



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Bill Savier
Maines Paper & Food Service, Inc.
Bill.Savier@Maines.net
(303) 820-5652

NEWS RELEASE

Maines Paper & Food Service, Inc. Receives William B. Darden 2009 Distribution Center of the Year Award

November 16, 2009 Conklin, NY – Maines' distribution center located in Conklin, New York, is the recipient of the William B. Darden 2009 Distribution Center of the Year Award. Named for the company's late founder, the William B. Darden awards recognize a select number of suppliers and one distribution center that "go above and beyond" to contribute to the success of the company. Selected by Darden's purchasing and total quality departments and restaurant managers, recipients are recognized and presented the award at a dinner and awards ceremony.

"Having won the award in 2005 and 2007, Maines is very proud to receive this prestigious award again in 2009 for our outstanding service levels," said General Manager Jeff Warren. "Receiving the award means a great deal to our performance-driven associates at the distribution center; it means we're meeting and exceeding our customers' high service level expectations. Our Maines' Chicago distribution center won this award in 2006, so we have a serious competition between the two distribution centers to see who will win the award in 2010."

"Congratulations to our award-winning associates," added President & CEO Chris Mellon. "Over the years, our relationship with Darden Restaurants has evolved from a foodservice distribution agreement into a collaborative partnership with a distribution model achieving both Darden and Maines' business goals and objectives. Proof of this success includes Maines' associates attaining the highest restaurant satisfaction survey scores in the history of Darden Restaurants. From our Darden Direct distribution center, we deliver fresh product and exceptional service to 175 Darden restaurants, including Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze, and Seasons 52. Our operational excellence through innovation and execution is achieving real results for our customers and for Maines this year. We are proud of this award and proud to be associated with a brand that continues to grow in a challenging economy."

About Maines Paper & Food Service, Inc.

Maines Paper & Food Service, Inc., is one of the largest independent foodservice distributors in the country. Maines has a 90-year history of helping restaurant owners and managers overcome their foodservice distribution challenges and help them quickly adapt to changing marketplace conditions. Our customized distribution process improvements result in true supply chain efficiencies, lowering costs and improving profitability for the supply chain participant. With annual revenue approaching \$3 billion, Maines is well-positioned to better serve, retain, and grow its customer base. Our foodservice

distribution services are provided by more than 1,900 highly-motivated associates serving customers from nine distribution centers serving 33 states.

For more information about Maines Paper & Food Service, Inc., please visit www.maines.net.

About Darden Restaurants, Inc. (NYSE: DRI)

Darden Restaurants is the world's largest full-service restaurant company and owns and operates more than 1,700 restaurants that generate \$7 billion in annual sales. Headquartered in Orlando, Florida, and employing 180,000 people, Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. Our restaurant brands – Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze and Seasons 52, reflect the rich diversity of those who dine with us. Our brands are built on deep insights into what our guests want. For more information, please visit www.darden.com