



Ross Stores Reports Strong August Sales and Forecasted Third Quarter And 2001 EPS

September 6, 2001

NEWARK, Calif., Sept. 6 /PRNewswire/ -- Ross Stores, Inc. (Nasdaq: ROST) today reported sales of \$238 million for the four week period ended September 1, 2001, a 20% increase above the \$198 million in sales for the four weeks ended September 2, 2000. Comparable store sales for the same period increased 9% on a day-for-day basis over the prior year.

For the seven months through September 1, 2001, sales were \$1.637 billion, a 9% increase above the \$1.504 billion in sales for the prior year's comparable period ended September 2, 2000. Comparable store sales for the same period increased 1% on a day-for-day basis over the prior year.

Michael Balmuth, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, said, "We are very pleased with the significant improvement in sales trends we realized in August, which benefited from broadbased strength throughout most major markets and merchandise departments. We also believe that customers are responding favorably to the steps we have taken over the past several months to strengthen our merchandise offerings. These include increasing the levels of nationally-recognized name brand product, creating a more balanced mix of ladies career vs. casual apparel, and adding more diversity in our home assortments."

Mr. Balmuth continued, "Total sales also benefited from the opening in August of three new stores located in El Cerrito, California; Nampa, Idaho; and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. These are the first of 22 new openings scheduled for the third quarter, our largest opening group of the year. We are happy to report that the new stores we have opened in 2001 continue to generate healthy sales."

Mr. Balmuth concluded, "Based on the stronger business trends in July and August, we are adopting a slightly more optimistic outlook for sales and earnings over the balance of 2001. If same store sales are up 4% to 6% in September, up 2% to 4% in October, and up 1% to 3% for the fourth quarter, we estimate that earnings per share will be in the range of \$.42 to \$.44 for the third quarter, vs. \$.36 in the prior year; \$.50 to \$.54 for the fourth quarter, vs. \$.56 in the prior year; and \$1.79 to \$1.85 for fiscal 2001, vs. \$1.82 in the prior year. Fiscal 2001 is a 52-week year compared to 53 weeks in fiscal 2000. The 53rd week added \$40 million in revenue and \$.07 in earnings per share to fiscal 2000, which is included in the fourth quarter and fiscal 2000 reported results."

Additional recorded information concerning today's press release and the company's future outlook can be accessed by calling 402-220-5900, PIN #2363, from 8:30 a.m. eastern time on September 6, 2001 through 8:00 p.m. eastern time on September 7, 2001. A transcript of these comments also will be made available on the press release page of the company's web site at www.rossstores.com.

Forward-Looking Statements: This press release contains certain forward-looking statements which are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause the company's actual results to differ materially from management's current expectations. The words "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "forecast," "projected" and similar expressions identify forward-looking statements. Risk factors include obtaining acceptable new store locations, competitive pressures in the apparel industry, changes in economic conditions, changes in the level of consumer spending on or preferences in apparel or home-related merchandise, the availability of dependable energy resources at reasonable costs, unseasonable weather trends, and greater than planned operating costs. Other risk factors are detailed in the company's Form 10-K for fiscal 2000. The factors underlying our forecasts are dynamic and subject to change. As a result, our forecasts speak only as of the date they are given and do not necessarily reflect the company's outlook at any other point in time. The company does not undertake to update or revise these forward-looking statements.

Ross Stores, Inc. operates a chain of off-price retail stores offering first quality, in-season, branded apparel and apparel-related merchandise for the entire family at prices that average 20% to 60% less than department and specialty stores, as well as merchandise for the home at similar savings. The company had 434 stores at September 1, 2001, compared to 392 stores at the end of the same period last year.

SOURCE Ross Stores, Inc.

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