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## **FRESNO FOOD EXPO SERVES AS LAUNCHPAD FOR NEW FRESNO BUSINESS**

*The first annual Fresno Food Expo (Friday, March 11) is focused on helping local food companies grow and succeed. It's the ideal event to introduce P\*DE\*Q, a new Fresno company offering an American take on a classic Brazilian snack.*

FRESNO, CA – When the Fresno Food Expo was announced as a showcase for local food growers, manufacturers, and producers, Flavia Takahashi-Flores knew it would be the best place to launch P\*DE\*Q, her new wholesale baked treat.

P\*DE\*Q is short for *pão de queijo* (Portuguese for “cheese bread”), a common snack item in Brazil. The tapioca-based cheese bread has a unique crispy/chewy texture. Flavia’s Americanized version of the product will be available wholesale to coffee shops, cafes, and other food vendors. P\*DE\*Q is delivered frozen, and baked fresh at the point of sale.

Flavia, a graduate of Fresno State’s Craig School of Business, is the creator and owner of P\*DE\*Q. Born and raised in Sao Paulo, Brazil, she was educated in her home country as a food engineer, before immigrating to the U.S. in 1998. She earned her M.B.A. in 2006 and has worked in a variety of capacities, from food engineer to business development manager.

“I love developing businesses,” she said. “I have been developing them my entire career, but always for other companies.”

When Flavia wanted to create a business for herself, she drew inspiration from her past in Brazil and the *pão de queijo* she enjoyed there.

“*Pão de queijo* has always been part of my life,” Flavia said. “I always loved the softness of the product, the savory taste, and how it satisfied my hunger. In America, I missed having *pão de queijo*, especially on days with a full schedule and little time to eat.”

She began developing a P\*DE\*Q recipe that could be made with local ingredients. Her goal was to translate the Brazilian product into something tailored especially for American tastes.

“I always believed that P\*DE\*Q was a perfect product for America,” she said. “It is delicious and convenient, with a bonus of being nutritional and gluten-free. I like mine with cream cheese or jam, but it goes great with almost everything.”

Once the recipe was finalized, P\*DE\*Q was ready to be introduced to America.

“I knew the Fresno Food Expo was the place for me to launch P\*DE\*Q,” she said, “because I want to be known as a Fresno-based company, and a success story for the Fresno State M.B.A. program. What better place to start making P\*DE\*Q a part of American life?”

The Fresno Food Expo is on Friday, March 11 at The Grand, 1401 Fulton St. in Downtown Fresno. P\*DE\*Q will be located in booth 11 on the 10th floor. For more information on the expo, visit [www.fresnofoodexpo.com](http://www.fresnofoodexpo.com). For more info on P\*DE\*Q, visit [www.pdeq.net](http://www.pdeq.net) or contact Flavia Takahashi-Flores at (559) 892-9020.

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