



United Natural Foods Announces LEED(R) Gold Certification for Its Ridgefield, WA Distribution Facility

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Ridgefield Utilizes 100% Renewable Energy and Becomes Largest Refrigerated Distribution Center to Achieve Gold Certification by USGBC

DAYVILLE, Conn., Feb. 18 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- United Natural Foods, Inc. (Nasdaq: UNFI) ("UNFI" or the "Company") today announced that its 259,729 square foot Ridgefield, Washington distribution center has been awarded LEED(R) (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council ("USGBC"). Ridgefield, which serves as a regional distribution hub for customers in Portland, Oregon and other Northwest markets, features 54,000 square feet of cold storage making it the first refrigerated distribution center to achieve Gold certification by the USGBC.

"We have successfully begun implementing a number of environmental construction initiatives over the past few years and the prestigious LEED(R) Gold certification for environmentally responsible design of our Ridgefield facility is a significant milestone for our organization and all of our Associates," commented Steve Spinner, UNFI's President and Chief Executive Officer. "We are also proud to be a company committed to improving shareholder return while demonstrating a long term dedication to sustainability and our environment."

LEED(R) is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings and is a voluntary third party rating system administered by the USGBC. The council recognizes environmental sustainability in different categories, such as building materials, energy efficiency, water savings and indoor environmental quality.

"UNFI is to be commended for achieving LEED(R) Gold certification. This facility is one that both the community and its customers can be proud of," said Rick Fedrizzi, President, CEO, Founding Chair, U.S. Green Building Council. "UNFI's Ridgefield facility will be a showcase for high-performance, energy-efficient distribution center, and an inspiration for others."

Environmentally Sustainable Building Practices

UNFI began exploring LEED(R) certification at its Ridgefield facility prior to construction and created a design based on Green Building best practices. Some of the environmentally focused initiatives used during development include building materials that were composed of a minimum 30% recycled content, low or zero-VOC emitting paint materials and carpets made from 100% recyclable materials. Furthermore, all wood products were selected from FSC ("Forest Stewardship Council") suppliers and 95% of construction waste was diverted from local landfills.

The Company partnered with ARCO Design/Build of Atlanta, GA to provide sustainable design and site planning for the distribution center and collaborated with leading LEED(R) consultant ReVision Architecture, who specializes in sustainable design and architecture.

"UNFI has a long-standing commitment to environmentally sustainable practices and should be applauded for having the first, and largest, Cold Storage distribution center certified LEED(R) NC Gold," commented Jake M. Stefan, Division Manager at ARCO Design/Build. "It has been a pleasure to partner with UNFI over the last six years and assisting with the implementation of economical, Green best practices within their distribution network."

Ridgefield Utilizes 100% Renewable Energy

Commencing operations in December 2007, the Ridgefield facility utilizes high-performance environmentally-friendly systems that reduce energy use by 30% when compared to a typical building of the same size. The facility is powered by 100% renewable energy, which avoids four million pounds of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions annually, and features motion-activated water sensors and flow controls, reducing water use by over 40%.

Additionally, the Company's irrigation techniques and storm drain plans were designed to avoid erosion, minimize containments entry and reduce irrigation needs by 50%. Consistent with initiatives at all of UNFI distribution centers, the Company's Ridgefield associates apply sustainability practices including using high-recycled products, conservationism as well as waste reduction.

"The promotion of environmentally responsible business practices is central to our corporate philosophy and we are extremely pleased to have received this Gold certification," commented Tom Dziki, UNFI's Vice President of Sustainable Development. "At Ridgefield, we were focused on creating a healthy, productive place to work while simultaneously reducing our environmental footprint."

UNFI's Ridgefield facility has also recently been recognized by the Clark Public Utilities and Bonneville Environmental Foundation for its "Green Lights" support of renewable forms of electricity in the Northwest. The program was designed to generate more wind, solar, geothermal and other forms of pollution-free power and displace more environmentally harmful power sources.

The Company implements sustainability practices throughout its nationwide distribution network and is pursuing LEED(R) certification for its newest distribution center, a 675,000 square foot facility located in York, Pennsylvania. Additionally, over the last 16 months, the Company has installed major solar electric systems on the rooftops of their Rocklin, California and Dayville, Connecticut distribution centers. UNFI has the largest warehouse capacity of any distributor in the natural products industry with approximately 6.2 million square feet of space at 20 distribution centers nationwide.

To learn more about UNFI's long standing commitment to the environment and the sustainable initiatives at its Ridgefield, Washington facility please visit http://www.unfi.com/LEED_Ridgefield.aspx.

About United Natural Foods

United Natural Foods, Inc. (www.unfi.com) carries and distributes more than 60,000 products to more than 17,000 customers nationwide. The Company serves a wide variety of retail formats including conventional supermarket chains, natural product superstores, independent retail operators and the food service channel. United Natural Foods, Inc. was ranked by Forbes in 2005 as one of the "Best Managed Companies in America," ranked by Fortune in 2006 and 2007 as one of its "Most Admired Companies," ranked by Business Ethics as one of its "100 Best Corporate Citizens for 2006" and winner of the Supermarket News 2008 Sustainability Excellence Award.

For more information on United Natural Foods, Inc., visit the Company's website at www.unfi.com.

"Safe Harbor" Statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995: Statements in this press release regarding the Company's business that 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 December 10, 2008, 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. The Company is not undertaking to update any information in the foregoing reports until the effective date of its future reports required by applicable laws. Any projections of future results of operations should not be construed in any manner as a guarantee that such results will in fact occur. These projections are subject to change and could differ materially from final reported results. The Company may from time to time update these publicly announced projections, but it is not obligated to do so.

SOURCE United Natural Foods, Inc.

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