



United Natural Foods Completes Acquisition Of Blooming Prairie Cooperative

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Acquisition Enhances United Natural Foods Presence & Customer Base in The Midwest

DAYVILLE, Conn., Oct 15, 2002 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- United Natural Foods, Inc. (Nasdaq: UNFI) today announced it has completed the acquisition of privately held Blooming Prairie Cooperative, the largest volume distributor of natural foods in the Midwest region of the U.S. Blooming Prairie, headquartered in Iowa City, IA and in business since 1974, had approximately \$130 million in sales for the latest twelve months. The purchase price was approximately \$31 million, including approximately \$15 million of goodwill, subject to the final purchase price allocation.

Blooming Prairie Cooperative carries and distributes approximately 15,000 products to more than 2,700 customers primarily in the Midwest. Blooming Prairie serves a wide variety of retail formats including conventional supermarket chains, natural product superstores, independent retail operators, cooperatives and buying clubs.

Michael Funk, United Natural Foods Chief Executive Officer, said, "With the addition of Blooming Prairie we have achieved our stated goal of broadening our presence and increasing our penetration in the fast growing Midwest market. This is a synergistic acquisition as it provides us with an immediate physical base of two strategically located distribution facilities and direct access to new customers. By utilizing the combined strengths and reach of the two companies we now have the capabilities to expand and broaden our market share in this region cost effectively."

Jesse Singerman, President and CEO of Blooming Prairie, commented, "We are proud of Blooming Prairie's 28 years of success in distributing organic and natural products throughout the Midwest, and welcome this opportunity to continue as part of a successful national company. We are very excited about joining forces with United Natural Foods and the opportunities the transaction brings to both franchises. With its proven leadership in the industry, we will benefit immediately from United Natural Foods broad set of supplier relationships and extensive national presence." Blooming Prairie will continue to operate under current management as a subsidiary of United Natural Foods. Ms. Singerman will continue as President of Blooming Prairie.

The Company also stated it expects the transaction to be neutral to slightly accretive in the first full year following the acquisition, and accretive thereafter.

About United Natural Foods

United Natural Foods, Inc. carries and distributes over 30,000 products to more than 8,500 customers nationwide. 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., visit the Company's web site at www.unfi.com.

"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 quarterly report on Form 10-Q filed with the Commission on June 13, 2002, 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 Foods, Inc. is not undertaking to update any information in the foregoing reports until the effective date of its future reports required by applicable laws.

SOURCE United Natural Foods, Inc.

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