

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ottawa-Gatineau Fair Trade Chocolate Company Wins Co-operative Award

Ottawa, September 29, 2006 – La Siembra Co-operative was honoured with the top co-operative award at the Annual General Meeting of the Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario (CCO) on September 29th, 2006. As a member of the CCO, La Siembra works closely with francophone co-operatives in Ontario and was recognized for its success, both financially and socially, within the co-op movement.

TransFair Canada's Natalie Rodrigue was on hand to present the award and described La Siembra as "an exemplary worker co-operative within the Fair Trade movement that is setting the standard for other Fair Trade companies". Founded in 1999 and based in Ottawa-Gatineau, La Siembra imports its ingredients from farmer co-operatives in South America and the Caribbean. The company has chosen to identify with its producer partners by adopting the same democratic, participatory and transparent model that they follow.

According to François Juneau, outgoing President of the CCO, "This award recognizes and pays tribute to La Siembra's contribution to the co-operative movement. La Siembra demonstrates leadership in the co-op community while boasting rapidly growing sales of their Fair Trade organic certified cocoa and sugar products. We hope that others will learn from this model and meet with similar success."

La Siembra is thrilled to win this prestigious award that has been bestowed upon co-operatives including several Desjardins credit unions and Mountain Equipment Co-op in past years. With projected sales of almost \$6 million this year and the continuous formation of new co-op partnerships (both overseas and at home), La Siembra's success confirms the many benefits of operating as a co-operative within the Fair Trade movement.

For further information visit www.lasiembra.com.

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Further press information: Please contact Shannon Sutton, Communications Manager at 613 235-6122 ext. 305 or e-mail shannon_s@lasiembra.com.

Notes for Editors

1. La Siembra Co-operative is the largest producer of Fair Trade certified organic cocoa and sugar products in Canada, as well as the pioneer of Fair Trade chocolate products in North America. La Siembra premium retail products, marketed under the brand name Cocoa Camino, include chocolate bars, sugar, hot chocolate, cocoa, chocolate chips and couverture.
2. All of La Siembra's Cocoa Camino products are certified Fair Trade by TransFair Canada (www.transfair.ca) and have undergone the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) monitoring process. Fair Trade ensures that producers receive a fair price for their products, provides premiums to improve social conditions, and prohibits the use of forced child labour.
3. The Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario (CCO) represents over 260,000 co-operative members belonging to 66 Franco-Ontarian co-operatives. The CCO's mission is to contribute to the economic and social well-being of the francophone community through the co-operative model. This involves promoting the co-operative model, providing services to members and helping to develop new co-operatives (www.cco.coop).

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