



Costco Wholesale Corporation Reports January Sales Results

February 5, 2004

ISSAQUAH, Wash.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 5, 2004--Costco Wholesale Corporation (Nasdaq: COST) today reported net sales of \$3.44 billion for the four weeks ended February 1, 2004, an increase of 16 percent from \$2.97 billion in the same four-week period of the prior fiscal year.

For the first 22 weeks of its 2004 fiscal year ended February 1, 2004, the Company reported net sales of \$19.92 billion, an increase of 15 percent from \$17.38 billion during the similar 22-week period of the prior fiscal year.

Comparable sales for the 4-week and 22-week periods ended February 1, 2004, were as follows:

	4 Weeks	22 Weeks
US	12%	9%
International	14%	21%
Total Company	13%	12%

Additional discussion of these sales results is available on a pre-recorded telephone message. You can access the recording by dialing 1-800-642-1687 (conference ID# 5397609). This recorded message will be available today through 5:00 PM (PST) on Friday, February 6, 2004.

The Company plans to release its second quarter fiscal year 2004 operating results, for the twelve weeks ended February 15, 2004, on March 3, 2004. A conference call to discuss these second quarter results is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. (PST) on March 3rd, and will be available via a webcast on www.costco.com (click on Customer Service, Investor Relations, Financial Releases and lastly the "Live Webcast" icon.)

Costco currently operates 430 warehouses, including 318 in the United States and Puerto Rico, 62 in Canada, 15 in the United Kingdom, five in Korea, three in Taiwan, four in Japan and 23 in Mexico. The Company also operates Costco Online, an electronic commerce web site, at www.costco.com. The Company plans to open an additional 10 to 12 new warehouses prior to the end of its fiscal year 2004 on August 29, 2004.

Certain statements contained in this release constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. For these purposes, forward-looking statements are statements that address activities, events, conditions or developments that the Company expects, or anticipates may occur in the future. Such forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties that may cause actual events, results or performance to differ materially from those indicated by such statements. These risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, domestic and international economic conditions including exchange rates, the effects of competition and regulation, consumer and small business spending patterns and debt levels, rising costs associated with employees (including health care and workers' compensation costs), conditions affecting the acquisition, development, ownership or use of real estate, actions of vendors, and other risks identified from time to time in the Company's public statements and reports filed with the SEC.

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