



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

**The Herb Society of America Celebrates Calendula  
(*Calendula officinalis*) as 2008 Herb of the Year**

*KIRTLAND, OHIO*-January 2008-With the New Year comes a new herb in the spotlight. In 2008 the Herb of the Year is Calendula. “Regardless what you call it—calendula, mary’s gold, pot marigold or poor man’s saffron—this plant has a story to tell. In 2008 it is the Herb of the Year,” states Theresa Mieseler author of this year’s Herb of the Year Guide. “Legend and history surround the plant... Unlike many herbs where the foliage is aromatic, calendula boasts its beauty in the flowers of many colors and shapes. Calendula offers something for everyone—as a colorful flower in tussie-mussies or for its color and flavor in cooking, potpourri and in medicine, both past and present.”

Excerpts from The Herb Society of America’s 2008 Herb of the Year Guide: The name calendula is from the Middle English *calends* derived from Latin *kalendae*, which means the day of the new moon. In the ancient Roman calendar it was the first day of the month. This name is derived from the ability of the herb to flower any month of the year in mild climates. Other plants known as marigolds were discovered in the New World and were brought to Europe in the 16th century. By 1542 it was recorded that only five American plants were established in Old World gardens. Four of these were vegetables; the fifth was marigold. No matter what its variety, the marigold is rich in symbolism of Our Lady. The gold petals are likened to rays of light crowning her head, and the prodigal color is related to the generous giving of herself to God’s plan. Sometimes described as “the flower of grief,” droplets gather in the flower during the night and drip off like tears when it opens in the morning. This

characteristic moved Shakespeare to write in “A Winter's Tale”: “The Marigold that goes to bed with the sun, / And with him rises weeping.”

The Herb Society of America, Inc., gratefully acknowledges The International Herb Association for their selection of Calendula for the Herb of the Year for 2008. The International Herb Association has selected an Herb of the Year since 1995. The Herb Society of America is pleased to present The Herb of the Year Guide as educational material to support the selection.

The Herb Society of America, Inc., is dedicated to promoting the knowledge, use and delight of herbs through educational programs, research and sharing the experiences of its members with the community. Members of The Society have a variety of interests including gardening, cooking, crafts, education and research and sharing activities with children. For more information or to purchase a membership or gift membership to The Herb Society of America please contact 440-256-0514 or visit [www.herbsociety.org](http://www.herbsociety.org). The Herb Society of America is a 501 (c) (3) organization.

#####