FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 22, 2009

CONTACT: Leah Craig
Public Relations Specialist
(800) 624-9458, ext. 113
lcraig@acfchefs.net

ACF Central Regional Conference Brings Chefs, Cooks and Foodservice Professionals to Schaumburg, Ill. Culinary Treats from Chicago’s Streets Trade Show, Wine Lessons with Charlie Trotter and U.S.A.’s Regional Chef of the Year™ Competition among Highlights

St. Augustine, Fla., January 22, 2009—The American Culinary Federation (ACF), Inc., is coming to Chicago for its Central Regional Conference, held just 30 miles outside the city at the Renaissance Schaumburg Hotel & Convention Center, 1551 N. Thoreau Dr., Schaumburg, Ill., 60173, Feb. 21–23. Hosted by ACF Chicago Chefs of Cuisine, Inc., the conference combines networking and educational opportunities, a trade show, cooking competitions and demonstrations from the region’s best chefs. The event is open to foodservice industry professionals.

Saturday, Feb. 21:
- ACF Student Team Regional Championship, sponsored by R.L. Schreiber, Inc.: 7 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Teams compete in a cooking competition for the chance to represent the region at ACF’s national convention in Orlando in July.
- ACF’s Regional Chef of the Year competition, sponsored by Unilever Foodsolutions: 7:45–8:30 a.m. Chicago’s Dominique Tougne, executive chef, Bistro 110, competes in a heated challenge against Schaumburg’s Jack Delby and two other competitors from Texas and St. Louis for the regional title.
- Cooking and Baking with Healthy Oils and Proteins, sponsored by QUALISOY in partnership with the Soyfoods Council: 8–9:30 a.m. Learn how to incorporate soy into menu classics without affecting the taste everyone loves.
- ACF Regional Student Chef of the Year competition, sponsored by Custom Culinary, Inc.: 8:45–10:30 a.m. Chicago’s Nicole Scherff, student, The Illinois Institute of Art–Chicago, competes against three other competitors from Michigan, Kansas and Nebraska to see whose cooking reigns supreme.
- Trade Show: Culinary Treats from Chicago’s Streets: noon–4 p.m. Attendees network and view the latest culinary products from more than 50 local, regional and national exhibitors.

Sunday, Feb. 22:
- ACF Student Team Regional Championship: 7 a.m.–2:30 p.m., continued from Saturday
- Small Plates, Big Impressions, sponsored by Le Cordon Bleu Schools North America: 8–9:30 a.m. Attendees will discover emerging techniques in the pastry field that apply to the bite-sized and small plated desserts trends.

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• ACF Regional Pastry Chef of the Year competition, sponsored by Splenda®: 8:45–10:30 a.m. The region’s best pastry chefs put the icing on the cake as they vie for the regional title.

• Presenting American Lamb: Global Flavors & Modern Techniques, sponsored by the American Lamb Board: 10–11:30 a.m. Join Certified Master Chef Edward Leonard, AAC, as he demonstrates recipes with global flavor profiles using fresh American Lamb.

• Global Flavors & Your Menu, sponsored by Unilever Foodsolutions: 10–11:30 a.m. Discover dishes from the hidden kitchens of Vietnam and Sicily during this demonstration.

• Beef: From Pasture to Plate, sponsored by the Central Region State Beef Councils: 10–11:30 a.m. A panel of producers representing the ranching, feeding and packing segments of the beef industry reveal how America’s favorite protein is produced.

• General Session, sponsored by US Foodservice: 1–5:30 p.m. Panelists representing the Central region join Central Region Vice President David Russell, CEC, AAC, for a discussion on food trends indigenous to the region, followed by a “Cooking Today” demonstration.

Monday, Feb. 23:

• Going Green to Save Green, sponsored by Enviro-Solutions and The School of Culinary Arts at Kendall College: 9–10:30 a.m. Christopher Koetke, CEC, CCE, dean, The School of Culinary Arts at Kendall College, Chicago, discusses how to marry environmental sustainability with today’s tough economic times.

• Wine Lessons with Charlie Trotter: 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Join one of America’s most respected chefs as he explores the harmonious relationship between food and wine.

• Chef Professionalism Lunch, sponsored by The Cheesecake Factory Bakery Inc., GFF, Inc./Girard’s Dressings, Michigan Sea Grant/Great Lakes Whitefish and Nestlé Professional: 12:30–1:30 p.m.

• Vice President’s Gala, sponsored by Butterball Farms, Inc, Splenda®, Sysco-Chicago and Tyson Food Service: 7–10 p.m. All award winners will be announced at this formal dinner event.

The event is open to foodservice industry professionals. A full-registration package for non-ACF members is $525. Daily badges are $75. Meal tickets can be purchased separately; tickets range from $40 to $125. Registration is available on-site. For more information, visit www.acfchefs.org or call (800) 624-9458.

Sponsors of the 2009 ACF Central Regional Conference and ACF national award sponsors are: American Lamb Board; Barber Foods; Barry Callebaut; Beef Information Center; Bon Chef, Inc.; Bunge Oils; Butterball Farms, Inc.; Canada Cutlery Inc.; Cargill Salt; Central Region State Beef Councils; The Cheesecake Factory Bakery Inc.; Clabber Girl Corporation; Consumer Packing Company; Custom Culinary, Inc.; Enviro-Solutions; Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers; GFF, Inc./Girard’s Dressings; Gordon Food Service; Kendall College School of Culinary Arts; Labriola; Le Cordon Bleu Schools North America; Mexican Hass Avocado Importers Association; Michigan Sea Grant/Great Lakes Whitefish; Mind’s Eye Resource Management, LLC; National Honey Board; The National Pork Board and America’s Pork Producers; Nestlé Professional; NewChef Fashion Inc.; Nueske’s Applewood Smoked Meats; Pearson Education; R.L. Schreiber, Inc.; Reinhart FoodService; Ronnoco Coffee Company; Rubbermaid Commercial Products; QUALISOY in partnership with the Soyfoods Council; Splenda®; Sysco-Chicago; Tyson Food Service; Unilever Foodsolutions; US Foodservice; Vita-Mix and the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

The American Culinary Federation, Inc., established in 1929, is the premier professional organization for culinarians in North America. With more than 22,000 members spanning 230 chapters nationwide, ACF is the culinary leader in offering educational resources, training, apprenticeship and accreditation. In addition, ACF operates the most comprehensive certification program for chefs in the United States. ACF is home to ACF Culinary Team USA, the official representative for the United States in major international culinary competitions. For more information, visit www.acfchefs.org.

MEDIA IS INVITED TO ATTEND. CONTACT LEAH CRAIG AT (800) 624-9458 EXT. 113 TO REGISTER FOR PRESS CREDENTIALS, OR EMAIL LCRAIG@ACFCHEFS.NET.