

# Whole Foods Market opens store



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

ABOVE: A new Whole Foods Market opened last week in Santa Cruz at 911 Soquel Ave. BELOW: A produce clerk brings in a load of Watsonville strawberries from the Well-Pict label into the produce section of Whole Foods Market.

## New Santa Cruz location stocks produce from local growers

By TARMO HANNULA  
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SANTA CRUZ — Local growers and producers are filling up a sizable section of the 31,500-square-foot Whole Foods Market that opened last week on the east side of Santa Cruz.

Danny Olivas, community relations representative for Whole Foods, said the grand opening Wednesday was well-received.

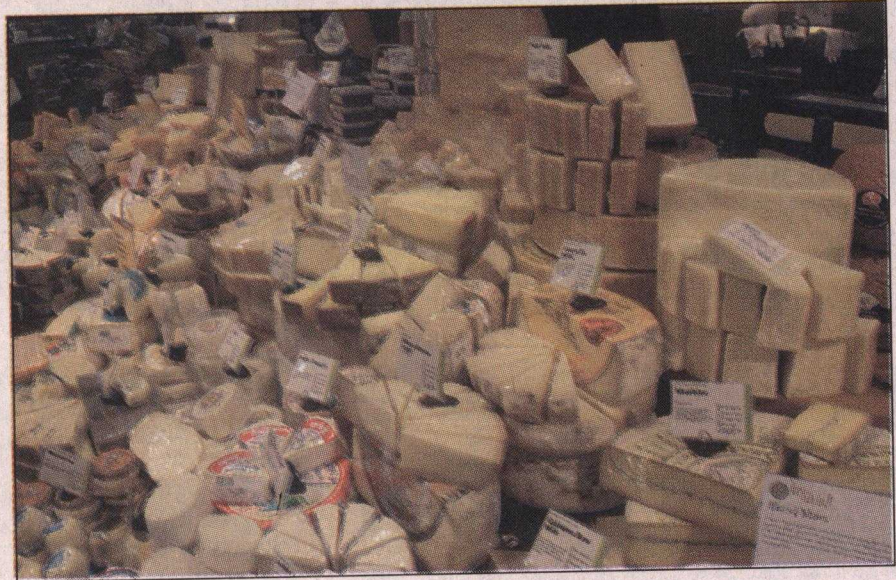
"It was a glorious opening and we had an amazing turnout from this wonderful community," Olivas said. "We were crowded right from the start."

Olivas said a major selling point for the products at Whole Foods is that the store represents more than 130 locally grown products. Included in that list are a number of Watsonville companies, including Bruce Rider apples, Martinelli's apple juice and cider, and berries from Giant, Driscoll's and Well-Pict.

The new store is situated in the former Albertsons building, which is in the same shopping center as Rite Aid, Ernie's Liquors and Tony and Alba's Pizza.

"We do the homework for our shoppers, giving them the peace of mind that our food is free of artificial flavors, colors, sweeteners, preservatives or hydrogenated fats," the Whole Foods Web site states. "We are the largest retailer of natural and organic foods and America's First National Certified Organic Grocer. We support local growers by selling their products and also by helping them financially by dedicating \$10 million annually to long-term, low-interest loans through our Local Producer Loan Program."

The market includes a bakery where several breads from scratch and other items



LEFT: A huge selection of cheese from around the world is available at Whole Foods Market.

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are baked daily; an olive bar; a full-service deli; fresh-baked pizzas; a full-service meat counter; a seafood counter, a coffee bar; an extensive cheese selection; and a bulk grains, nuts and candy section.

"I've been waiting forever for this store to open in San-

ta Cruz," said one female customer who chose not to reveal her name. "It's really good quality with a lot of selection. Their selection of cheeses is amazing. And I love the olive bar."

Whole Foods, which now has more than 275 stores in the United States, Canada

and the United Kingdom, was founded in Austin, Texas, in 1980. Plans are also in the works to open another Whole Foods on 41st Avenue in Capitola in the former Ralph's food store. It defines its mission as "selling the highest quality natural and organic products available."