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New Willys store opens at Sickla shopping centre

The Willys low price chain continues to expand in Greater Stockholm and a new Willys store with about 3 000 sq m of retail area is to open at the beginning of 2007 in the Sickla shopping centre in the suburb of Nacka.

“Setting up shop in the Sickla shopping centre shows considerable promise. The area is regarded as a future regional centre, and a low price retail store will be a useful addition to the centre,” says Anders Quist, Deputy Managing Director of Willys Lågpris AB.

Sickla and the adjoining area of Nacka are fast growing districts with new building of residences, industrial and trading premises of different kinds. In Hammarby Sjöstad alone very large residential developments have now been built, with more to come in the near future.

The Willys store will have a retail area of about 3 000 sq m and be housed in a building being constructed by the Ljungbergs Group. An interesting neighbour to Willys in the new building will be an off-licence.

Willys is currently Sweden's largest cut price chain with a wide selection of goods, and particularly specialises in such perishables as fresh vegetables, cured meats and dairy products. The average store has a range of about 7,500 articles, which constitute 95% of consumers' annual grocery purchases. The price levels of the average food basket in Willys is the lowest in Sweden. The main reason for the low prices is that the stores are managed in a highly efficient manner at low overhead costs. This efficiency is achieved by, among other things, large volume purchase by the joint Group purchasing organisation.

The Willys chain consists of a total of 105 stores, of which 18 are located in the Stockholm area, and further expansion is planned. Axfood also includes 48 Willys hemma stores, which is the Axfood low price chain of smaller stores.

For further information, please contact:

Anders Quist, Deputy Managing Director, Willys AB, +46-708-28 42 82

Kenneth Wall, Acting Director of Corporate Communications, Axfood AB, +46-703-124 122

Willys AB's business concept is to offer Sweden's cheapest bag of groceries. The chain comprises approximately 100 wholly owned stores, with estimated annual sales of more than SEK 12 billion. Willys AB is thus Sweden's market-leading discount food chain. Willys is part of Axfood AB, which conducts retail trade through the wholly owned store chains Hemköp, Willys and Willys hemma, comprising roughly 240 stores, and wholesale trade through Dagab and Axfood Närlivs. In addition, Axfood collaborates with a number of proprietor-run stores that are tied to Axfood through agreements. These include stores within the Hemköp chain as well as stores run under the Handlar'n and Tempo brands. In all, Axfood collaborates with over 500 proprietor-run stores. Axfood is listed on the Stockholm Stock Exchange O-list, Attract 40. Axel Johnson AB is the principal owner, with approximately 45% of the shares.