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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 4/21/09

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WGUV presents *Asparagus! Stalking the American Life*
Film by Spargel Productions focuses on Oceana County

(Grand Rapids, MI, April 21, 2009) On Wednesday, April 29 at 8 p.m., WGUV TV will present the television premiere of the film *Asparagus! Stalking the American Life*, an award-winning documentary film about the “Asparagus Capital of the Nation” in Western Michigan. The film by Spargel Productions will also air on Public Broadcasting stations statewide at the same time.

Thirty years ago, Oceana County, Michigan proclaimed itself the Asparagus Capital of the Nation! Hailed as “Green Gold,” asparagus was exactly what this poor rural community needed - a spring cash crop at the end of the long cold winter. Asparagus quickly became Oceana’s biggest claim to fame, with everyone from the local clown band to the dance teacher inspired by the “Super Stalk.” Then, in a twist of fate, the U.S War on Drugs ushered in a free trade agreement that threatened to take it all away. Virtually overnight, Oceana’s asparagus farmers found themselves smack-dab in the middle of international drug policy and the turbulent global economy. They called an Emergency Asparagus Summit, pulled up their bootstraps, and jumped head-on into the fray.

This is the story of one rural American community scrambling to keep its proud identity and source of survival against impossible odds. *Asparagus! Stalking the American Life* journeys to the heart of asparagus country to discover why one little vegetable matters so much.

WGUV's continued mission is to provide educational, informative, and entertaining programs and events to the West Michigan community as a service of Grand Valley State University.

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