

# Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## La Siembra Wins Worldwide Award for Democracy in the Workplace

April 24, 2008 – Ottawa-Gatineau’s La Siembra Co-operative is thrilled to announce that it is one of four Canadian companies to win WorldBlu’s “Worldwide Award for the Most Democratic Workplaces”.

WorldBlu, Inc., based in Atlanta, Georgia, specializes in organizational democracy and awards companies such as La Siembra a spot on the List of Most Democratic Workplaces after a rigorous survey process. WorldBlu developed the survey tool based on a decade of research into what makes a world-class democratic organization.

“The WorldBlu List seeks to shine a spotlight on the companies pioneering the next generation of business,” says WorldBlu Founder and CEO, Traci Fenton. “The organizations that practise democracy in the workplace are creating the businesses of the future and will ultimately build a more sustainable and democratic world.”

La Siembra Co-operative is the largest producer of Fair Trade Certified organic cocoa and sugar products in Canada and a pioneer of Fair Trade chocolate and sugar products in North America. The company is owned by its workers, who invest in the co-op financially and participate in its democratic governance. Worker-owners (currently 83% of total employees) each have a vote in key organizational decisions, including the election of Directors to the Board, which is composed uniquely of worker-owners. La Siembra is led by a top management team of two Co-Executive Directors, ensuring consensus-building at all levels of the organization, and worker-owners invest 5% of their modest gross salaries in the co-operative every pay period.

According to La Siembra’s Co- Executive Director Martin Van Den Borre, “We are a mission-based Fair Trade business. We believe in fair, democratic employment for all – both our worker-owners at La Siembra and the producer co-operatives we source our ingredients from. To this end, we work in close partnership with cocoa and sugar farmers in South America, Central America and the Caribbean and employ the same democratic, participatory and transparent model as our producer partners overseas.”

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### Notes for Editors

1. All of La Siembra’s Cocoa Camino products are certified Fair Trade by TransFair Canada and have undergone the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) monitoring process. The Fair Trade logo ensures the payment of guaranteed fair prices as well as the payment of Fair Trade premiums that are used to improve social conditions and organizational capacity building in producer communities, support for democratic participation in farmer-owned co-operatives, support for sustainable production methods and no forced or child labour used in production.
2. Cocoa Camino is a line of premium Fair Trade Certified and certified organic chocolate, cocoa and sugar products produced by La Siembra Co-operative. These products include chocolate bars, sugar, hot chocolate, cocoa, chocolate chips, syrup and couverture. Cocoa Camino products are available in natural health food stores, pharmacies and grocery stores across Canada including, but not limited to, Choices, Capers, Planet Organic, Loblaws, Provigo, A&P/Dominion, Shoppers Drug Mart, Thrifty’s, Overwaitea, IGA, Metro and Wholefoods.
3. La Siembra’s Seven Co-operative Guiding Principles are: Fair Trade, healthy communities, inter co-operation, open membership, democratic control, economic participation and independence. Further detail is available at [www.lasiembra.coop](http://www.lasiembra.coop).
4. Founded in 2003, WorldBlu works with CEOs and executive teams to design, develop, and lead the most successful democratic companies in the world. For more information, visit the WorldBlu website at [www.worldblu.com](http://www.worldblu.com).

Creators of **Cocoa Camino**<sup>®</sup>  
Fair Trade & Organic Products

[www.cocoacamino.com](http://www.cocoacamino.com)

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et biologiques **Cocoa Camino**<sup>™</sup>