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COLD STONE SEARCHING FOR HOT PROPERTIES

Real Estate Has Become the Cornerstone to Open 450 Stores in 2004

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (April 12, 2004) – Cold Stone Creamery®, the fastest growing super-premium ice cream franchise in the nation, opened 228 new stores across the country in 2003 and has another 450 slated for 2004. The Creamery attributes its explosive growth directly to one the company's Key Success Factors: **Secure Premier Locations for Our Franchisees.**

The Cold Stone Creamery Real Estate Team executed 341 leases in 2003 and is prepared to deliver in excess of 500 leases by September 30, 2004. New lease provisions that secure payment to landlords directly from the home office have fueled lease negotiations. This new initiative will give Cold Stone Creamery the ability to negotiate better lease terms, allowing franchisees to open their stores faster. Averaging the execution two leases per business day so far in 2004, it is clear the Real Estate Team is a dynamic contributor to the company's unparalleled success.

"We're looking for a solid development plan with clear objectives and a systematic process from our brokers," stated Director of Real Estate Brett Sheets. "The key ingredients that make a premier location desirable for Cold Stone include site features, demographics and the physical characteristics of the trade area."

Cold Stone Creamery will be unveiling their new real estate initiatives with brokers from across the country at the International Council of Shopping Centers Show (ICSC) this May in Las Vegas. This industry tradeshow produced over 100 additional sites for the Creamery that were not previously identified in 2003.

The company's proven real estate formula is also a key contributor to Cold Stone Creamery's bite out of the \$20.7 billion ice cream industry. Boasting a \$380,000 annualized average unit volume, the highest of any super-premium ice cream concept, 2003 system-wide revenues exceeded \$154 million, up from \$88 million in 2002 and \$45 million in 2001.

Cold Stone Creamery also continues to set new growth records and maintain its position as the nation's fastest growing super-premium ice cream concept. Ranked no. 25 in *Entrepreneur* magazine's 101 Fastest Growing Franchises (February 2004), Cold Stone Creamery's potential has been realized by a surge of entrepreneurs eager to open their own Cold Stone Creamery franchises. Prospective franchise applications are up with more than 23,000 applications received in 2003.

More than 600 stores are currently operating in 44 states and the Caribbean, and the Company has more than 800 additional stores in various stages of development, real estate selection and construction.

About Cold Stone Creamery

Cold Stone Creamery is the nation's fastest-growing super-premium ice cream franchise, with stores in 44 states from coast-to-coast, including Hawaii, Alaska and the Caribbean. Cold Stone Creamery handcrafts its secret recipe for super premium ice cream, and then customizes each order by combining a variety of mix-ins on a frozen granite stone. The resulting ice cream Creation delivers an unbeatable first bite sensation. For more information about Cold Stone Creamery, visit the company's Web site at www.coldstonecreamery.com.

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