



**For Immediate Release:**

***Ground Round is Ready to Grow Again with a Unique Franchise Offer***

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**Freeport, Maine** (June 18, 2010). Ground Round Independent Owners Cooperative (IOC) has owned and operated its own brand and franchise system since July 2004. This is a story of franchisees who came together to acquire their own brand and system. “We’re all in this together and now is our time for Ground Round to grow again” states Jack Crawford, who helped lead the acquisition in 2004 and recently returned as President & CEO. “Ground Round Grill and Bar is a brand guests have enjoyed for over 40 years, with an ownership structure that’s unique, and now we will grow again with a franchise offer like no other”

At their annual meeting held earlier this year, the franchise members of the Ground Round IOC voted their approval to offer membership shares in the Cooperative to new franchisees, which paves the way to a very compelling franchise offer to new members joining the group. Rich Batley, Board Member and Franchisee from Wisconsin, offers “In our Ground Round family, you not only own a franchise, but you are also a partner in the Cooperative with a structure that guarantees you’ll always have input in the direction of our brand and future.” Franchise partners can join the brand with a traditional franchise agreement and fees, or they can invest in and join the Cooperative, and receive a membership share in the company, voting rights and preferred royalty fees. A Board of Managers, elected by its membership, directs the staff and leads the affairs of the Cooperative.

Over the past six years the Ground Round IOC has proven out their new structure, updated its image and menu offerings, strengthened leadership and staff support, and paid off nearly 90% of the original debt from the brand acquisition. “The members of this Cooperative are also the day to day caretakers of our restaurants and brand, and they are mutually committed as franchisees and owners in our future growth and success,” offers Gary Serino, Chief Financial Officer. The growth plan includes a focus to add new units in existing and neighboring markets, primarily in the Midwestern and Northeastern United States, to further strengthen brand awareness, distribution of product and marketing ability.

**About Ground Round IOC**

Ground Round IOC is a franchise led organization, with headquarters based in Freeport, Maine, which operates 28 Ground Round Grill and Bar restaurants located in 12 states spread throughout the Midwest and Northeast areas of the United States. For more information, visit [www.groundround.com](http://www.groundround.com) .