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Some Like It Hot! Two of Three Finalists in Papa John's Specialty Pizza Challenge Feature Spicy Toppings, Third is Rendition of Chicken Cordon Bleu

"The Workin' Fire," "The Big Bonanza," and "Cheesy Chicken Cordon Bleu" receive top marks from judges including Food Network's Ted Allen, Rich Eisen of NFL Network
Pizzas to be featured at www.papajohns.com beginning Aug. 2

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Jun 29, 2010 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Food Network star Ted Allen and Rich Eisen of the NFL Network participated in the ultimate taste test earlier today, helping narrow down a field of more than 12,000 Facebook entries in the Papa John's Specialty Pizza Challenge to just three lucky finalists. The announcement was broadcast live on Papa John's (NASDAQ: PZZA) Facebook page.

The result? Two spicy recipes featuring jalapeno peppers and one with a new take on a traditional dish. "The Big Bonanza" by Blair Dial of Springfield, Ill., "The Cheesy Chicken Cordon Bleu" from Barbara Hyman of Los Angeles, Calif., and "The Workin' Fire" from Kendra Chapman of Ball Ground, Ga., received the highest marks based on appearance, aroma, taste and overall appeal, as chosen by Papa John's celebrity judging panel.

The three pizzas will be featured on the Papa John's menu August 2 - 29 and their creators will each receive a \$1,000 marketing budget to help promote their pizza. The highest-selling pizza will be declared the winner - and its creator will receive a "slice" of the sales (up to \$10,000), free Papa John's pizza for *life*, and the opportunity to appear in a "Papa's In The House" TV commercial.

"Customers responded to this challenge by combining ingredients that normally have a very niche audience and making a case for them in the mainstream," said Allen, host of *Chopped* on the Food Network. "Finding a balance in the ingredients was key to creating a winning recipe, as well as not overloading the pizza with too many toppings."

"I was put on this Earth to eat pizza," said Eisen, host of "NFL Total Access" on NFL Network, "I took my role as the representative of football fans everywhere seriously when assessing each slice, and I think 'The Big Bonanza' about sums up the whole experience. The pizzas are terrific."

Though each variety of Papa John's sauce (Original, Spinach Alfredo, and Barbeque) is represented in the finalists' recipes, only 19 percent of the entries used Spinach Alfredo sauce while 14 percent used Barbeque. Of the more than 12,000 entries received, jalapenos and pineapple were two of the most popular toppings, featured on 20 percent and 18 percent of the submissions, respectively. All of the finalists feature Papa John's original hand-tossed fresh dough crust, though 27 percent of the overall submissions were built on thin crust.

"Papa's Specialty Challenge was the Facebook equivalent of a 12,000-person focus group, giving our team a direct pipeline to our customers' preferences," said Andrew Varga, Papa John's Chief Marketing Officer. "We have just begun digging through the data to determine trends that may impact our menu offerings in the future, perhaps even inspiring us to add new toppings to the mix."

More about the three finalists:

- **The Big Bonanza**

Created by: Blair Dial of Springfield, Ill.

Crust/Sauce: Original Crust with Barbeque Sauce

Ingredients: Bacon, Beef, Ham, Jalapeno Peppers, Onions, Roma Tomatoes

Inspiration: A pizza that can tackle the Wild West and make you "howl at the moon"

- **Cheesy Chicken Cordon Bleu**

Created by: Barbara Hyman of Los Angeles, Calif.

Crust/Sauce: Original Crust with Spinach Alfredo Sauce

Ingredients: Extra Cheese, Three Cheese Blend, Grilled Chicken, Ham, Onions

Inspiration: A Papa John's pizza twist on a mother and daughter's cherished chicken cordon bleu recipe

- **The Workin' Fire**

Created by: Kendra Chapman of Ball Ground, Ga.

Crust/Sauce: Original Crust with Traditional Sauce

Ingredients: Parmesan/Romano Cheese, Jalapeno Peppers, Pepperoni, Spicy Italian Sausage

Inspiration: Created by a firefighter to be the "fire tetrahedron" of pizzas

For more information about the challenge, visit www.facebook.com/papajohns and watch live footage from the event. Also, additional descriptions about each entry can be found on the company's Facebook discussion board.

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Papa John's International, Inc. (NASDAQ: PZZA) is the world's third largest pizza company. For 10 of the past 11 years, consumers have rated Papa John's No. 1 in customer satisfaction among all national pizza chains in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). Papa John's also was honored by Restaurants & Institutions Magazine (R&I) with the 2009 Gold Award for Consumers' Choice in Chains in the pizza segment. Papa John's International, Inc. (NASDAQ: PZZA), is the Official Pizza Sponsor of the NFL and Super Bowl XLV, XLVI and XLVII. For more information about the company or to order pizza online, visit Papa John's at www.papajohns.com.

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