



The North West Company is a leading retailer of food and everyday products and services to rural communities and urban neighbourhoods in Canada, Alaska, the South Pacific and the Caribbean.

NEWS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

Canada's Oldest Retailer Launches 'Greener Tomorrow' Initiative at Checkouts in Nunavut and Nunavik

Winnipeg, Manitoba January 12, 2011:

Thirty-one Northern and NorthMart stores in Nunavut and Nunavik are taking the initiative to reduce the use of 3,630,000 disposable plastic grocery bags starting January 17th. The oldest retailer on the continent is breaking new ground by partnering with customers to encourage the use of reusable bags as part of a pilot program.

To assist customers in this eco-friendly initiative, The North West Company will be providing each household in Nunavut and Nunavik with two reusable shopping bags at no cost, that's equivalent to over 26,000 reusable shopping bags. These stylish environmentally friendly bags feature a colourful design and hold the equivalent of three ordinary plastic bags. To nudge customers' environmental conscience, The North West Company will begin charging 25 cents per plastic bag with all proceeds going towards community based environmental initiatives such as community clean up events.

Michael McMullen, Executive Vice-President of the Northern Canada Retail Division of NWC says, "Day by day, bag by bag, we can really make a difference by choosing alternatives to plastic bags at our retail stores." McMullen adds, "Together with our customers, we will work to improve on the environment in our hometowns."

The North West Company will not profit from the sale of the bags as all proceeds will flow back into the community.

McMullen sums up the full program in these terms, "We are not retaining any of the funds collected. All proceeds will be funnelled to programs within the community related to the environment such as a partnership with schools on a community clean up event. We will work with each community to establish the exact nature of the environmental initiative from the proceeds of the sale of plastic bags. We hope these partnerships, centered on direct engagement will create greater awareness for the environmental stewardship of Canada's North."

Last February, in support of the Northwest Territories Government, Department of Environment and Natural Resources efforts to reduce plastic retail bags; The North West Company initiated a 'go green' campaign in the Northwest Territories. Over 16,000 reusable shopping bags were distributed to its Northern and NorthMart customers and the overall result was a 77 per cent reduction, equivalent to 1,098,000 plastic bags reduced last year in the Northwest Territories.

For more information or to arrange an interview contact:

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To learn more about NWC, please visit www.northwest.ca

The North West Company is a leading retailer of food and everyday products and services to rural communities and urban neighbourhoods in Canada, Alaska, the South Pacific, and the Caribbean. The North West Company operates 230 stores under the trading names Northern, NorthMart, Giant Tiger, AC Value Center, and Cost-U-Less and has annualized sales of approximately CDN \$1.5 billion.

The common shares of the parent company, The North West Company Inc., trade on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol "NWF".

