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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Central Co-op and Seattle Sierra Club Launch Petition to Support Ban of Neonicotinoid Pesticides on City Property

Seattle, WA: Central Co-op and the Seattle Chapter of the Sierra Club have come together to launch a petition to Seattle's City Council in support of a resolution banning the use of neonicotinoid pesticides. Neonicotinoids are systemic neurotoxins that have been linked by researchers to the worldwide decline of pollinators, including honey bees. One third of all agricultural production worldwide is wholly or partly reliant on the work of pollinators, and that includes key Washington crops like tree fruit. As a grocery store that emphasizes Washington products, Central Co-op recognizes the importance of maintaining honeybee populations in our region.

This fall, Seattle City Councilmember Mike O'Brien will present a resolution that would bar the City from purchasing or using neonicotinoids on City property. The resolution also calls on the US Congress to reintroduce the "Save America's Pollinators" act, and urges the White House Pollinator Health Task Force and the Environmental Protection Agency to institute a moratorium on neonicotinoids (as the European Union has done). Following the widely-reported sale of "bee friendly" plants by major retailers – plants that turned out to have been treated with these bee-killing pesticides – the resolution also calls on retailers in Seattle to ensure they are selling no seeds or plants that have been treated with these systemic pesticides.

"Washington crops are a critical piece of our offering here at Central Co-op, and we rely on the ecosystems services provided by honeybees and native pollinators," says General Manager, Dan Arnett. "Our goal with this petition is to show that there is popular support for a ban of this kind in Seattle, and we look forward to working with our community to ensure a healthy pollinator population for the future."

Petition site: <http://www.change.org/petitions/city-of-seattle-we-call-on-the-city-of-seattle-to-ban-neonicotinoid-pesticide-usage>

About Central Co-op: Central Co-op is a community-owned natural foods cooperative located at the top of Seattle's Capitol Hill. A complete grocery store dedicated to sustainable practices and the Washington food economy, Central Co-op features an organic produce department, sustainably raised and harvested meat and seafood, an in-house deli and juice bar, a large selection of bulk goods and herbs, and extensive healthy and wellness section and unique gifts. Open to everyone, seven days a week. More information is available online at www.centralcoop.coop

About Seattle Sierra Club: The Sierra Club tagline is: "Enjoy, explore, and protect the planet." Thousands of people in Washington State every year participate in events and campaigns related to that mission. The Seattle group serves Seattle and Shoreline, and focuses on local issues, including improving public transit, reducing waste, environmental justice, and endorsing and supporting green candidates. <http://cascade.sierraclub.org/>

Attachment: City of Seattle Neonicotinoids Resolution (Draft)

-End-

CITY OF SEATTLE
RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION concerning the use of neonicotinoid pesticides by the City of Seattle; supporting a national moratorium on neonicotinoids, urging the White House Task Force on Pollinator Health to recommend such a moratorium, urging the US Environmental Protection Agency to institute such a moratorium, and urging the US Congress to revive legislation to enact such a moratorium; and urging retailers operating within the City of Seattle to ensure that no plants, seeds or products containing neonicotinoids are offered for sale.

WHEREAS, Bees and other insect pollinators are under great environmental stress, experiencing die-offs and diminishing populations, and putting major sectors of agriculture and food security at risk; and

WHEREAS, The Food Action Plan of the City of Seattle commits the City to use its purchasing and contracting power, and to support programs, policies and projects, to promote local, sustainably produced food, and access to healthy food for all residents; and

WHEREAS, Agriculture is among the largest sectors of the economy of the State of Washington, accounting for over \$49 Billion in total revenue and 13% of the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, Pollinators are critical to key Washington crops such as tree fruit; over 1/3 of all agricultural production worldwide is dependent on pollinators; and

WHEREAS, Neonicotinoids have been identified by scientists from the United States Geological Survey as a factor contributing to die-offs and diminishing populations of insect pollinators including honeybees; and

WHEREAS, Neonicotinoids, one of the most widely used insecticides in the world, are systemic, persistent neurotoxins that spread throughout a treated plant including to the pollen that is gathered by pollinators; and

WHEREAS, A recent study from Harvard University School of Public Health adds to numerous research documenting a direct link between pollinator deaths and colony collapse disorder to neonicotinoids; and

WHEREAS, Responding to scientific concern over the impact of neonicotinoids on pollinators, the European Union in 2013 instituted a two-year moratorium on use of neonicotinoids, while cities, Spokane, WA, Eugene, OR, and Sherwood, MN, have instituted bans against municipal use; and

1 WHEREAS, United States House of Representatives bill 2692, the “Save America’s Pollinators
Act” of 2013 died in committee and has not been reintroduced in 2014; and

2 WHEREAS in August 2014 the US Fish and Wildlife Service announced plans to phase out use
3 of neonicotinoids on national wildlife refuges across the country, and the US Geological
4 Survey released information on the pervasive appearance of neonicotinoids in aquatic
environments throughout the Midwest; and

5 WHEREAS, In July 2014 President Obama set up the White House Task Force on Pollinator
6 Health with 180 days to publish a strategy to stop the decline of pollinators and help
7 restore populations to healthy levels; and

8 WHEREAS, The US Environmental Protection Agency has allowed registration, sale and use of
neonicotinoids while it carries out an assessment, and is not scheduled to issue its report
9 until 2018; and

10 WHEREAS, The City’s Interdepartmental Team on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which
11 includes representatives from Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle City Light,
12 Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle Center, Finance and Administrative Services, Seattle
Department of Parks and Recreation and Seattle Public Libraries, has recommended
13 eliminating the use of neonicotinoids at City facilities; NOW, THEREFORE,

14 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:

15 **Section 1.** The City of Seattle will not purchase or use any neonicotinoid pesticides for
any purpose on any City-owned or operated land.

16 **Section 2.** The Mayor and the Seattle City Council supports a national moratorium on the
17 sale and use of neonicotinoids.

18 **Section 3.** The Mayor and the Seattle City Council strongly urges the US House of
19 Representatives to reintroduce the Save America’s Pollinators Act.

20 **Section 4.** The Mayor and Seattle City Council strongly urges the Environmental
21 Protection Agency (EPA) to suspend the registration of imidacloprid, clothianidin,
thiamethoxam, dinotafuran and any other neonicotinoids until the EPA can complete its
22 environmental assessment.

23 **Section 5.** The Mayor and the Seattle City Council strongly urges the White House Task
24 Force on Pollinator Health to recommend or institute an immediate moratorium on all uses of
neonicotinoids.

1 **Section 6.** The Mayor and Seattle City Council strongly urges businesses operating
2 within the City of Seattle to take immediate steps to ensure no plants, seeds, or products
containing neonicotinoids are purchased, sold, or used within the City of Seattle.

3 Adopted by the City Council the ____ day of _____, 2014, and signed
4 by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day
5 of _____, 2014.

6 _____
7 President _____ of the City Council

8
9 THE MAYOR CONCURRING:

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11 _____
12 Edward B. Murray, Mayor

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15 Filed by me this ____ day of _____, 2014.

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18 Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

19 (Seal)
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