United Natural Foods Strengthens Management Team

October 10, 2002

Announces Executive Appointment and Promotion

DAYVILLE, Conn., Oct. 10 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- United Natural Foods, Inc. (Nasdaq: UNFI), a leading national distributor of natural foods and related products, today announced the appointment of Rick Antonelli to the position of President of the Eastern Region and the promotion of Dan Atwood to the newly created position of Senior Vice President.

Mr. Antonelli served as Director of Sales for United Natural Foods, and a predecessor company, from 1982 through July 2001 and most recently was president of privately held Fairfield Farm Kitchens. He assumes the role of President of the Eastern Region of United Natural Foods from Steven Townsend, who will continue to serve as President of United Natural Foods. Mr. Antonelli will have direct responsibility for leading the growth, profitability and customer support of the Company's Eastern Region. This will provide Mr. Townsend with additional time to focus on company-wide business strategies including the integration of acquired companies, major customer and key supplier initiatives and other national programs.

Mr. Atwood previously was National Vice President of Marketing for United Natural Foods where he had direct responsibility for developing and implementing innovative programs designed to provide opportunities for suppliers to increase sales and improve margins. Mr. Atwood, as Senior Vice President, will continue to focus on these customer and supplier initiatives. He has been with the Company since 1982.

Both appointments were made during a recent meeting of the Board of Directors.

Michael Funk, Chief Executive Officer of United Natural Foods, commented, "We continue to build a team of inside and outside talent resources to enable us to take advantage of growth opportunities in the rapidly growing natural products market. Accordingly, with a strong operational background and extensive knowledge of United Natural Foods and the natural products industry, Rick Antonelli is uniquely qualified to assume the position of President of the Eastern Region. As director of sales for the Company for 17 years, Rick played an important role in our organization's growth and development. We believe this is a natural transition that strengthens our Company as well as our opportunities for growth."

Mr. Funk added, "We are also pleased to announce that Dan Atwood has been promoted to Senior Vice President. Dan has served United Natural Foods for over 20 years with distinction as he has progressed through a variety of purchasing, sales and marketing positions with increasing responsibility. Most recently, he played a key role in the successful implementation of our national marketing program, which is designed to provide 'Win-Win' programs and innovative offerings to Company suppliers and customers. In addition, Dan has led the effort to develop and promote UNFI's National Brands as well as leading the effort to receive Organic Certification for all of our distribution facilities."

Background information

Mr. Antonelli, age 45, has committed a majority of his professional career to United Natural Foods, serving as the Director of Sales since its inception in 1996 through 2001. From 1985 through 1996, Mr. Antonelli served as Director of Sales for Cornucopia Natural Foods, the Company's predecessor. From 1982 through 1985, Mr. Antonelli was director of operations for Harvest Provision, a division of Bread and Circus that was acquired by Cornucopia Natural Foods in 1985. Mr. Antonelli rejoins United Natural Foods from Fairfield Farm Kitchens, a Massachusetts-based custom-food manufacturer, where he held the position of president from 2001 to 2002. At Fairfield Farm Kitchens, Mr. Antonelli's responsibilities included oversight of a 250,000 square foot manufacturing facility, the acquisition and integration of an integrated food company and the development and launch of three new organic product lines.

Mr. Atwood, age 44, has been with United Natural Foods for 20 years. He has served as Secretary since January 1998 and was United Natural Foods National Vice President of Marketing since April 2001. He was President of the Company's Natural Retail Group and Vice President of United Natural Foods from August 1995 to April 2001. Mr. Atwood was Vice President - Marketing of Cornucopia, the Company's predecessor from January 1984 to August 1995 and Director of Operations of Cornucopia from 1982 to 1983. From 1979 to 1982, Mr. Atwood was a store manager at Bread & Circus Supermarkets, a super natural chain. Mr. Atwood served on the Company's and its predecessor's Board of Directors from August 1988 to December 1997.

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 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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