



Pick The Winner: An Economic Story Showdown

July 22, 2009

Inspired by television's *Iron Chef*, NPR's Planet Money team sent three reporters to the [Fancy Food Show](#) in New York City this month. These were reporters on a mission: to find the best economics story they could, and gather all the sound for it in an hour.

What's more, each story had to mention at least one mythical beast.

Now you can listen to their stories and determine the winner in a [poll on the Planet Money blog](#). Voting closes Thursday at midnight Eastern.

We also asked the three contestants to craft their own blurbs, which we'll present in alphabetical order.

Adam Davidson writes:

Adam Davidson ignored the glitz and glamour to figure out what was going on at the most modest, simple corner of the show: the first ever Palestine Pavilion at the Fancy Food Show. He answers questions such as: What is the U.S. government's role in promoting the sale of low-end potato chips from Hebron at a show more commonly known for its high-end cheeses?

Chana Joffe-Walt says:

The first booth I saw at the Fancy Foods Show was [Nielsen Massey Vanilla](#). Madagascar Pure Vanilla: \$19.99. I kept walking. What could be more boring, more vanilla, than vanilla? But 10 minutes later, I was still thinking about that price. \$19.99 for 8 ounces of product! Why is vanilla so expensive? Turns out it's because the vanilla supply chain includes tropical storms, suitcases full of cash and a Mexican bee with a secret.

David Kestenbaum calls his:

... a marvelous, epic quest for the most expensive food item in the show and a meditation on what sets the prices we see every day in the grocery store. Powerful, compelling and deeply funny. The best story of the (fiscal) year.