



Announcement of FY2001 Q2 Estimates

February 8, 2001

Dayville, Connecticut – February 8, 2001 -- United Natural Foods, Inc. (Nasdaq: UNFI) today announced preliminary results for the second quarter of fiscal 2001, ending January 31, 2001, as well as guidance for the second half of the year.

Net sales for fiscal year 2001's second quarter are expected to be approximately \$244 million, a 5.5% increase over the \$231.4 million recorded in the second quarter a year ago. Net income for the current quarter is projected to range between \$0.14 - \$0.15 per diluted share, compared to a net loss of \$(0.07) per diluted share for the fiscal 2000 second quarter, excluding the impact of certain non-recurring and special charges.

The Company stated that its second quarter operating results were adversely impacted by a number of factors including the closure of several internet-based companies and several Wild Oats stores that generated sales in the prior year. Additionally, the Company's year-over-year top-line growth comparisons were impacted by increased sales volume in the prior year resulting from Year 2000 concerns. The Company indicated that it experienced negative sales growth in December 2000 primarily due to their customers placing more orders than normal in the period preceding January 1, 2000, to respond to anticipated increased consumer purchases as well to guard against potential supply-chain difficulties related to Year 2000 issues.

Chief Executive Officer Michael Funk said, "We continue to closely monitor both the impact of the economy on our business and on the operations of our customers in major markets. While I strongly believe that today's announcement is not a reflection of our long-term strength in our marketplace the near-term impact of the situation cannot be ignored. As we look ahead to the remainder of 2001, based on preliminary figures, we anticipate our year-over-year revenue growth rates to range from 7% - 11% for our third and fourth 2001 fiscal quarters. Additionally, while we maintain our focus on stringently managing expenses, the Company continues to be negatively impacted by a number of factors including higher than anticipated transportation and energy costs and labor productivity. Accordingly, we are projecting earnings per share to be \$0.20 - \$0.23 for our fiscal third quarter and \$0.22 - \$0.25 for our fiscal fourth quarter."

United Natural Foods intends to report its financial results for the second quarter and six-months ended January 31, 2001 before the market opens on Tuesday, March 6, 2001. Management will conduct a conference call and audio webcast at 11:00 a.m. ET on March 6, 2001 to review the Company's quarterly results, market trends and future outlook. The conference call dial-in number is 703-871-3022. The audio webcast will be available, on a listen only basis, via the Internet at www.streetevents.com. Please allow extra time to the webcast to visit the site and download any software required to listen to the Internet broadcast. The online archive of the webcast will be available for 30 days.

About United Natural Foods

United Natural Foods, Inc. distributes over 30,000 products to more than 7,000 customers in 50 states. The Company serves a wide variety of retail formats including conventional supermarket chains, natural product superstores and independent retail operators.

For more information on United Natural Foods, Inc., via fax at no charge, please dial 1-800-PRO-INFO and enter the Company's ticker symbol, UNFI. Or, visit the Company's web-site at www.unfi.com.

AT THE COMPANY: AT THE FINANCIAL RELATIONS BOARD:

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"Safe Harbor" Statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995: Statements in this press release regarding United Natural's business which are not historical facts are "forward-looking statements" that involve risks and uncertainties. For a discussion of such risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results to differ from those contained in the forward-looking statements, including but not limited to general business conditions, the impact of competition and our dependence on principal customers, see "Risk Factors" in the Company's annual report on Form 10-Q filed with the Commission on December 15, 2000, and its other filings under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Any forward-looking statements are made pursuant to the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and, as such, speak only as of the date made. United Natural is not undertaking to update any information in the foregoing reports until the effective date of its future reports required by applicable laws.