



Costco Wholesale Corporation Reports August, Fourth Quarter and Fiscal Year 2003 Sales Results

September 3, 2003

ISSAQUAH, Wash.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sept. 3, 2003--Costco Wholesale Corporation (Nasdaq: COST) today reported net sales of \$3.41 billion for the four weeks ended August 31, 2003, an increase of 13 percent from \$3.02 billion in the same four-week period of the prior fiscal year.

For the 16-week fiscal fourth quarter ended August 31, 2003, the Company reported net sales of \$13.42 billion, an increase of 11 percent from \$12.05 billion during last year's fiscal fourth quarter.

For the 52-week fiscal year ended August 31, 2003, the Company reported net sales of \$41.70 billion, an increase of 10 percent from \$37.99 billion during the prior fiscal year.

Comparable sales for the 4-week, 16-week and 52-week periods ended August 31, 2003, were as follows:

	4 Weeks	16 Weeks	52 Weeks
US	8%	5%	4%
International	17%	17%	10%
Total Company	9%	7%	5%

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# 2615651). This recorded message will be available at 1:30 PM (PDT) today through 5:00 PM (PDT) on Thursday, September 4, 2003.

Costco currently operates 418 warehouses, including 309 in the United States and Puerto Rico, 61 in Canada, 15 in the United Kingdom, five in Korea, three in Taiwan, four in Japan and 21 in Mexico. The Company also operates Costco Online, an electronic commerce web site, at www.costco.com. The Company plans to open an additional 12 new warehouses (including the relocation of one warehouse to a larger and better-located facility) prior to the end of calendar year 2003.

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, 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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