

Northern Retailer Supports Nunavut Food Security Coalition

For Immediate Release

Winnipeg, June 15, 2012 - The North West Company (NWC) applauds Premier Eva Aariak and her Nunavut government for its leadership in creating a Nunavut Food Security Coalition which will develop a long-term and sustainable approach to food security in Nunavut.

“We were especially excited to hear the government welcomes the private sector to help find a solution to issues we all care about,” said Executive Vice President Michael McMullen, Northern Canada Retail. “We are eager to join the Premier at the table and add practical advice based on success we’ve had just this year in lowering the cost of healthy food and increasing the consumption of dairy, protein and fresh produce in Nunavut.”

NWC took a meaningful step last year on improving food security when it worked closely with the federal government to plan, and then implement the new federal Nutrition North program in 67 of its eligible communities.

Starting last April, NWC was able to create savings for consumers by using more efficient freight options and negotiating directly with transportation carriers instead of using the old Canada Post Food Mail system that was more expensive. In addition, NWC helped promote the Nutrition North program that subsidizes healthy foods for people living across the North.

A few food facts about northern food consumption since NWC’s efficiencies were implemented and the Nutrition North program launched:

- **14%** - the increase in dairy consumption in one year.
- **18%** - the increase in meat and protein consumption in one year.
- **19%** - the increase in fresh produce consumption in one year.
- **15%** - the decrease in the price of a healthy basket of food in one year.

A sample community: Igloolik, Nunavut

- **34%** - the increase in dairy consumption in one year.
- **21%** - the increase in meat and protein consumption in one year.
- **30%** - the increase in fresh produce consumption in one year.
- **22%** - the decrease in the price of a healthy basket of food in one year.

In addition, in Igloolik, Nunavut, the price of four litres of milk has dropped from \$15.19 to \$7.70 – a savings of 49%.

“Through even more collaboration and innovation with the Nunavut government, we believe that northern living costs, starting with food, can continue to be lowered,” McMullen said.

The North West Company operates 134 stores across Northern Canada under the Northern & NorthMart banners. It is the largest private sector employer of Inuit and First Nation people with 3,100 employees and team members across the north with an annual payroll in excess of \$67 million. NWC has a capital investment of \$271 million in inventory, infrastructure and other assets. Additionally it spends \$36 million annually on the purchase of local goods and services in northern communities.

In Nunavut in particular, NWC operates 30 stores in 21 communities, and is the largest retail employer of Inuit with 664 associates. The annual Nunavut payroll tops \$17 million. NWC has a capital investment in Nunavut of \$75 million and it spends \$18 million annually on local goods and services.

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