

For Immediate Release

Where is Canada's Foodservice Future Headed?

TORONTO, January 30, 2007-- Breakfast continues to lead meals eaten out of home while freshness, small portions and organics are emerging as forces shaping Canadian menus according to cultural and food industry experts gathered in Toronto today. Acclaimed demographer Dr. David Foot joins international food consultant and former Editor of *McCall's* magazine, Dr. A. Elizabeth Sloan; Editor and Publisher of *Foodservice and Hospitality* magazine, Rosanna Caira; market research experts NPD and foodservice operators Sir Corp., and Dairy Queen at the 15th annual *Foodservice Interchange* Conference. The event highlights what Canadians have been eating out of the home, and offers a preview of what's to come as we age, and continue to embrace new cultures, flavours and dining concepts.

"This conference underscores how the industry is looking to evolve so as to meet Canadian's needs today while anticipating the future," said Gabby Nobrega, Sr. V.P., Member Services & Communications, Food and Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC). "Continuing to offer Canadians access to quality, safe and interesting menu options which reflect our evolving culture and aging population takes thoughtful planning and ingenuity. The fact that we are seeing many of our favourite food service menu items making their way to the grocery store is just one example of changes on the horizon," she adds.

What the Numbers Say

In his presentation *How Changing Demographics are Redefining Consumer Foodservice Needs*, Dr. David Foot looks at the demographics which are driving the trends. "As we age, we have different dietary needs and considerations which will create a new reality for restaurants and institutions. We're also going to see different age-related preferences," said Dr. Foot, author, *Boom Bust and Echo*. "For example, as we get older the level of music and the amount of spice factor heavily into our decision to eat out or not and if so, where."

Taste and Convenience

Canadians are certainly eating out, but there is also an increase in meals purchased at restaurants for consumption at home according to Jane Graham, General Manager, Foodservice Canada, The NPD Group and industry expert Harry Balzer, Vice President, the NPD Group, Inc., (US). Their presentations *Eating Patterns in America* and *"Only in Canada, eh? What Makes the Canadian Consumer Unique?"* demonstrate that there are not many significant differences between Canadians and Americans when it comes to food preferences. Among the key trends are food safety, "healthy" or "better for you" options, fresh local products and organics, but the real story is about how the industry makes purchasing food away from home a convenient solution for time-pressed consumers.

Can we Judge by the Covers?

Rosanna Caira, Editor of *Foodservice and Hospitality* magazine and *Hotelier Magazine* orchestrated a retrospective look at the industry through a series of cover stories in addition to the 10 foods that ruled in 2006. Her presentation also looked at how food safety and the environment factored into the industry's news and business operations. "The covers chronicle how the industry has evolved and is tackling very difficult issues."

A Taste of Tomorrow

A fusion of a lot of trends and cultures are driving new tastes reports Dr. A. Elizabeth Sloan who spoke on *Putting the Trends to Work for You*. "Other influences including gender, comfort food, exposure to new flavours and the growing exposure to gourmet among the mainstream are creating a very dynamic dining scene," said Dr. Sloan. "The most important trend for operators to take advantage of is the strong demand by consumers to have healthful menu options which is a key driving force for diners of all ages, demographics, and ethnicities. Creating a canvas for industry to really get creative is research which proves there are distinct differences between men and women when it comes to dining patterns. Now there's a real opportunity for industry."

The Classics meet the Concepts

SIR Corp.'s (Service Inspired Restaurants®) Corey Dalton, COO and George Kakalettris, V.P. Marketing & Branding and Jean Champagne, Chief Operating Officer, International Groups, Dairy Queen Canada, Inc., provided behind the scenes stories about how the industry is creating and recreating experiences for foodservice customers one detail at a time. Their stories reflect both new establishments and the rebirth of a foodservice legend underscore the innovation and resiliency of the industry.

"The key to success in the restaurant industry is knowing your customer, understanding their needs, and providing them with a good experience," said Champagne in his presentation *Dairy Queen Canada, Inc. – A Smile and a Story*. Similarly, SIR Corp.'s Dalton believes the most important factor to ensure the success of casual dining is to keep up with the demands of the consumer—great quality at a great value, while continually updating menus to satisfy a growing taste for healthy and ethnic foods."

About FSI

Foodservice Interchange (FSI) is Canada's premier foodservice event. Attendees include food manufacturers, operators and institutions including independent operators, national and international restaurant chains. FSI is presented by FCPC and the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD). This year marks the 15th annual conference.

About FCPC

Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC) is the largest industry association representing Canadian-operated food, beverage and consumer product companies that make and market retailer and national brands sold through grocery, drug, mass, club, convenience, foodservice distributors and operators. In 2005, the industry employed 291,000 Canadians across the country, making it the largest employer in the Canadian manufacturing sector, and generated \$24 billion annually in GDP (13% of the Manufacturing Gross Domestic Product). On an annual basis, the industry donates an estimated \$100 million to charitable causes and over 5 million bags of groceries to food banks in Canada. The industry has a record of embracing world-class regulatory standards and is governed by 442 federal and provincial pieces of legislation, as well as thousands of regulations and self-imposed standards.

About CCGD

The Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) is a not-for-profit organization committed to advancing and promoting the grocery and foodservice distribution industry in Canada, at both the regional and national level. We recognize, advance and promote industry best practices for the benefit of our members and the Canadian consumer. The food distribution and retail grocery industry is Canada's second largest commercial sector. Member sales represent \$71 billion in grocery and \$12 billion in foodservice and employ over 428,000 Canadians. Our members represent 85% of all grocery products (food, non-food, non-alcoholic beverages) distribution sales in Canada.

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