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Green Seal Steps Up to Green Los Angeles Businesses

—Partners with LA Green Business Certification Program—

Los Angeles, CA — December 11, 2009 — On Friday, the Los Angeles City Council approved moving forward with the Los Angeles Green Business Certification Program.

The City of Los Angeles' initiative, to be administered by the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), will provide information on how to identify a green business and how businesses can adopt sustainable practices. One of the aims is to enable consumers to support firms that strive to protect the environment.

The program was announced at a news conference at Ciudad restaurant. Green Seal, Inc., the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, Green Globe and dineLA, a part of LA INC, The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau will join the LACCD in its work on this effort.

Hosting the event were Ciudad Chef/Owners Mary Sue Milliken and Susan Feniger (Food Network's "Too Hot Tamales") who have always been champions of the environment and in recent years have stepped up their efforts with a range of environmentally-friendly policies at their restaurants.

The LA Environmental Affairs Department reports that many businesses in Los Angeles have already expressed their enthusiasm for green certification—over seventy businesses have taken the "Green Pledge" <http://www.environmentla.org/cgbp/pledge.html> because being green is good for the earth and good for business' bottom line.

Green Seal, a partner in the Los Angeles Green Business Certification Program, will use its restaurant standard (GS-46) to certify restaurants, develop checklist criteria for retail-offices and auto body shops, and coordinate with the LACCD on the Los Angeles green lodging program (run by Green Seal and LA Inc. in cooperation with the City).

Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Restaurants and Foodservices was a result of extensive life-cycle research in all areas of a restaurant's environmental impacts, with input from over one hundred stakeholders. The standard involved comprehensive evaluation of all major sources of environmental impacts, including food selection, energy, water use, and waste.

The Environmental Standard for Lodging Properties (GS-33) requires hotels to demonstrate sustainable business practices in the areas of waste minimization and reduction, recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation, indoor air quality and environmentally sensitive purchasing.

"Green Seal has broad consumer and industry recognition", said Dr. Arthur Weissman, Green Seal's President and CEO. "For 20 years our standards and certification have helped green the lodging industry, a range of product industries and now restaurants/foodservices."

On November 19, The Radisson Los Angeles Airport Hotel achieved Green Seal certification, giving the Radisson LAX the distinction of being the first hotel within the Radisson brand to achieve Green Seal certification. On August 28, the City recognized LA's largest hotel — Westin Bonaventure — as the first hotel to receive Green Seal certification. The Bonaventure expects to save \$225,000 in the first year by going green.

Councilman Richard Alarcón has spearheaded the City's effort to create the Green Business Certification Program since March 2007.

"In today's economy, businesses are looking at ways to save money and draw in more business, and the Green Business Certification Program will do just that," Alarcón said. "Today's vote by the City Council means that after years of a collaborative effort, we will have a new incentive program for businesses that are working to reduce their impact on our environment."

Green Seal, a non-profit based in Washington D.C., has been identifying consumer and institutional products and services that protect the environment and human health since 1989. Green Seal has certified more than 3,600 products and services in over 286 categories. The independent organization focuses on certification to its environmental leadership standards and also works with cities, universities and government agencies to help make them more sustainable. For more information, visit www.GreenSeal.org

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