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State Media Release

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2008 AND 2009 CIF STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP BOWL GAMES PRESENTED BY FARMERS TO REMAIN AT THE HOME DEPOT CENTER

ALAMEDA – The Home Depot Center in Carson will remain as the host site for the 2008 and 2009 CIF State Football Championship Bowl Games presented by Farmers, CIF Executive Director Marie M. Ishida announced Wednesday.

“CIF has entered into a partnership with Home Depot Center and looks forward to having a home for our state football championships that not only offers a facility to continue producing an event that includes more than a football game, but also provide a home for our ancillary events which currently include a cheerleading competition and coaches clinic,” said Ishida.

All five games will be played over two-days, Friday-Saturday, December 19-20, 2008. Selection of this year’s participating teams will be made Sunday, December 14, 2008.

In addition, the CIF Federated Council approved in January 2008, to increase the championships from three divisions to five, beginning in December 2008, thus increasing to 10 the number of teams that will compete for a state football championship. The exact format of the five games is likely to be determined in mid-May, though it has been recommended that one contest feature an “Open Division” pitting the top team from Northern California against the top team from Southern California, as selected by the Section Commissioners, regardless of school enrollment.

A team still must be a CIF Section champion to be eligible for selection to the state football championship. Last year, there were a total 47 CIF Section champions - 23 from Northern California and 24 from Southern California.

Several of the factors that weighed into CIF's decision to return to The Home Depot Center included the size of the venue, its location, the facility offerings and venue management's ability to make a return financially feasible.

"The Home Depot Center is thrilled to have the CIF State Football Championship Bowl Games presented by Farmers return to our facility for at least two more years," said The Home Depot Center General Manager Rod O'Connor. "We are grateful for our partnership with the California Interscholastic Federation, and look forward to hosting the state's best high school football teams for the third straight year in December."

The Home Depot Center features an all-grass playing surface and seats 27,000. Its Soccer Stadium serves as the home of Major League Soccer's Los Angeles Galaxy and Chivas USA, and its facilities also include a Tennis Stadium, the ADT Events Center which houses an indoor velodrome, and a track and field facility which also serves as the home of Major League Lacrosse's Los Angeles Riptide. The 125-acre facility is on the campus of California State University, Dominguez Hills in Carson.

The UCA/Macy's California State Cheerleading Championships and a Coaches Clinic sponsored by NIKE will continue as ancillary events to the state football championships.

The concept of the state football championship bowl games was approved by the CIF Federated Council as a two-year pilot in May 2005. The pilot proposal called for three games to be played in December 2006 and 2007. Those contests took place at The Home Depot Center.

"The Home Depot Center worked with us to bring CIF back to their facility. Their willingness to provide a financial deal and other incentives indicated their strong desire for our football championships to return," added Ishida. "Even though several other venues across the state expressed interest in hosting these games, The Home Depot Center offered an agreement that we could not refuse."

The CIF sent out RFPs (request for proposals) from venues and cities throughout the state and received a total of seven bids. Other bids received were from: Bakersfield College's Memorial Stadium, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's Alex G. Spanos Stadium, Los Angeles Coliseum, San Jose State University's Spartan Stadium, Stanford Stadium and UC Davis' Aggie Stadium.

The CIF previously offered state football championships early in the 20th Century, between the years of 1919-1928. The event was discontinued at that time due to financial constraints.