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**Twin Cities Co-ops Join Minnesota FoodShare's March Campaign,
Help Restock Empty Food Shelves with Much-Needed Nutritious Food Items**

*11 local, natural food co-ops work to generate 85,000
in combined food pounds and dollar donations*

MINNEAPOLIS (Feb. 15, 2010) – Local food shelves are fullest during the holiday season, but holidays are also the time of greatest need. As the New Year passes, food shelves are depleted. This spring, to help restock food shelves, Twin Cities natural food co-ops are joining Minnesota FoodShare's March Campaign and pledging to raise 85,000 in combined food pounds and dollars.

The 11 Twin Cities natural food co-ops (www.themix.coop) would like to encourage people to choose healthful options when donating to the Minnesota FoodShare. By contributing nutritious, natural and organic food to the campaign, participants help give those who depend on food shelves healthier options when feeding their families. To donate to Minnesota FoodShare, shoppers can stop by any Twin Cities natural food co-op to drop off food or dollar donations.

In its 28th year, Minnesota FoodShare, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing hunger in Minnesota, and dozens of local supporting organizations work tirelessly to restock diminishing supplies at more than 260 food shelves across the state.

Minnesota FoodShare's March Campaign is one of the many ways local food co-ops give back to the Twin Cities community and lend a healthy, helping hand. Co-ops provide food shelves with healthier options for people in need.

"Twin Cities co-ops are leaders in natural and organic foods, and in community enrichment," said Kelly Smith, director of marketing and communication for National Cooperative Grocers Association, a business services cooperative for 112 natural food co-ops nationwide. "We're so proud to be part of this effort. We hope people throughout the Twin Cities visit their local co-op and make a donation so that nutritious, organic and natural foods are available to everyone in the community."

With a goal of raising \$12 million in food or dollar donations, the Minnesota FoodShare will depend on the support and generosity of local citizens to help put food on the table for our neighbors in need.

About Minnesota FoodShare's March Campaign

Each March, FoodShare directs the largest food drive in the state (known as the March Campaign) and restocks more than 260 food shelves across Minnesota. It recruits thousands

of congregations, corporations, schools and civic groups to run local food and fund drives to aid in the effort. Minnesota FoodShare organizes a statewide media campaign to promote food shelf donations. It produces and distributes free promotional and educational resources for food drive organizers, and acts as a clearinghouse for all cash donations and distributes the funds to participating Minnesota food shelves. Throughout the year, FoodShare advocates on behalf of hungry Minnesota families with both state and federal lawmakers and educates the public about hunger in Minnesota.

About Twin Cities Natural Food Co-ops

The Twin Cities are nationally recognized for their progressive and strong natural food cooperative system. In the metropolitan and surrounding area, there are 11 independently owned natural food cooperatives: Eastside Food Co-op (Northeast Minneapolis), Just Food Co-op (Northfield), Lakewinds Natural Foods (Anoka, Chanhassen and Minnetonka), Linden Hills Co-op (Southwest Minneapolis), Mississippi Market (two St. Paul locations), City Center Market (Cambridge), River Market Community Co-op (Stillwater), Seward Co-op Grocery & Deli (South Minneapolis), St. Peter Food Co-op (St. Peter), Valley Natural Foods (Burnsville) and The Wedge (Uptown Minneapolis). For more than 30 years, Twin Cities natural food co-ops have proudly offered local and organically grown foods and products. For more information and a list of local food co-ops, visit www.mix.coop.