



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2016

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

Allison Phelps

312.799.5788

Allison.Phelps@wholefoods.com

MAYOR EMANUEL AND WHOLE FOODS MARKET OPEN NEW STORE IN CHICAGO'S ENGLEWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD

Store Brings More Fresh, Healthy Food Access and Economic Opportunities to Chicago's South Side

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined Whole Foods Market Co-CEO Walter Robb and hundreds of community members to open the company's new store in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood. Whole Foods Market Englewood is bringing better access to fresh, healthy food to Englewood and surrounding South Side neighborhood residents, plus more than 100 new jobs and economic opportunities. The new 18,000-square-foot store represents three years of community collaboration and will have products from more than 35 local suppliers on its shelves.

"Today we are doing much more than opening the doors to a new Whole Foods. We are opening doors to a new future for the Englewood community," Mayor Emanuel said. "This store is also putting products from dozens of local suppliers on its shelves, helping turn small businesses into big businesses and creating even more economic opportunities that reach across Chicago."

"Working alongside the many individuals and organizations bringing positive change in their community was inspiring. Englewood has more good happening here and we've had the privilege to support the next class of food innovators, leaders and entrepreneurs of the South Side; helping to bring healthy food access to their community," Robb said. "We hope to this store provides wholesome food choices and continues to help support the economic growth in the community."

More than 100 team members will work at Whole Foods Market Englewood, with the majority coming from nearby. Additionally, the store will utilize more than 35 local suppliers to provide a variety of products on the shelves.

Since the announcement of the store in 2013, Englewood residents and Whole Foods Market teams have engaged in two-way conversations to ensure the new location on Chicago's South Side would reflect the community it serves and meet the needs of those living and working in the area. From the early discussions, three key themes rose to the top for the company to focus on: food access; community engagement; and economic development and employment.

“We are witnessing the revitalization of the Englewood community and I would like to thank the mayor and Whole Foods for their leadership in bringing about economic growth to the south side of Chicago,” U.S. Representative Bobby L. Rush (IL-01) said.

To prepare for the store opening, Whole Foods Market worked with community partners from Teamwork Englewood and the Greater Englewood Corporate Development Center to hold a variety of workshops and events to support small businesses in Englewood across the south side, including:

- The Englewood Entrepreneurial Workshop Series provided business training on product development, safety, licensing and many other topics to small business owners.
- Supplier Expo event connected startups with business resources such as insurance, labeling, distribution, and financing. Attendees also met with Whole Foods Market buyers to discuss products in more detail and learn more about the buying experience.
- The Englewood Quality of Life Economic Development Competition gives small businesses development resources and business mentors to create and pitch a business plan and win up to \$40,000.

Beyond the store, Whole Foods Market teams support local initiatives by donating healthy food for community events and activities. Whole Kids Foundation awarded garden grants to eight Englewood schools to build or enhance food gardens on the campuses and supported healthy eating education for teachers. Whole Cities Foundation held a food education summit and currently teaches free nutrition classes for residents, and partnered with a community organization for community-voted food program grants for Englewood nonprofits.

To celebrate opening day, Whole Foods Market hosted its version of a ribbon-cutting called a “Bread-Breaking Ceremony” with Whole Foods Market Team Members and Englewood neighbors. The store’s doors open and shopping officially begins at 9 a.m. Music, food, samples and more will be offered from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for all who attend.

Whole Foods Market has 26 other Chicagoland stores: Gold Coast, Halsted, Hyde Park, Lakeview, two Lincoln Park locations, Sauganash, South Loop, Streeterville, West Loop and Edgewater neighborhoods in Chicago; and the surrounding suburbs of: Deerfield, Elmhurst, three Evanston locations, Hinsdale, Kildeer, Naperville, Northbrook, Orland Park, Park Ridge, Schaumburg, River Forest, Wheaton and Willowbrook.

About Whole Foods Market®

Founded in 1978 in Austin, Texas, Whole Foods Market (wholefoodsmarket.com, NASDAQ: WFM), is the leading natural and organic food retailer. As America’s first national certified organic grocer, Whole Foods Market was named “America’s Healthiest Grocery Store” by *Health* magazine. The company’s motto, “Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet”™ captures its mission to ensure customer satisfaction and health, team member excellence and happiness, enhanced shareholder value, community support and environmental improvement. Thanks to the company’s more than 91,000 team members, Whole Foods Market has been ranked as one of the “100 Best Companies to Work For” in America by *FORTUNE* magazine for 18 consecutive years. In fiscal year 2015, the company had sales of more than \$15.4 billion and currently has more than 456 stores in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. For more company news and information, please visit media.wfm.com.

###