



Wakefern Launches Sustainable Seafood Program

Partners with internationally recognized organizations to meet its commitment

(Keasbey, NJ (January 17, 2014) – Wakefern Food Corp., a retailer-owned cooperative whose members own and operate ShopRite and Fresh Grocer branded supermarkets, announced today that in its ongoing effort to achieve seafood sustainability, it has partnered with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) and will increasingly source wild-caught and farm-raised seafood for processing in its facility that meets one of these certification standards.

Wakefern has taken a major step in meeting its commitment by obtaining MSC Chain of Custody certification, a comprehensive traceability program back through the supply chain to a MSC certified fishery, at its seafood processing facility in New Jersey. This partnership is an important step towards the company's goal of sourcing product from vendors who demonstrate sustainable practices.

"Wakefern is dedicated to keeping seafood plentiful and safe for generations to come. We have committed to working with suppliers who ensure that our wild-caught and farm-raised seafood is sourced from certified, sustainable fisheries and farms," said Karen Meleta, corporate spokesperson for Wakefern.

The MSC's fishery certification program and seafood ecolabel recognize and reward sustainable fishing. This global organization works with fisheries, seafood companies, scientists, conservation groups and the public to promote the best environmental choice in wild-caught seafood.

"We are pleased to partner with Wakefern as it takes this step forward in ensuring sustainable seafood offerings for its customers," said Michael Griff, MSC commercial manager. "This development will have a significant impact on keeping sustainable seafood sourcing top of mind for consumers and the industry, as a whole."

The GAA is the leading international organization dedicated to advancing environmentally and socially responsible aquaculture and providing a safe supply of seafood to meet growing world food needs.

Through its **Best Aquaculture Practices** program, GAA encourages the use of responsible production systems that are sustainable regarding environmental and community needs, and efficiently provide safe, wholesome aquaculture products to the world's population.

"We are proud of our continued association with Wakefern. We applaud the deep level of commitment shown throughout the company towards the drive for responsibly sourced farmed seafood," said Peter Redmond, VP of Market Development for Global Aquaculture Alliance.

This certification is yet another step that Wakefern has taken to ensure that the seafood it provides to ShopRite, PriceRite and The Fresh Grocer stores is not only sustainably sourced but among the freshest and the safest in the marketplace.

ShopRite was one of the first supermarkets in the United States to participate in a voluntary inspection program and to place the U.S. Department of Commerce's "Processed Under Federal Inspection" and "Grade A" mark on certain species of fresh fish. Its seafood is under continuous inspection by the US Department of Commerce as well as an internal quality assurance team. All of Wakefern's seafood undergoes a seven point inspection, following the US Food and Drug Administration's guidelines. Having its own on-site facility allows Wakefern to deliver fresh seafood seven days a week and helps ensure that the seafood sold at retail meets strict quality standards.

Furthering its sustainable seafood goals, Wakefern will discontinue the distribution of orange roughy, shark, blue-fin tuna and grouper to its retail partners due to their status as overfished, until a sustainable source can be identified.

"We recognize that consumers depend on seafood as a quality source of protein and that fishing provides a livelihood for many communities both here in the U.S. and abroad. In order to ensure that our customers have quality seafood available to them and their families well into the future, this partnership with MSC and GAA will help us achieve the goal of sourcing sustainable seafood," said Ms. Meleta.

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About Wakefern Food Corp.

From a small, struggling cooperative with eight members – all owners of their own grocery stores – Wakefern Food Corp. has grown into the largest retailer-owned cooperative in the United States. Founded in 1946, the cooperative is comprised of 50 members who today individually own and operate more than 250 supermarkets under the ShopRite and The Fresh Grocer banners in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware. In 1996, Wakefern introduced PriceRite stores, extending the company's reach into Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Today, there are more than 50 PriceRite stores in six states. As the merchandising and distribution arm of ShopRite, PriceRite and The Fresh Grocer, Wakefern, together with its member companies, employs more than 70,000 people, making it one of the largest employers in New Jersey. Wakefern also distributes products to other supermarkets throughout the northeastern United States and Bermuda. Wakefern was named one of the Best Places to Work in NJ by NJBIZ Magazine in 2011 and again in 2012. In 2011, Supermarket News gave Wakefern its Retail Excellence Award and The Griffin Report named Wakefern Retailer of the Year. Supermarket News also recently awarded Wakefern the 2013 Technology Excellence Award. For more information, please visit www.Wakefern.com.