



Announcement of Eastern Region President

January 31, 2000

Dayville, Connecticut – January 31, 2000. United Natural Foods, Inc. (Nasdaq: UNFI) today announced the appointment of Steve Townsend, 46, to the position of President of the Company's Eastern Region. Mr. Townsend replaces Frank Carpenito, 37, who recently resigned to pursue other opportunities. Mr. Carpenito will remain as a consultant to the Company for an indefinite period, however.

Mr. Townsend has devoted a major portion of his career to United Natural Foods, serving as the Company's Chief Financial Officer since its inception in 1996 to 1997. Prior to that, from 1983 to 1995, Mr. Townsend served in a variety of executive operational, financial and administrative positions with Cornucopia Natural Foods, the Company's predecessor. Since December 1999, Steve has provided information technology executive consulting services to the Company. As part of his role as President of the Eastern Region, Mr. Townsend plans to continue his involvement with the Company's information technology group.

Commenting on the appointment, Chief Executive Officer Michael Funk said, "We are delighted to welcome Steve back into the United Natural Foods family on a full-time basis. His deep operational knowledge of the Eastern Region, which has been undergoing a consolidation and repositioning, as well as his management and financial expertise will be a tremendous asset in helping us continue to restore the Eastern Region to normal operations."

United Natural Foods, Inc. distributes over 26,000 products to more than 6,500 customers in 47 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.

AT THE COMPANY: AT THE FINANCIAL RELATIONS BOARD:

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This press release contains forward-looking statements relating to the Company's results of operations, and such statements involve a number of risks and uncertainties. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. Additional information concerning factors that could cause actual results to materially differ from those in the forward-looking statements is contained in the Company's SEC filings, including its periodic reports filed under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (copies of which are available upon request from the Company's investor relations department).