



NEWS RELEASE

FEDERATED CO-OPERATIVES LIMITED

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Co-op food stores reeling in eco-friendly catch

(May 4, 2012) -- Co-op food stores have gone eco-fishing. And what they've reeled in for their customers is ocean-friendly seafood options and a new labeling system to help them make environmentally responsible choices when buying fresh and frozen seafood products.

The 165 Co-op food stores that carry fresh and frozen seafood in Western Canada are taking part in the **"Reel in the Solution!"** sustainable seafood program developed by Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL) in partnership with SeaChoice, a consortium of five nationally respected Canadian conservation organizations that undertake scientific assessment of the environmental sustainability of wild fisheries and aquaculture products.

"The Co-operative Retailing System (CRS) and your local Co-op food store care about healthy oceans and sustainable fish stocks," says Vic Huard, FCL Vice President, Corporate Affairs. "With the support and guidance of SeaChoice, we are pleased to introduce the **"Reel in the Solution!"** program as the next step in our commitment to becoming a leader around sustainable fisheries and aquaculture at all levels of the seafood supply chain – from ocean to store to dinner table."

During the past year, FCL has worked with SeaChoice in identifying fresh and frozen seafood products ranked as "Avoid" by SeaChoice's scientific assessments due to population concerns, harm to endangered species and/or unsustainable fishing methods. As a result of this extensive review, products removed were Atlantic Halibut, Blue Marlin, Shark, Chilean Sea Bass, longlined Swordfish, Skates, Rays and Orange Roughy. Customers are encouraged to consider the following options: Arctic Char, Sablefish, Steelhead Trout, Rainbow Trout, Dungeness Crab and Mussels.

SeaChoice's ranking and labeling of fish stock has been adopted with information and signage posted on products and by fresh fish counters and freezer shelves. A green SeaChoice label indicates a "Best Choice" item that is well managed, abundant, and caught or farmed in environmentally sustainable ways. A yellow label identifies a "Some Concerns" item and red label signals an item to "Avoid".

SeaChoice's Kelly Roebuck applauds the co-operative retailing system for its support of ocean-friendly fisheries and aquaculture.

"FCL, supplier partners, Co-op food stores and their customers can take pride in knowing their efforts are helping to ensure the long term viability of our oceans and the products harvested from them. Together, we are making a positive difference for the health of our oceans," says Roebuck.

Troy Verboom, General Manager, Sherwood Co-op in Regina, is appreciative of the leadership provided by FCL and SeaChoice in raising awareness around sustainable seafood and sourcing ocean-friendly product.

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“We are committed to doing all we can to ensure a sustainable future for the seafood we sell to customers. And to help them make well-informed choices, they will see various point-of-sale materials such as handouts, pocket guides, posters, banners, and the new labeling system promoting our sustainable seafood program,” says Verboom.

FCL began its partnership with SeaChoice in 2010 to help fulfill its commitment to sourcing sustainable seafood products for customers. Last year FCL worked closely with Sea Choice to develop and adopt a sustainable seafood policy built on six guiding principles: commitment, procurement, transparency, information, education, and support industry reform of sustainable seafood practices and policies.

(end)

About SeaChoice

Formed in 2006, SeaChoice is a national program that provides science-based sustainability assessments of seafood and helps Canadian businesses and consumers make sustainable seafood choices. SeaChoice is a joint initiative of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, David Suzuki Foundation, Ecology Action Centre, Living Oceans Society and Sierra Club BC. Working in collaboration with the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s acclaimed Seafood Watch program, SeaChoice undertakes science-based seafood assessments, provides informative resources for consumers, and supports businesses through collaborative partnerships.

About Federated Co-operatives Limited

Federated Co-operatives Limited along with 240 co-operative retail members form a team called the Co-operative Retailing System. We are here to serve our members and our communities with products and services that help build, feed, and fuel individuals and communities across Western Canada. We are a different kind of business; being member-owned means that any profits are returned to our members and stay in the local economy. We live where you live, work where you work and we are helping grow the economy right here. We are your neighbours and we make sustainable investments in the communities we share.

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