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## The Common Market Strengthens Local Food Ecosystem with Acquisition of Local Foods (Chicago)

CHICAGO, IL – November 6, 2023 – The Common Market, a renowned nonprofit local food distributor, is proud to announce its acquisition of Local Foods, a decade-old local food wholesaler in the Chicagoland area. This strategic merger represents a significant step forward in advancing the cause of local, sustainable food while creating a more resilient regional food supply chain.

Local Foods, known for its commitment to connecting local farmers and producers with Chicagoland restaurants, retailers, schools and more, has been a staple in the local food movement. The merger with The Common Market is a testament to the shared values and commitment of both organizations to empower local farmers and communities.

"We are thrilled to unite with Local Foods in this endeavor to strengthen our local food ecosystem," said Haile Johnston, Co-CEO of The Common Market. "We look forward to a very bright future, one that creates enhanced experiences for our customers, and deepens and diversifies opportunities for our farmer partners."

Local Foods' Director, Dan Dahir, expressed his enthusiasm for the collaboration, highlighting the potential for a more vibrant, sustainable Chicagoland foodshed. "At the core of this decision is our shared commitment to delivering exclusively local food to positively impact our partners: our farms and our communities. We firmly believe that the synergies between Local Foods and The Common Market will increase our ability to drive more impact for farmers in our region and those in need of quality food."

The Common Market, founded in 2008 by Tatiana Garcia-Granados and Haile Johnston, operates as a dynamic nonprofit aggregator and distributor of local food. They connect farmers who prioritize sustainable and ethical farming practices with underserved communities, schools, hospitals, and businesses throughout the Mid-Atlantic, Southeast and Texas regions. With a mission deeply rooted in social and environmental equity, the innovative organization operates

at the intersection of climate, agriculture, food access, and community resilience, taking steps to make fresh, healthy, locally sourced food accessible to all.

Over the years, The Common Market has made a profound impact by generating over \$130 million in direct investment into local food systems and supporting more than 30,000 acres of productive farmland.

The acquisition was made final as of October 27, 2023. Law firm Ballard Spahr advised The Common Market on the transaction, working pro bono as part of the firm's support of the nonprofit for more than a decade. Ballard Spahr has provided pro bono representation on prior transactions and matters for The Common Market, and has committed funds to the organization through the Philadelphia Healthy Food Initiative. The initiative, in the city where The Common Market was founded, supports community-driven healthier food solutions where they're needed most.

Both The Common Market and Local Foods are working diligently to integrate the operations of both organizations seamlessly to minimize any disruptions in service. They welcome new partnership and urge institutions interested in connecting to local, sustainable food sources to make contact online at: [www.thecommonmarket.org/get-started-today](http://www.thecommonmarket.org/get-started-today)

### **About The Common Market**

The Common Market is a nonprofit aggregator and distributor of local food, connecting institutions and communities with sustainable, family farms across multiple regions. Founded in Philadelphia 15 years ago, The Common Market has made a significant impact by generating over \$130 million in direct investment into local food systems and supporting more than 30,000 acres of productive farmland. For more information on The Common Market and their mission to support local food systems, please visit [www.thecommonmarket.org](http://www.thecommonmarket.org).