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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fresh Market Stores Look To Positive Future Despite Economic Challenges

Salt Lake City, UT (June 22, 2011) –2011 proved to be a challenging time throughout the grocery industry. Large national companies have struggled as consumers tightened their spending amid the recession. Local grocers have been some of the hardest hit businesses, yet through smart planning and an intrepid entrepreneurial spirit, locally owned Fresh Market stores have begun to see positive results.

One of the best examples of the stores' success has been the consolidation in Richfield, Utah. In 2009, Associated Food Stores purchased the Richfield Albertsons store and converted it to a Fresh Market. The Lin's Richfield store nearby was also owned by Associated Food Stores. The company made a strategic move to consolidate their operations in the area by closing the Lin's Richfield store and merging the two store teams into the newer Fresh Market facility. Not only did this allow the company to operate more efficiently, the store team quickly unified, consistently delivered positive financial results. The store also recently received three Best of the Best awards from the *Richfield Reaper*.

"We are local and are committed to improving our communities both economically and through our service efforts," said Neal Berube, president of Fresh Market. "We have been amazed by our store teams. They have continued to look for positive solutions throughout the last year and have come up with a number of exciting and innovative ways to build sales and improve results."

As a product of their hard work, Berube says many of Fresh Market stores are seeing modest increases in customer counts and sales.

"The last year has been challenging," said Berube. "We faced our share of financial struggles, many of which we understood when we purchased the 34 stores from SuperValu over a year ago. We made a conscious decision to give every store we purchased an opportunity to turn things around. However, there were several of these stores that simply could not reach the level of performance we needed and they had to be closed to secure the long-term viability of our entire system."

The company closed five Fresh Market stores since the initial purchase and transferred ownership of two stores to Macey's, leaving a total of 27 stores in operation. Throughout 2011, the company has experienced positive results including gains in weekly store-to-store sales, guest counts and cash flow. "Despite these positive results, we are operating in a tremendously challenging time and are battling against some of the most competitive retailers in the nation. We expect to face additional challenges as we move forward, but we are confident in the store teams and their ingenuity to help us succeed," said Berube.

Fresh Market is part Associated Food Stores, a cooperative wholesaler that services over 500 corporate-owned and independent grocery retailers in eight western states. The acquisition of the Fresh Market stores increased volume and efficiencies throughout the company's distribution system upwards of \$5-6 million. These efficiencies help Associated Food Stores' member retailers purchase groceries at lower costs and pass savings along to customers.

Fresh Market is a member of Associated Food Stores, an independent retailer-owned warehouse based in Salt Lake City, Utah, which provides products and services to more than 500 grocers throughout the Intermountain West. Associated Food Stores can be found on the internet at www.afstores.com. Fresh Market can be found on the Internet at www.freshmarketstores.com.

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