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**\*\* POSITION STATEMENT \*\***

**Windy City Chefs Decry Chicago Ban on Foie Gras**

CHICAGO, May 4, 2006 – The Windy City Professional Culinaricians chapter of the American Culinary Federation (ACF) issued a statement opposing the ban of sales of foie gras in Chicago, passed April 26 by the City Council.

“This latest move by the city of Chicago belittles diners by telling them they’re not intelligent enough to make their own decisions,” said Michael Garbin, CEC, AAC, president of the chefs association and executive chef of the 127-year-old Union League Club of Chicago. “As with any free-market enterprise, the dining-out public has the power to make its opinion known to restaurants by voting with its wallet. Chicago’s City Council has effectively trampled on one’s capability to decide where to dine by eliminating a choice. Chicago is the greatest restaurant city in the Midwest, and this is a tremendous letdown to residents and visitors who expect sophistication and great food.”

Unlike Chicago’s recent smoking-ban legislation, Garbin said, “The ban on foie gras is the result of uninformed decision-makers listening to a select few who don’t have all the facts at hand. The fact that consumption of this delicacy is a personal issue for every diner was irresponsibly attacked by city aldermen with the fervor of a public-health issue.”

Garbin, who said he speaks for his entire association of 235 professional chefs, cooks and culinary- and baking-arts students who work or train in the city and outlying suburbs, added that he agrees with comments by Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley that the city has far more pressing concerns on its plate than the outlawing of liver from goose and duck. “The City Council appears to be focused on a trivial issue of what is appropriate for the dining public when safety in our communities, education for our children, and jobs and revenues for our city are being ignored,” Garbin said.

John Draz, CEC, CCE, vice president of Windy City Professional Culinarians and research chef for Ed Miniat, Inc., a meat processor in Homewood, Ill., echoed Garbin by pointing out the ban on foie gras coincided with the release of data indicating Chicago's convention business is heading south and west to other metropolitan cities.

Draz also predicted more hassles on the horizon for Chicago's chefs, saying the foie-gras ban sets precedent that could lead to prohibition of other foods. "Will we soon see a ban on beef, veal or other poultry because animal-rights activists consider industrial livestock practices not to their liking? Recent initiatives such as Take a Pass on Chilean Sea Bass from the National Environmental Trust and Chefs Collaborative's moratorium on swordfish are good examples of how the market and industry can be effective in changing dining habits without legislation."

Windy City Professional Culinarians, a chapter of the American Culinary Federation, upholds the highest standards of cooking in greater Chicago and promotes the culinary profession locally through education and certification and by fostering a fraternal bond of respect and integrity. For more information, visit [www.acfwindycitychefs.org](http://www.acfwindycitychefs.org).

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