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Whole Foods Market® Opens Its Doors to Santa Cruz Community

Store to Offer Large Selection of Natural and Organic Products, Featuring Over 130 Local Vendors

Emeryville, Calif. (March 17, 2009) – Whole Foods Market, America’s first certified organic retailer, will open its first store in Santa Cruz on Wednesday, March 18th with a “bread breaking” ceremony at 9:45 a.m.

Whole Foods Market Northern California President David Lannon, Store Team Leader Dan Wolfe, and the new Whole Foods Market Santa Cruz team will be on hand to celebrate the opening with a raffle to benefit the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS), and a free BBQ will be served in front of the store from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The new store, located at 911 Soquel Avenue, will feature products from over 130 local vendors, 30 of which are new to Whole Foods Market. Santa Cruz residents and families can enjoy the region’s largest selection of natural, organic and bulk food at budget-friendly prices. A vibrant and inviting place, the 31,500-square-foot Whole Foods Market combines the convenience and expertise of a farmers’ market, a gourmet wine and cheese shop, a grocer, an artisan bakery, a coffee roastery and juice bar, a full-service butcher and fishmonger, a huge selection of raw foods throughout the store, and a team of chefs making restaurant-quality meals—all under one roof.

“We are very excited to open our doors and become the place where Santa Cruz shoppers can find the highest quality natural and organic foods – free of artificial colors, flavors, sweeteners and hydrogenated oils,” says Dan Wolfe, Store Team Leader, Whole Foods Market Santa Cruz. “Most importantly, we are dedicated to offering everyday low prices and helping Santa Cruz residents find real deals throughout the store so they may generously share the pleasures of good food with friends and family.”

With a national produce procurement office in Watsonville which employs 60 people, Whole Foods Market has been a member of the Santa Cruz County business and agriculture community for 19 years. Since 1998, the office has coordinated large scale import and domestic produce purchases for the entire company and promotes sustainable agriculture throughout the world while providing a consistent supply of high quality product when it is unavailable from local growers.

Some of the highlights that Santa Cruz Whole Foods Market shoppers can look forward to enjoying:

- **Allegro Coffee and Juice Bar** – serving coffee from local roasters Verve Coffee and Lulu Carpenter’s Coffee, raw soy and almond milks made fresh daily, and Kombucha Botanica’s Healthy Living Tonic™ on tap.

- **Meat** – a full-service meat department featuring the best-tasting, freshest and highest quality meat available that is carefully raised without antibiotics or added growth hormones,* along with a special section of meats cut to order, dry-aged beef and hand-made sausage.
- **Seafood** – featuring fresh local seafood caught and delivered straight from the Santa Cruz harbor six days a week, fresh off the day boat of a local Santa Cruz fisherman.
- **Hot Food Bar** – made by a team of talented in-house chefs the Hot Food Bar offers an extensive selection of healthful, ethnic and comfort foods including fresh baked deep dish pizza, a savory taqueria, featuring made-to-order tacos, burritos and south-of-the-border burgers.
- **Soup and Salad Bar** – mealtimes are a snap with 11 varieties of house-made soups and the freshest organic salad bar in town.
- **Artisan Bakery** – European-style hearth breads made from scratch daily, in tempting varieties like sourdough, seeded sourdough, Kalamata olive, four cheese, jalapeño Cheddar, cranberry pecan, raisin pecan, challah – plain, seeded and cinnamon -- and Sperlonga, an Italian-style dipping bread.
- **Nut Butter Stations** – four make-your-own nut butter stations allow you to customize your favorite treat with almond, peanut, honey peanut, and chocolate peanut nut varieties.
- **Hand-stacked Produce** – Santa Cruz’s most bountiful selection of the highest-quality fruits and vegetables; shoppers can choose from an abundance of summer berries and field greens and discover unique items like an expanded exotic mushroom set with over 20 unique varieties.
- **Exotic Eggs** – A variety of cage-free eggs available individually or by the dozen including chicken eggs, ostrich, duck and quail eggs.
- **Bulk Section** – a large variety of rices, beans, grains, flour, and nuts as well as body care (shampoo, lotions), wellness tinctures, olive oil, honey, and local dried fruits.

Special Features at Whole Foods Market Santa Cruz

Kombucha Botanica’s Healthy Living Tonic on tap

Whole Foods Market Santa Cruz is the only store to offer Kombucha Botanica’s Healthy Living Tonic on tap, available in the Coffee and Juice Bar. Known for its smooth and balanced flavor, Kombucha Botanica’s unique microbrewed process creates a tonic to balance and revitalize your body and mind. These raw and 100 percent organic elixirs with probiotics, organic acids, enzymes and B-Vitamins, are not just good for you, they are good for the planet--and Fair Trade Certified ingredients are used whenever possible. Santa Cruz’s own Adam Goodman of Kombucha Botanica has doubled production and sales since 2007 with the help of Whole Foods Market’s Local Producer Loan Program, which provides up to \$10 million in low-interest loans to small, local producers to support their business.

“Eat Well for Less” Tours

Whole Foods Market Santa Cruz recognizes that its customers come from diverse economic backgrounds and believes that everyone should have access to great tasting, high-quality natural and organic foods. To

bring this concept to life, Whole Foods Market Santa Cruz will offer regular “Eat Well for Less” tours, during which store Team Members show customers how to shop smart on a budget and enjoy the best savings on organic and natural foods.

Focus on Sustainability

It may be fashionable to be green these days, but Whole Foods Market has made it a mission for 28 years. Under the guidance of Adesina Stewart, Whole Foods Market’s Northern California Green Mission Specialist, the Santa Cruz store will be looking for innovative ways to conserve resources and reduce environmental impact. As an example, Whole Foods Market Santa Cruz featured a special edition reusable produce bag at its recent local vendor fair, with profits going to Save Our Shores, and will offer mason jars for a \$2.00 deposit to use for bulk products. Shoppers who use reusable grocery bags will receive a nickel-per-bag refund which will benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Santa Cruz, the Homeless Garden Project, and the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF).

Store Information

Hours: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days per week

Location: 911 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

General Telephone: 831-426-9901

Web site: www.wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/santacruz

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About Whole Foods Market®

Founded in 1980 in Austin, Texas, Whole Foods Market (www.wholefoodsmarket.com), a leader in the natural and organic foods industry and America’s first national certified organic grocer, was named “America’s Healthiest Grocery Store” in 2008 by *Health* magazine. The Whole Foods Market motto, “Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet”™ captures the company’s mission to find success in customer satisfaction and wellness, employee excellence and happiness, enhanced shareholder value, community support and environmental improvement. Thanks to its 53,000 Team Members, Whole Foods Market has been ranked as one of the “100 Best Companies to Work For” in America by *FORTUNE* magazine for 12 consecutive years. In fiscal year 2008, the company had sales of \$8 billion and currently has more than 275 stores in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Whole Foods Market, Fresh & Wild™, and Harry’s Farmers Market® are trademarks owned by Whole Foods Market IP, LP. Wild Oats® and Capers Community Market™ are trademarks owned by Wild Marks, Inc.

*Federal regulations prohibit the use of hormones in raising pork and poultry.