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Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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## Trump pleads not guilty to 34 criminal charges in New York

NEW YORK, April 4 (Reuters) - Donald Trump, the former president and front-runner for the 2024 Republican nomination, pleaded not guilty in a history-making moment for the United States on Tuesday to 34 felony counts of falsifying business records after an investigation into hush money paid to a porn star.

Wearing a dark blue suit and red tie, Trump, the first sitting or former U.S. president to face criminal charges, sat with his hands folded at the defense table as he entered his plea flanked by his lawyers.

“Not guilty,” Trump, 76, said when asked how he pleaded.

He said nothing as he entered the courtroom or when he left roughly an hour later. Trump previously called the charges politically motivated.

He was due to return to Florida and deliver remarks from his Mar-a-Lago resort at 8:15 p.m. on Tuesday (0015 GMT on Wednesday), his office said.

Taken together, the charges carry a maximum sentence of more than 100 years in prison under New York law but an actual prison sentence if he is convicted at a trial would almost certainly be far less than that.

While falsifying business records in New York on its own is a misdemeanor punishable by no more than one year in prison, it is elevated to a felony punishable by up to four years in prison when done to advance or conceal another crime.

The Manhattan grand jury convened by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg that indicted Trump heard evidence about a \$130,000 payment made to Daniels in the waning days of the 2016 presidential campaign. Daniels has said she was paid to keep silent about a sexual encounter she had with Trump at a Lake Tahoe hotel in 2006.



Former U.S. President Donald Trump is accompanied by members of his legal team, Susan Necheles and Joe Tacopina, as he appears in court for an arraignment on charges stemming from his indictment by a Manhattan grand jury, April 4, 2023. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly

Trump’s former personal lawyer Michael Cohen has said he coordinated with Trump on payments to adult film actress Stormy Daniels and to a second woman, former Playboy model Karen McDougal. Trump has denied having had sexual relationships with either woman, but has acknowledged reimbursing Cohen.

Bragg, a Democrat, was due to give a news conference later on Tuesday.

Trump earlier held his fist in the air in a gesture to reporters as he departed his New York residence at Trump Tower in a motorcade bound for the courthouse. He exhibited little emotion when he waved to a crowd assembled outside the courthouse.

From his motorcade, Trump posted on social media: “Heading to Lower Manhattan, the Courthouse. Seems so SURREAL - WOW, they are going to ARREST ME. Can’t believe this is happening in America.”

Trump surrendered to Bragg’s office before the arraignment began in Justice Juan Merchan’s court. At an arraignment, a defendant hears charges and can enter a plea. Trump was fingerprinted but no mugshot photo was taken, according to a Twitter post by a New York Times reporter.

In other social media posts ahead of the arraignment, Trump renewed his attacks on Merchan, who last year presided over a trial in which Trump’s real estate company was convicted of tax fraud.

Trump, who served as president from 2017 to 2021, in November announced a bid to regain the presidency in 2024 in a bid to deny Democratic President Joe Biden, who beat him in 2020, a second term in the White House.

A photo taken by a photographer in the courtroom authorized by the judge showed Trump sitting at the defense table, flanked by his lawyers. Trump’s lawyers had urged the judge to block any vid-

eography, photography and radio coverage, arguing it would worsen “an already almost circus-like atmosphere.”

The businessman-turned-politician has been a familiar figure for decades in New York, the city where he was raised, built his real estate business and became a celebrity.

On a cool and sunny early spring day in the most-populous U.S. city, Trump supporters and detractors were separated by barricades set up by police to try to keep order, though there were some confrontations.

“Let’s keep it civil, folks,” a police officer told them.

Hundreds of Trump supporters, at a park across from the Manhattan courthouse, cheered and blew whistles, outnumbering his detractors. The Trump critics held signs including one of Trump dressed in a striped jail uniform behind bars and another that read, “Lock Him Up.”

The White House remained mum on the drama in New York.

“I think the American people should feel reassured that when there is an ongoing case like this one that we’re just not commenting,” White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters.

Any trial is at least more than a year away, legal experts said. Being indicted or even convicted does not legally prevent Trump from running for president.

**TRUMP URGES VENUE CHANGE**  
In a social media post, Trump said Manhattan Criminal Court was a “very unfair venue” and urged that the case be moved to the New York City borough of Staten Island, which regularly votes Republican.

Among the pro-Trump demonstrators was Gina Witcher, 55, of Maryland.

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# WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

04/03/2023

## We Are All In The Same Family



There are always many rare and unforgettable deeds on the road of life. Today we all came to the home of the bluebonnets and visited Chappell Hill Bank with banker, Mr. Smith. We gave him a big hug and told him how much we appreciated him for letting us join the bank as family.

I always remember when I was child that my parents often said to me, "Son, you can rely on your parents when you are home, and you should also rely on your friends when you are away from home."

Chappell Bank was founded in 1907 and has been noted



as the oldest bank in Texas. It has been under Mr. Smith's management for more than 38 years. With the help of former Harris County Judge Robert Eckels, we were able to become a partner of Mr. Smith and continued to establish another bank, Global One Bank. We believe that this will open a new chapter for the banking business in Texas. Today we saw Mr. Smith open his arms to welcome us as his new family.

What's more, Texas Senator John Whitmire, who announced that he is running to be next Mayor of Houston, owns a 300-acre ranch in this town. When we walked on the land with all the bluebonnets, we were all stunned. Senator Whitmire brought two horses for us to ride and then took our photo under the blue sky in a sea of blue flowers I told him that he is really living in paradise.

On the way home, I remembered the teaching of my parents in my early years. In the constant challenges of life, how important friends are. I am so grateful to my parents who taught me and I am very grateful for the opportunity I have been given by this land.



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**Southern DAILY** Make Today Different

## Editor's Choice



Donald Trump in the hallway at the Manhattan Criminal Courthouse after being processed for his arraignment in New York City. REUTERS/Brendan McDermid



Former President Donald Trump is reflected in the Trump Tower windows as he departs the building en route to his planned court appearance in New York City. REUTERS/David Dee Delgado



Local resident Galina Slepko, 64, stands inside her house which was heavily damaged in recent shelling during Russia-Ukraine conflict, in Horlivka (Gorlovka) in the Donetsk region, Russian-controlled Ukraine. REUTERS/Alexander Ermochenko



Donald Trump appears in court with his lawyer Joe Tacopina for his arraignment in New York City. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly



NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg smiles as Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken shake hands during a joining ceremony at the NATO foreign ministers' meeting at the Alliance's headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. REUTERS/Johanna Geron/Pool

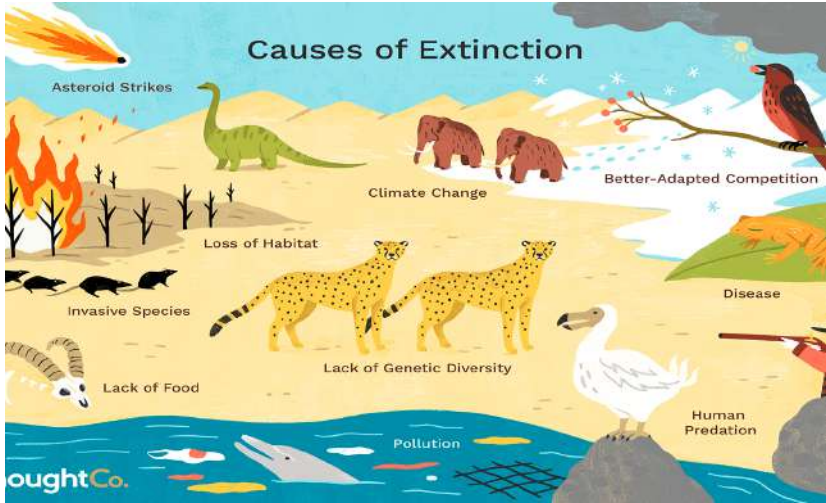


Students shout at state lawmakers inside the state capitol as they demonstrate against gun violence and call for gun law reform during The March For Our Lives walkout, a week after the mass shooting at Covenant School, in Nashville, Tennessee. Mark Zaleski/USA Today Network



Coffee, Wine, And Wheat Varieties Are  
Among The Foods We Could Lose Forever

The Extinction Crisis That  
No One Is Talking About



Key Point

*Supply chain challenges and inflation spikes in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic have now been joined by growing and documented concerns for the potential extinction of endangered foods and the lack of food choices along with the diversity of foods as well as the nutritional values they represent that are in serious danger of disappearing from the global marketplace. Scientific observers are now saying it is time to act and make efforts to bring diversity back into the food system while being motivated by the health of society.*

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Your morning coffee is in a perilous state. There are just two species of coffee plants on which the entire multibillion-dollar industry is based: One of them is considered poor-tasting, and the other, which you're likely familiar with, is threatened by climate change and a deadly fungal disease. Thankfully, there's another kind of coffee out there, known as stenophylla. It has a higher heat tolerance, greater resistance to certain fungal pathogens, and it tastes great. There's just one problem: It's incredibly rare, and until recently, scientists believed it was extinct. Stenophylla is just one of dozens of important foods that are threatened with extinction, according to Dan Saladino, a BBC journalist and author of the new book, "Eating to Extinction: The World's Rarest Foods and Why We Need to Save Them." While grocery stores may seem as abundant as ever, Saladino argues that the diversity of food is actually in decline. Of the hundreds of thousands of wheat varieties that farmers once cultivated, for example, only a handful are now farmed on a large scale, he told Vox.

As we grow and harvest fewer varieties of plants

and animals, the foods you can buy in the grocery store may become less nutritious and flavorful, and — as the current state of coffee demonstrates — the global food system could become less resilient. That's why it's so crucial to lift up communities that are protecting foods from disappearing, Saladino told Vox in an interview about his new book.

The important conversation that followers was held between author Dan Saladino and Vox.com interviewer Benji Jones and pinpoints the food diversity challenges that face us all.

**Grocery stores may be stocked, but the variety of food is in decline**



Benji Jones

You write that a lot of foods, such as varieties of coffee and wheat, are going extinct. Yet when I walk into the grocery store it seems like there's more variety than ever.

**Dan Saladino**

Whether it's cotton candy grapes or certain varieties of avocado, there's a degree of uniformity. And while you'll see this abundance — consider bread, and the wheat it's made of — it's extremely narrow in terms of its genetics.

In this amazing place in the Arctic called Svalbard, there's a seed vault buried deep under the ice, down a tunnel, in which there are more than 200,000 different unique samples of wheat. That's the kind of diversity that's hidden from us. A farmer today in the UK might get a recommended list of wheat varieties to grow — dictated largely by the food industry and millers and bakers — of fewer than 10 kinds.

You can take all of the world's staple crops, including maize [also known as corn] and rice, and you'll see the same thing. In seed banks around the world, there are tens to hundreds of thousands of varieties, yet in the food system that we experience, it's an extremely small number.

**Benji Jones**

Why should the average grocery shopper care about losing these rare varieties of food?

**Dan Saladino**

Endangered foods give us options in a future with many challenges — feeding a growing population, reducing emissions, and finding fresh water, for example.

Take a type of maize tucked away in a mountain village in southern Mexico, very close to where maize was first domesticated thousands of years ago. Botanists arrived in the late 1970s and saw this 16-foot-tall stock of maize. It shouldn't have been growing there because the soil was so poor.

Not only was it so tall, but it also has these aerial roots that were dripping with mucus, like something out of a science fiction film. Just three years ago, a scientist figured out that the mucus is an interplay between sugars and microbes that's actually feeding the plant from the air. That hadn't been seen before in cereal crops.



A type of maize that grows in the Sierra Mixe region of Oaxaca, Mexico. It has aerial roots coated in mucus that help the plant

**pull nutrients out of the air. (Photo/Allen Van Deynze et. al/PLOS Biology)**

Why should we care? If we understand how this plant works, could we potentially use it to reduce our use of fertilizer globally? We know there is a way in which some plants are feeding themselves. We need to give thanks to the Indigenous people who have looked after this maize for centuries, if not thousands of years.

**Benji Jones**

A wider variety of crops also makes our food system more resilient to threats like disease and climate change, right?

**Dan Saladino**

That's another really important lesson. I traveled to eastern Turkey to get as close as I could to the Fertile Crescent, where wheat was first domesticated. I found farmers who had saved a type of emmer wheat that had been growing for 8,000 to 9,000 years. It's been growing in high altitudes where it's damp.

If you put a modern wheat variety in that environment, fungal diseases would ruin the crop. And so what they have in Turkey is a precious genetic resource that has forms of resistance, such as to fungal pathogens.



A field of kavilca, or emmer, wheat. (Dan Saladino)

You can also find those principles of disease resilience among ancient varieties of rice and maize — really, in all of the crops. Over thousands of years, our ancestors created these adaptations through farming under different conditions.

What we've done since is create these incredibly high-performance plants that need specific conditions to grow, and a lot of inputs, like fertilizer. Each wheat or maize plant is almost a clone, whereas in traditional farming, there's a huge amount of genetic diversity in the field. If you get a bad summer or too much or too little rain, some of those traditional varieties are still going to bear grains because there is diversity within the crops.

**You can breed out bitterness, but you might lose deliciousness**

**Benji Jones**

Is there a flavor extinction happening as well?

**Dan Saladino**

Absolutely. I tell the story of a type of wild citrus from northern India called memang narang. It has a cultural, culinary, and medicinal function, but the striking thing is how bitter these fruits are. The people who live here place huge value

on bitterness, a flavor that's disappearing from most of our palates. Fruit breeders, over centuries, have been ingenious at giving us something that we love: sweetness. They have bred out the bitterness.

When you realize that the bitter taste comes from compounds that help plants protect themselves from pests, then you understand why it might be beneficial to retain that flavor. We've taken the beneficial bitter compounds out, and we've cloaked plants in pesticides and other chemicals to protect them.



A type of rare coffee, Coffea stenophylla. (Getty Images)

Another example comes from coffee. We live in a world where we can enjoy a lot of different types of arabica coffee. There's robusta as well. But these are just two of more than a hundred different types of coffee around the world.

Historically, there were cultures in parts of Africa that had more distinctive types of coffee, including one called stenophylla that was prized in parts of East Africa up until the 1960s, when it pretty much went extinct because farming systems changed. It has greater disease resistance than arabica. And arabica is under pressure now because of climate change — it's an extremely delicate plant. Stenophylla offers the benefit of disease resistance, and it's an amazing-tasting coffee.

**Coffee as we know it is in danger. Can we breed a better cup?**

**Benji Jones**

Another example that helps explain the decline of flavor comes from a region of France, home to the Salers cow. It really shows the connection between biodiversity and flavor, right?

**Dan Saladino**

"Salers" is a place, a breed of cow, and a cheese. Farmers would take their cattle in the spring and summer to [mountain] places where the pasture is richest, often ending up in remote places. It was a monastic experience; they were up there living a solitary life. At the end of the summer, the cheese would end up back down in the village. It's this mind-blowing process that highlights the power of cheese: The pasture captures the energy of the sun, the animals convert the pasture into milk and cheese, and the villagers then eat the cheese during the winter when other foods are running out.

(Article Continues Below)

(Article Continues From Above)

Coffee, Wine, And Wheat Varieties Are  
Among The Foods We Could Lose Forever

The Extinction Crisis That  
No One Is Talking About

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

**Dan Saladino**

The remarkable thing is that the pasture is so rich in microbes that these farmers don't even need a starter culture to coagulate the milk and turn it into cheese. As soon as the milk hits these wooden barrels, it's inoculated with microbes. For a modern health inspector, it would be a nightmare to watch.

We've been talking about the endangered genetics of crops and endangered tastes. Here, we're talking about endangered microbes that are not only missing from the cheese making process, but also from our gut microbiomes.



A breed of cattle called Salers in the Cantal region of France. (Photo/Andia/Universal Images Group via Getty Images)

**Benji Jones**

You also explain that when these cows have access to a wide diversity of plants in the pasture, their milk and cheese end up tasting richer. That's because different grasses have different types of defense chemicals called terpenes, which can translate to flavor in the milk.

**Dan Saladino**

Terpenes can be found in milk from rich pastures, but not in cheese made from cattle that have been fed on grains. We're only beginning to understand the connections between biodiversity and our food and our health and our flavors.

**Benji Jones**

You traveled the world sampling all of these foods with unique flavors. What were some that stood out?



**Dan Saladino**

Skerpikjöt is this food from the Faroe Islands. There's not enough sunlight or firewood there to produce salt to preserve food. People instead built these huts that have gaps that allow the sea air in. They raise sheep and hang the meat in these huts, which gets bathed by the salty air and slowly fermented and preserved. It doesn't look like food. It's covered in mold. It needs to be washed. It's almost as if this sheep meat is gently rotting away in these huts, but actually, the conditions are exactly right so it doesn't rot or become too funky. It becomes this wonderful preserved meat.

**Benji Jones**

You also have an incredible chapter about a type of wine in the country Georgia, which you explain is where some of the world's first — or the first — winemakers were practicing their craft.

**Dan Saladino**

Georgia is the most likely country in which grapes were domesticated and the first winemakers were practicing their craft. They have a technology that predates the barrel by thousands of years — the qvevri. These are terracotta vessels that you bury underground with whole branches of grapes with skin and pips [seeds] inside. Many people think France and Italy and Spain and California are great wine-producing regions. Here is a place where the relationship with wine just goes up another level. There is a reverence and spiritual dimension to wine drinking.



A workshop where Georgian qvevris are being made. (Photo/Dan Saladino)

**Our relationship with food mirrors our relationship with nature**

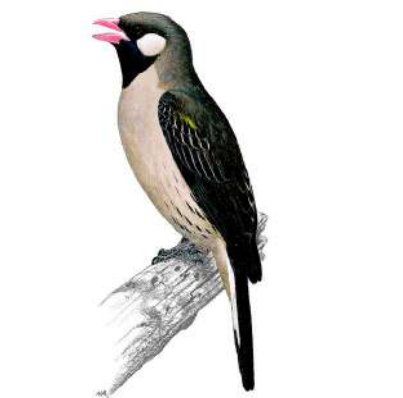
**Benji Jones**

In your book, you talk about how losing certain foods isn't just about losing resilience, flavor, and culture, but also about our changing relationship with nature. You explain that some groups, like the Hadza people of Tanzania, are deeply connected to their environment through food — and by losing certain foods, we may be losing these connections.

**Dan Saladino**

The Hadza story brilliantly sums that up. I followed some of these hunter-gatherers out within a landscape of baobab trees. In those trees, some of which are a thousand years old, you can find bees' nests and one of the greatest prizes the Hadza can find: honey. It's an extremely important food — and their favorite food — but it's hard for them to find the hives high up in the trees.

The Hadza whistle, and after a period of time, if they're lucky, a very humble-looking bird will fly down. The bird will start a "conversation" with the hunter-gatherers and lead them to a tree with honey. The bird knows where the honey is, whereas the hunter-gatherers have the fire and the smoke to get rid of the bees, which are a risk for the bird. The Hadza can go up, extract the honey, and then leave something behind for the birds.



An illustration of a greater hon-

**eyguide. (Photo/Brown Bear/Windmill Books/Universal Images Group via Getty Images.)**

Toward the end of the Hadza visit, we went to a mud and brick hut, and inside there were cans and cans of soda. This was a source of sugar and energy that could mean that they no longer use that skill to find honey within our lifetimes — something so fundamentally important to human history could disappear.

**Benji Jones**

Do we run the risk of glorifying some of these older cultures? Don't some of these groups want soda — or access to health care, or other benefits that come with Western or modern life?

**Dan Saladino**

There's story after story of another culture coming in and imposing its food and

phone and sold rice through WeChat to people in Beijing and Chengdu, some of the biggest cities in the world. Modern technology can actually connect us.

**Benji Jones**

The food industry is massive and largely run by just a small number of companies. How does one person help prevent these unique foods from going extinct?

**Dan Saladino**

It's important to understand what we mean by endangered foods and diversity. I think we should all choose our favorite foods and interrogate the diversity of that food. Explore cacao, coffee, or different types of cheeses. Then maybe develop a relationship with a cheesemaker and become a different kind of customer — somebody who's supporting a local farmer.



A man dries a rare, prized type of Venezuelan cacao called criollo. (Photo/Dan Saladino)

This also needs to be dealt with on a much larger scale. I was inspired by stories of cities, such as Copenhagen, where schools use diversity as a criterion for the contracts they're issuing to farmers: Don't just give me the cheapest apples — give me a choice of apples, and we will reward you. That's also happening in Brazil. Over the last few decades, they've had a policy that requires schools to source 30 percent of ingredients from local family farms.

These levers do exist for governments to make a big, significant change. I also think we have the most selfish reasons to embrace diversity — our own health. We know what's happening in many parts of the world, in terms of type 2 diabetes, cancers, and other diseases that have a food dimension. Perhaps we will be motivated by health to try and bring diversity back into the food system. The science says we need to. (Courtesy vox.com)