

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs Conference 2009 addresses the Global Politics of Food Awards the 2009 Couchiching Public Policy Award to the Honourable Lincoln Alexander**



**Toronto ON, August 4, 2009** - Food Production and Cultivation; Food Safety and Regulation, the Future of Food, and the Politics of Diet, dominate the agenda of the 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs. This year's panelists are drawn from a cross-section of academia, NGO's, Government, media, business and the law, and feature such luminaries as Galen G. Westin, Loblaw's; Rory McAlpine, Maple Leaf Foods; Debbie Field, Foodshare Inc.; Carol Off, CBC; Richard Ellis, McDonald's; Samy Watson, World Bank; and Eric Reguly of the Globe and Mail.

"Today's headlines are full of food issues: security and safety of production, the health costs of poor dietary choices, the growing number of the world's population without access to healthy and sufficient food," explains Alan Pearson, President Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs. "Among other hot topics-climate change and the environment, urbanization, corporate and government regulatory lapses-food emerges as a common thread."

The opening keynote by Don Cox, global portfolio strategist, former general manager, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and former general counsel, Canadian Federation of Agriculture, promises to set the tone for the conference with his insights on global pressures that will shape the politics of food and explain Canada's role in feeding the world.

Friday panels include *Production and Cultivation: How Can the World Produce Enough Food to Go Around?* as well as *Distribution and Distortion: How Can we Get Enough Food to Everyone Who Needs It?* which looks at global and local food distribution, trade systems and subsidies. *Food Safety and Regulation* will be addressed Saturday morning followed by a panel on *The Politics of Diet: How Can We Strike the Right Balance?* Sunday morning's panel deals with *The Future of Food: What Will our Children Eat?*, and concludes with a closing Keynote by CBC's Carol Off, co-host of CBC Radio's *As It Happens* and author of *Bitter Chocolate: Investigating the Dark Side of the World's Most Seductive Sweet*.

"The panel discussions and topics are thoughtful and compelling and are designed to challenge our notions about food both now and into the future. All aspects of food supply from production and processing through distribution to consumption, life and death, bounty and famine—all of these issues and more will be addressed over the conference's four days." concludes Pearson.

### **2009 Couchiching Public Policy Award**

The Honourable Lincoln Alexander has been awarded the 2009 Couchiching Public Policy Award for his lifelong work towards the creation of a socially just and diverse society. This award is presented annually to a nationally recognized Canadian who has demonstrated a particular kind of leadership; someone who has made an impact in public policy for Canada or for a community, often in the face of public opposition. The 2009 Couchiching Public Policy Award will be presented to the Honourable Lincoln Alexander on Sunday, August 9, 2009 prior to the conference's closing keynote.

The Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs is Canada's oldest public affairs forum and is a crucible of provocative questions, creative ideas and divergent discussions that are the product of the collective contributions of all who attend. For more information about the conference please visit <http://www.couch.ca>.

The conference is open to all to attend. Simply register online at: [www.couch.ca/conference](http://www.couch.ca/conference) or call the Couchiching Office at 416.494.1440, ext 229.

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### **For more information or to speak to a conference panelist, please contact:**

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