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## **DOWN TO EARTH GOES TO KAPOLEI!**

### ***10,000 Sq. Ft. Building Will Be Company's New Flagship Store; Remodels of Kahului and Kailua Stores on Schedule***

**Honolulu, HI (June 23, 2010)** – Down to Earth ALL VEGETARIAN *Organic & Natural* today announced it will add a sixth store to its natural food store chain in Hawaii when it opens a new store in the Kapolei Commons Shopping Center next year. The company signed a lease with the Kapolei Commons developers—a joint venture by the MacNaughton Group and Kobayashi Group—to break ground early in 2011. The new Kapolei location will be Down to Earth's largest store and employ about 50 people. It will be the company's new flagship store.

Down to Earth opened a new store in Hilo last fall, and remodels of two other stores are on schedule—Kailua later this year followed by Kahului early next year. Down to Earth completed a total remodel of its Honolulu store two years ago and it also has a store in Pearlridge.

Down to Earth is the only all-vegetarian natural foods store in Hawaii and one of only a few in the nation.

"Our expansion is a response to consumer demand," says Mark Fergusson, Chief Vegetarian Officer of Down to Earth. "Customers from Kapolei and Makakilo have been asking us to come to their neighborhood for years. We're thrilled to be able to do that as our mission is to help improve the health of our island communities."

The new store will be 10,000 square feet in the Kapolei Commons home to Target, Petco, Sports Authority, Office Max, Ross, Price Busters, Regal Cinema, 200,000 square feet of Outlet stores, and a food court and great sit down restaurants to be open in early 2012.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Down to Earth to Kapolei Commons and share their vision to promote better health for local residents and visitors alike" says Duncan MacNaughton. "The addition of Down to Earth to Kapolei Commons will also contribute to the health of the local economy through construction jobs as well as employment opportunities at this new store."

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As with Down to Earth's other stores, the new Kapolei store will carry a variety of natural and organic foods including groceries, dairy products, local organic produce, bulk foods, vitamins and natural supplements, body care products, and green household items.

"It will have its own first-class kitchen for Down to Earth's signature all-vegetarian deli featuring a hot table with delicious entrees and acclaimed salad bar, fresh juices and smoothies, a great made-to-order sandwich menu, fresh grab-and-go options and a wide variety of mouth watering desserts made daily," explains Fergusson.

### ***Remodels on Schedule***

The remodel of the Kahului store includes an expansion that converts 3,000 square feet of storage space into retail space, for a total of 9,000 square feet. "The bigger and renovated store will have many new products and will allow us to offer our customers a wider range of healthy and organic products," said Fergusson.

"We will more than double the size of the chill and frozen department, greatly improve our award winning vegetarian deli, and expand our wellness, grocery, and produce departments," he added.

"The renovation and remodel of the Kailua store will double the chill and frozen departments, where there has been an explosion of new vegetarian products since the store first opened in 2000, and we are going to improve our popular deli, bakery, and juice bar."

Fergusson said changes in the layout of the store will improve traffic flow and make the shopping experience easier and more enjoyable.

The new Kapolei store and renovated Kahului and Kailua stores will have the new "look" of the company's remodeled flagship store on King Street in Honolulu. The graphics feature its new logo that emphasizes the company's local roots and its universally appealing slogan, "Love Life!"—which for Down to Earth includes the meaning "Love animals, don't eat them."

The décor also includes the prominent display of a message encouraging Down to Earth customers to consider that "The single most important thing an individual can do for their health, for the environment, and for the sake of the innocent animals is to adopt a vegetarian diet."

"The success of Down to Earth has been based on our unshakable commitment to both our vegetarian mission and helping our customers improve their health," adds Fergusson. "We have earned the loyalty of our customers due to our uncompromising dedication to this commitment. We remain a community-based business whose mission is to promote healthy living among our island communities, respect for the environment, sustainable organic farming, and a vegetarian lifestyle. Yet, you don't need to be a vegetarian to shop at Down to Earth. Everyone can benefit from the all-vegetarian, organic and natural products that Down to Earth provides."

### ***Preferred Local Natural Food Store***

Even with increasing competition, Fergusson believes customers will continue to choose Down to Earth as their preferred natural food store. He says there are many reasons for his confidence:

***“The first is health.*** Down to Earth is Hawaii’s leading provider of healthy great tasting foods. We don’t sell products that are bad for people. Customers know that Down to Earth’s primary concern is to help its customers enjoy better health, and to assist those who are struggling with serious health issues, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and obesity make a change to a healthier diet and lifestyle.”

***Value:*** Down to Earth offers great values on natural foods and sells only healthy products that are good for you and the environment. We offer everyday low prices and great savings on a big selection of sale items.”

***“We understand the local market.*** We have served health-conscious islanders for over thirty years, with natural and organic products, free cooking classes, nutritional seminars, and community outreach. Our customers know they can rely on us for quality products, great value, and excellent service from our friendly and knowledgeable staff. No amount of glitz, ostentatious décor, and fancy gourmet foods can take the place of deep local roots and knowledge of local tastes, and a commitment to helping Hawaii make better, healthier food choices.

***“And, many of Down to Earth’s customers are vegetarians who will not be comfortable shopping in a store that sells and promotes meat.*** They know that eating meat is bad for their health and the environment and reject the notion that slaughtering animals to eat them is ever humane. And those moving towards a vegetarian lifestyle appreciate the health and environmental benefits, too. For example, a vegetarian diet supports a “green” lifestyle since it is dramatically more effective in reducing global warming than any other action an individual can make in their daily life. As a 2006 United Nations report said, the livestock industry generates more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks in the world combined.”

***“Finally, Down to Earth supports local businesses.*** Each year we purchase about \$2.5 million in products from 400 local vendors including over 150 farmers and growers. The trust and loyalty we have developed with them means we will continue to have access to the freshest local fruits and vegetables.”

***Excellent Prospects for Growth***

“As a result,” Fergusson says, “Down to Earth is and will continue to thrive in a marketplace that changed considerably with the arrival of a mainland Goliath. We look forward to increased interest in organic and natural foods in Hawaii. Expanding the market for healthful foods will benefit the people of Hawaii and we expect our business to grow.”

Down to Earth was founded in 1977 in Wailuku, Maui. Today, Down to Earth is the largest local natural foods store chain in Hawaii. For more information visit [www.downtoearth.org](http://www.downtoearth.org)