

## **Store of the Year Winner Cambridge Naturals Raises Starting Pay to \$15**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **CONTACT:**

Emily Kanter, 617-492-4452, [emily@cambridgenaturals.com](mailto:emily@cambridgenaturals.com)

Michael Kanter, 617-492-4452 [michael@cambridgenaturals.com](mailto:michael@cambridgenaturals.com)

Bob Keener, 617-610-6766, [bob@businessforafairminimumwage.org](mailto:bob@businessforafairminimumwage.org)

*December 13, 2016* – Cambridge Naturals, an award-winning family-owned retailer in Cambridge, MA, will increase its starting hourly wage from \$13 to \$15, effective December 19th. While the company already pays above the state minimum wage and the retail industry average, the new \$15 wage floor will be in line with the higher standard for a living wage in the city of Cambridge. In addition, Cambridge Naturals already provides 100% medical and dental insurance coverage to all full-time employees.

Winner of the 2016 Store of the Year award from the nationwide Independent Natural Food Retailers Association, Cambridge Naturals has long been a leader in fair pay and ethical, innovative business practices. Founded in 1974 by Michael Kanter and Elizabeth Stagl, Cambridge Naturals is now also co-owned by their daughter Emily Kanter and her husband Caleb Dean.

“We want our employees to live healthy lives and be able to show up every day for work with more confidence in their financial stability. We believe this will not only improve our employees’ standard of living, but in turn their effectiveness in doing their jobs and serving our customers,” said Michael Kanter, Chief Visionary Officer and Co-Founder. “We are excited to make this move to \$15 now, and we believe it will bring even greater success to our business in the long run.”

As a member of Business for a Fair Minimum Wage, Michael Kanter testified in support of raising the Massachusetts state minimum wage to \$11 (effective January 1, 2017) and backs the new effort of the Raise Up Massachusetts campaign to gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 statewide.

“Over the course of the past year, I’ve been leading a group of business owners, residents, workers, and activists looking at ways the City might try to increase the minimum wage,” said Cambridge Mayor E. Denise Simmons. “The fact that businesses like Cambridge Naturals are taking the initiative on their own to increase the rate of pay for their employees is truly encouraging. It’s clear that Cambridge Naturals understands the value and the benefits of

paying their employees a fair and truly living wage, and by taking this step, they are showing other business owners in Cambridge that this is a model that can work. I very much applaud this move.”

Cambridge Naturals hosted U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez in March 2014 for a roundtable discussion with Massachusetts business owners on the business and economic reasons for increasing the state and federal minimum wage. This year, Cambridge Naturals was a leading retailer in the national Fair Pay Today Campaign, a partnership of Business for a Fair Minimum Wage and large natural products brands such as Dr. Bronner’s, Earth Friendly Products and Badger Balm, engaging consumers with the message that raising the minimum wage is “Good for Business, Good for Us All.”

“Cambridge Naturals has long led by example,” said Business for a Fair Minimum Wage CEO Holly Sklar. “Raising its starting pay to \$15 now is a great step and will help grow support for gradually raising the state minimum wage to \$15, benefiting business, employees and customers.”

Second-generation Co-Owner Emily Kanter said, “Cambridge Naturals is proud to be a leader in its industry and in the growing movement of businesses that believe in paying fair wages, which in turn results in healthier employees, stronger businesses, and prosperous communities.”

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[Cambridge Naturals](#) is located at 23 White Street (Porter Square Shopping Center) in Cambridge, MA.