could be improved by research findings are not even aware such a wealth of information exists in their midst,” said Mathur. “Almost anyone with experience would agree that many more channels of communication are needed to increase the exchange between academics and lay people.”

Trees for Life Journal will be free to users and features an easy-to-use format. Anyone may publish an article—from peer-reviewed field and clinical studies to informal essays or ideas for possible new uses of plants and trees. The content is also freely available for reproduction and distribution, with credit given to the original authors. The Web site also features a mentor program that matches experienced scientists with those who are new to the research process. Publishing electronically means the journal can be updated as often as necessary.

“The ease and speed of this technology transcends the barriers of cost, space and time,” Mathur said. “Thanks to the Web, it is now possible to scale the walls that have long divided those who know and those who need the knowledge.”

Dr. Doren Fredrickson of the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita will be the journal's Chairman. Dr. Jed Fahey of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine will be Editor-in-Chief and Jeffrey Faus of Trees for Life will be Managing Editor.

About Trees for Life: Founded in 1984 by Wichita businessman Balbir Mathur, Trees for Life is an international nonprofit movement that demonstrates that by helping each other, people can unleash extraordinary power that enriches every life. Their mission is to create hope through a movement in which people join hands to break the cycle of poverty and hunger and care for our earth. For more information about the Trees for Life organization, visit www.treesforlife.org.

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