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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Ontario Market Investment Fund gets behind natural foods.**

Friday October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009-Mississauga-based Ontario Natural Food Co-op is pleased to announce that the Government of Ontario will be contributing \$100,000 to help the company ensure that more fresh Ontario-grown food makes it onto the tables of residents all across the province.

Through the Ontario Market Investment Fund, the province will assist Ontario Natural Food Co-op in their efforts to identify and evaluate potential markets, as well as prioritize and plan for the rollout of the company's "**Ontario Natural**" line of food products.

Randy Whitteker, General Manager of ONFC, explains how this endeavour will help the company get one step closer to fulfilling its long-term vision:

"We're now poised to bring to market an array of products that are grown right here by Ontario farmers. This is important for our members as it addresses the rising demand for locally grown foods while providing an exclusive brand to our channel. We can grow great food in our own region, extending the harvest through processing in a way that is both healthy and sustainable."

Ontario Natural Food Co-op is expecting stellar sales figures from the OMIF-supported program. It's all part of ONFC's long-term plan to introduce more private-label products to Ontario consumers – like the recent launch of their new pickles product line launched at CHFA and offered in partnership with the Sunshine Pickles. The pickles initiative is proving to be a tremendous success in the marketplace, and ONFC looks forward to initiating similar successful launches of other food categories in the months to come.

### **About the Ontario Market Investment Fund**

The \$12-million, four-year, Ontario Market Investment Fund was announced in the 2008 Ontario Budget and is targeted to promote consumer awareness of Ontario-produced foods, and encourages Ontario to buy locally. The Ontario Market Investment Fund's mandate is to improve consumer access to locally produced foods by supporting industry and local food network marketing and coordination efforts.

### **About Ontario Natural Food Co-op (ONFC)**

Ontario Natural Food Co-op is a co-operative headquartered in Mississauga, Ontario. ONFC has led the distribution of natural and organic food in the region since its inception in 1976. ONFC is a member-owned and directed wholesaler that distributes over 4,000 grocery, refrigerated, frozen, bulk, and household items to natural and organic retailers in the eastern half of Canada.

The company has established itself as the preferred supplier to small and large natural food stores, wellness clinics, daycare centres, buying clubs, bakeries, restaurants, and independent grocery stores. It consistently provides its customers with a high product fulfillment rate and unparalleled service levels in the industry.

For more information about Ontario Natural Food Co-op, please contact John Landsborough, Sales and Marketing Manager, at 905-507-2021.