

Head of Research Chefs Association Opens-Up on the Science Behind Food Trends: Joins Esteemed Consumer Lifestyle and Trend Experts at Foodservice Industry Conference

Toronto, January 22, 2008 – While most Canadians do not think of ‘food science’ when dining out, Stephen Kalil, President of the Research Chefs Association, an industry group dedicated to the blending of culinary arts and the science of food, is focused on little else. Today, at the 16th annual *Foodservice Interchange Conference*, he’ll join diversity expert and author Giselle Kovary, *Loyalty Unplugged: how to get, keep and grow all four generations*; Linda Nazareth, economist and author of *The Leisure Economy*; Rosanna Caira, Editor and Publisher of *Foodservice and Hospitality* magazine and Jim Carroll futurist, trends, & innovation expert, on a panoramic tour of the gastronomic, culture and economic shifts which stand to change the foodservice experience across Canada. Today, the average Canadian household visits a restaurant for a meal or snack 536 times per year¹, and spends 24.5% of its total food dollar on foodservice².

“We’re entering a really interesting time in foodservice. Consumers are hungry for new experiences, and quality meal solutions which integrate into their busy schedules while manufacturers and operators have to digest breakneck scientific and culinary developments and emerging lifestyle trends. The conference is focused on identifying strategies to leverage an increasingly diverse workforce toward creating consumer loyalty,” says Gabby Nobrega, Senior Vice President of Food & Consumer Products of Canada.

Trends Shaping Canada’s Foodservice Industry:

- **Demographics and Cultural: Adapting to Change:** *A shift from the time-crunched to the leisure economy and a multi-generational workforce will affect the foodservice experience from back of the house through the drive-thru.*

“For years, busy Baby Boomers have been creating a ‘time crunch economy’ where time is scarce and businesses need to recognize that fact. This has led to an industry on the verge of a huge shift, a shift to ‘the leisure economy’ – a place where boomers have more time than they have had in decades, and ascendant generations X and Y are living lives that value leisure,” says Linda Nazareth, an economist and author of “*The Leisure Economy: How Changing Economics, Demographics and Generational Attitudes will Reshape our Lives and our Industries*”.

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¹ CREST/NPD Group; NPD Group Eating Patterns in Canada Report, October 2006 release; and CRFA’s [Foodservice Facts](#)

² CRFA’s [Foodservice Facts](#), [Statistics Canada](#) and the Bureau of Labour Statistics

To survive and excel in a demand-side labour market, organizations must be able to recruit, retain and develop high performing employees from across a range of generations,” explains diversity expert and author Giselle Kovary. This is especially true for the foodservice industry where the average annual turnover rate for an hourly paid employee is 67 per cent at a quick-service restaurant or a casual/family dining restaurant. According to Kovary generational identities translate into different behaviours in the workplace. The road to creating engaged employees is dependant on an organization demonstrating transparency, responsiveness, and partnering.

- **Health and Wellness and Exotic: Excelling At Creating a Niche and Remaining Relevant:** *A variety of healthier-for-you product options continues to be a key focus for the industry, combined with emerging growth and interest in exciting and novel flavors. A study by the Advantage Group International, Inc., ranking priorities among manufacturers and operators confirms the Health and Wellness trend is the number one non-economic priority for both.*

Lifestyles are changing rapidly due to speed to market of new innovations. Foodservice outlets and the vast array of food and beverage companies that supply to them are asking themselves “how do we create a niche with food products and services that will remain constantly relevant, signature and unique?” says Stephen A. Kalil, President of the Research Chefs Association. “One of the key trends is the desire for healthy eating without sacrifice, which means manufacturers and foodservice operators must be looking to develop healthy products that are flavourful and indulgent.”

- **Customized and Personalized: the Increasing Role of Technology in Foodservice:** *Largely influenced by technology, restaurant-goers want to be in control of their experiences - from customizing menu items to fit their preferred tastes and diets, to using self-activated ordering and payment systems.*

Jim Carroll, international futurist, sees dramatic changes sweeping through the foodservice industry. “It’s being driven by hyper-innovation, rapid technological advance, increased customer expectation, rapidly evolving product trends, and increasingly fickle consumers. We’re seeing light speed changes in terms of restaurant design and layout, payment technologies, and in-store ordering technologies, coupled with ever-changing consumer trends as healthier lifestyle choices increasingly drive decisions. Restaurants need the agility and flexibility to adapt to change.”

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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 national and retailer brands sold through retail and foodservice outlets. Canada's food manufacturing sector generates approximately \$24 billion annually in GDP (13% of the Manufacturing Gross Domestic Product) and employs approximately 291,000 Canadians across the country, making it the largest employer in the Canadian manufacturing sector. On an annual basis, the industry donates an estimated \$100 million in cash donations 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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