



Ross Stores Reports Strong December Sales and Estimated Fourth Quarter Earnings Per Share

January 10, 2002

NEWARK, Calif., Jan. 10 /PRNewswire/ -- Ross Stores, Inc. (Nasdaq: ROST) today reported sales of \$384 million for the five weeks ended January 5, 2002, a 19% increase above the \$323 million in sales for the five weeks ended January 6, 2001. Comparable store sales for the same period increased 9% over the prior year on a day-for-day basis.

For the eleven months through January 5, 2002, sales totaled \$2.804 billion, an 11% increase above the \$2.520 billion in sales for the prior year's comparable period ended January 6, 2001. For the eleven months, comparable store sales increased 2% over the prior year on a day-for-day basis.

Michael Balmuth, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, said, "We are very pleased with the strong 9% gain in comparable store sales in December, especially considering the challenges of today's difficult retail environment. Sales benefited from an improved flow of fresh and exciting name brand fashions for the family and the home at compelling discounts, resulting in broadbased strength throughout most markets and merchandise categories."

Mr. Balmuth continued, "Looking ahead, we now estimate that same store sales in January will grow 5% to 7% over the prior year. As a result, we are forecasting earnings per share of approximately \$.61 for the 13 weeks ending February 2, 2002, or an estimated increase of 24% over the prior year period on a 52-week basis. The company reported earnings per share of \$.56 for the 14 weeks ended February 3, 2001. The 53rd week last year added an estimated \$40 million in sales and \$.07 in earnings per share. As a result, without the extra week, earnings per share would have been \$.49 for the fourth quarter ended February 3, 2001."

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. The estimated earnings per share for the fourth quarter ending February 2, 2002 are preliminary and subject to adjustments. 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, 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.

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 January 10, 2002 through 8:00 p.m. eastern time on January 11, 2002. 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.

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 453 stores at January 5, 2002, compared to 411 stores at the end of the same period last year.

SOURCE: Ross Stores, Inc.