



Costco Wholesale Corporation Comments on Its Operations in Japan Following the Major Earthquake

March 14, 2011

ISSAQUAH, WA, Mar 14, 2011 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) --

Costco Wholesale Corporation ("Costco" or the "Company") (NASDAQ: COST) announced today the impact on its Japan operations following the major earthquake in Japan on March 11, 2011. All Company employees have been accounted for; and all Costco facilities in Japan (nine warehouse locations and one cross-dock facility) have been inspected by both Company personnel and independent third-party experts. Sadly, two people died as a result of the collapse of the parking ramp at the Company's Tamasakai warehouse. With the exception of the Tamasakai location, which sustained significant damage, all Japan warehouses are open for business. The Tamasakai location will remain closed for several months pending further inspection and repairs to make sure it is safe for members and employees.

To assist in the relief efforts, all Costco locations around the world will be accepting donations at cash registers for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Relief Fund. Donations can also be made through the Red Cross link on www.costco.com.

Costco currently operates 581 warehouses, including 424 in the United States and Puerto Rico, 80 in Canada, 22 in the United Kingdom, seven in Korea, six in Taiwan, nine in Japan, one in Australia and 32 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 fifteen to sixteen new warehouses (including the relocation of a warehouse to a larger and better-located facility and the reopening of San Marcos, CA -- closed for an onsite relocation) prior to the end of its 2011 fiscal year on August 28, 2011.

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 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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