



Costco Wholesale Corporation Announces Pilot Test for Accepting Food Stamps

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ISSAQUAH, WA, May 27, 2009 (MARKET WIRE via COMTEX) -- Costco Wholesale Corporation ("Costco") (NASDAQ: COST) announced today that it will begin accepting food stamps in its two New York City locations as soon as it has completed the installation of the necessary technology for processing the payment cards, estimated for early summer 2009. The two Costco locations, in Queens and Brooklyn, were selected as pilots for the test because of the high penetration of food stamp recipients in the surrounding areas. If the test proves successful in meeting requests by Costco members to use this form of payment, and if it does not result in an unexpected loss of efficiency for Costco's front-end operations, Costco will open its future planned New York City locations with food stamp acceptance.

Costco CEO, Jim Sinegal, stated: "In the past, we have not been convinced that there was sufficient demand among our membership to justify the expense and possible inefficiencies associated with accepting food stamps. However, we are mindful that many of our fellow citizens are facing unprecedented economic challenges at this time, and it seemed to us that it was worth reconsidering our position in that light. We are taking this step to see if we can be a part of the solution to the financial burden that many people are facing today."

Costco currently operates 555 warehouses, including 407 in the United States and Puerto Rico, 77 in Canada, 21 in the United Kingdom, six in Korea, five in Taiwan, eight in Japan and 31 in Mexico. The Company also operates Costco Online, an electronic commerce web site, at www.costco.com and at www.costco.ca in Canada. The Company plans to open an additional six new warehouses and close its two Costco Home locations prior to the end of its 2009 fiscal year, on August 30, 2009.

Certain statements contained in this document 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, uncertainties in the financial markets, consumer and small business spending patterns and debt levels, conditions affecting the acquisition, development, ownership or use of real estate, actions of vendors, rising costs associated with employees (including health care and workers' compensation costs), rising costs associated with the acquisition of merchandise (including the direct and indirect effects of the rising cost of petroleum-based products and fuel and energy costs), geopolitical conditions and other risks identified from time to time in the Company's public statements and reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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SOURCE: Costco