



25 February 2011

**ICELAND CEO MALCOLM WALKER TO CLIMB EVEREST
TO RAISE £1M FOR ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH UK**

Iceland Foods founder and Chief Executive Malcolm Walker (65) and his son Richard (30) are to take part in a British expedition, launched and sponsored by Iceland Foods, which is climbing Everest in 2011. The Walkers' personal goals are to reach the North Col of Everest at 23,000ft and to raise at least £1 million for Alzheimer's Research UK to pursue a cure for early-onset Alzheimer's disease.

Led by renowned explorer David Hempleman-Adams, the Iceland Everest Expedition will follow in the footsteps of Mallory and Irvine from the north side of the mountain, and aims to plant the Iceland Foods flag at the summit. The Patron of the Expedition is HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and it has been awarded the privilege of carrying the flag of the Explorers Club.

All the Expedition's food has been specially prepared by Iceland supplier loxtonfoodco, using sous vide cooking techniques to ensure that the climbers will enjoy a safe, healthy, balanced and nutritious diet. This and the Expedition's other supplies are being generously airfreighted to Kathmandu by Iceland's supply chain partner DHL.

Iceland has a long record of involvement with good causes, having donated £7.5 million to charity since it became a founder member of the Per Cent Club in 1986. Last year the company's employees, customers and suppliers raised £1.5 million for Iceland's Charity of the Year, Help for Heroes, and the company has previously given over £3 million to the Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

Iceland's Charity of the Year for 2011 is Alzheimer's Research UK, and the first £1 million raised by the company has been pledged to research into early-onset Alzheimer's disease by a team headed by Prof Nick Fox at UCL Institute of Neurology.

The Expedition leaves the UK on 28 March and Malcolm has been granted a two month leave of absence by his fellow directors to take part. Full details of the team and much more information about Iceland's Charity of the Year and the Expedition Nutrition can be found on the Expedition's website at www.icelandeverest.org.uk

Malcolm Walker said, "I'm not much of an adventurer, unless you count my adventures in business, but last year David Hempleman-Adams took me to the North Pole – admittedly by helicopter – and we got talking about Everest. It's probably the toughest challenge on earth. Many people die trying. And I realised that I just had to give it a go.

"Given my age and experience, and the fact that I'm not suicidal, I don't rate my chances of reaching the summit. If I did, I'd be the same age as Sir Ranulph Fiennes when he got there, on his third attempt. But I do hope that Richard and I will be able to get to the North Col at 23,000ft and support the team taking the Iceland Foods flag right to the top. I'll be writing a blog as we do.

"I also hope that we can make the most of this fantastic opportunity to raise some serious money for a truly outstanding cause – Alzheimer's Research UK. Dementia will soon affect a million people in the UK and almost every family is touched by it, yet research into it attracts only a tiny fraction of the funding provided for cancer or heart disease. The tragedy is it's not just the elderly: early-onset Alzheimer's ruins the lives of people in their 40s and 50s. Please help us to find a cure for this dreadful disease."

Prof Nick Fox said, "Early-onset Alzheimer's disease is particularly cruel, affecting people who are otherwise fit and healthy, typically with jobs and young families, perhaps also with responsibility for caring for an elderly parent. Research into early-onset Alzheimer's is especially important not just because of the exceptional burden that it imposes on sufferers and their families, but also because it gives us the opportunity to look at people who are suffering **only** from Alzheimer's disease, rather than the multiple diseases and conditions typically associated with old age. So by focusing on early-onset Alzheimer's, we may be able to unlock secrets that will ultimately benefit all sufferers from the disease.

“I am hugely grateful to Malcolm and Richard Walker for dedicating the Iceland Everest Expedition to raising money to support our work, and I hope you will join me in sponsoring their climb. I wish them every success.”

Rebecca Wood, Chief Executive of Alzheimer’s Research UK, said, “We’re delighted that Alzheimer’s Research UK has been named Iceland’s Charity of the Year for 2011. This support, and Malcolm’s extraordinary efforts to conquer Everest, will be a major boost to research into dementia, a condition that affects over 820,000 people in the UK today. Research is the only answer to dementia, but it is desperately underfunded, so Iceland’s backing could not be more important.”

ENQUIRIES:

Iceland Foods Malcolm Walker, Chief Executive
01244 842221 / 07836 552200

Keith Hann, PR adviser
kh@keithhann.com
01244 842228 / 07831 521870

Alzheimer’s Research UK

Tim Parry, Senior Media Officer
01223 843304 / 07795 823308