



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Convention Center Food Service Contract

Contact: City Manager Tony O'Rourke – 575-6040

Yakima Valley V&C Bureau President & CEO John Cooper – 575-3010

Communications & Public Affairs Dir. Randy Beehler – 901-1142

Release Date: Friday, April 12th, 2013

International Company Chosen to Provide Convention Center Food

Centerplate, one of the largest hospitality companies in the world, will become the exclusive food service provider for the Yakima Convention Center on May 1st. Centerplate serves more than 115 million guests each year in more than 300 venues throughout North America and the United Kingdom. Centerplate's current client list includes convention centers in Dallas, Miami, and San Diego, major entertainment venues like the Spokane Arena, the Tacoma Dome, and the New Orleans Arena, and pro sports franchises such as the Denver Broncos (NFL), Seattle Mariners (MLB), and Portland Timbers (MLS).

"We're excited about the experience and quality that Centerplate brings to the Yakima Convention Center," said Yakima City Manager Tony O'Rourke. "Centerplate clearly has a proven track record for outstanding customer service that our Convention Center guests will enjoy. We are looking forward to a long and productive relationship," said O'Rourke.

The Yakima Convention Center is owned by the City of Yakima and is operated by the Yakima Valley Visitors & Convention Bureau.

Centerplate was selected by a panel made up of community members and City and V&C Bureau representatives as part of a competitive process. The City solicited proposals for catering services earlier this year after Red Lion Hotels Corporation, which had provided food services to the Convention Center for many years through a company it owned (M&M Catering), elected to discontinue its contract with the City.

Centerplate will offer several new selections that include a Northwest take on fresh, local ingredients sourced from neighboring suppliers have been created for the Convention Center's menu by renowned Executive Chef Matthew Lecours, who has served as Microsoft's District Chef and as Centerplate's Executive Sous Chef at Safeco Field. Yakima Valley wines will also be prominently featured on the Convention Center's menu.

"We know the Yakima Convention Center is a valuable asset to the community," said Centerplate Regional Vice President Adrian Dishington. "Centerplate's goal is to provide each guest with a one-of-a-kind authentic experience while also providing local businesses with opportunities to partner with us. By working hand in hand with meeting planners and event specialists, we'll deliver world class hospitality for each and every guest at the Convention Center," said Dishington.

Centerplate has been the hospitality service provider for numerous major events including thirty U.S. Presidential inaugural balls, thirteen Super Bowls, twenty one World Series, and the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The company was recently named by Nation's Restaurant News as the fastest growing restaurant/hospitality groups in the United States.

The Yakima Convention Center is the premiere meeting facility in Central Washington and last year served more than 125,000 guests and generated nearly \$9 million in economic activity.

- end