



## Featured Stock in March's Dividend Growth Model Portfolio

Seven new stocks make our [Dividend Growth Stocks Model Portfolio](#) this month, which was made available to members on March 26, 2021.

### Recap From February's Picks

On a price return basis, our Dividend Growth Stocks Model Portfolio (+5.0%) outperformed the S&P 500 (+1.4%) by 3.6% from February 25, 2021 through March 24, 2021. On a total return basis, the Model Portfolio (+5.1%) outperformed the S&P 500 (+1.7%) by 3.4% over the same time. The best performing stock was up 20%. Overall, 23 out of the 30 Dividend Growth Stocks outperformed the S&P 500 from February 25, 2021 through March 24, 2021.

[Learn more about the best fundamental research](#)

More reliable & [proprietary](#) fundamental data, proven in [The Journal of Financial Economics](#), drives our research. Our proprietary [Robo-Analyst technology](#)<sup>1</sup> scales our forensic accounting expertise ([featured in Barron's](#)) across thousands of stocks<sup>2</sup> to produce an unrivaled database of fundamental data.

The methodology for this model portfolio mimics an All-Cap Blend style with a focus on dividend growth. Selected stocks earn an [Attractive or Very Attractive rating](#), generate positive free cash flow ([FCF](#)) and [economic earnings](#), offer a current dividend yield >1%, and have a 5+ year track record of consecutive dividend growth. This model portfolio is designed for investors who are more focused on long-term capital appreciation than current income, but still appreciate the power of dividends, especially growing dividends.

### Featured Stock From March: Tractor Supply Co (TSCO: \$177/share)

Tractor Supply Company (TSCO) is the featured stock from March's Dividend Growth Stocks Model Portfolio.

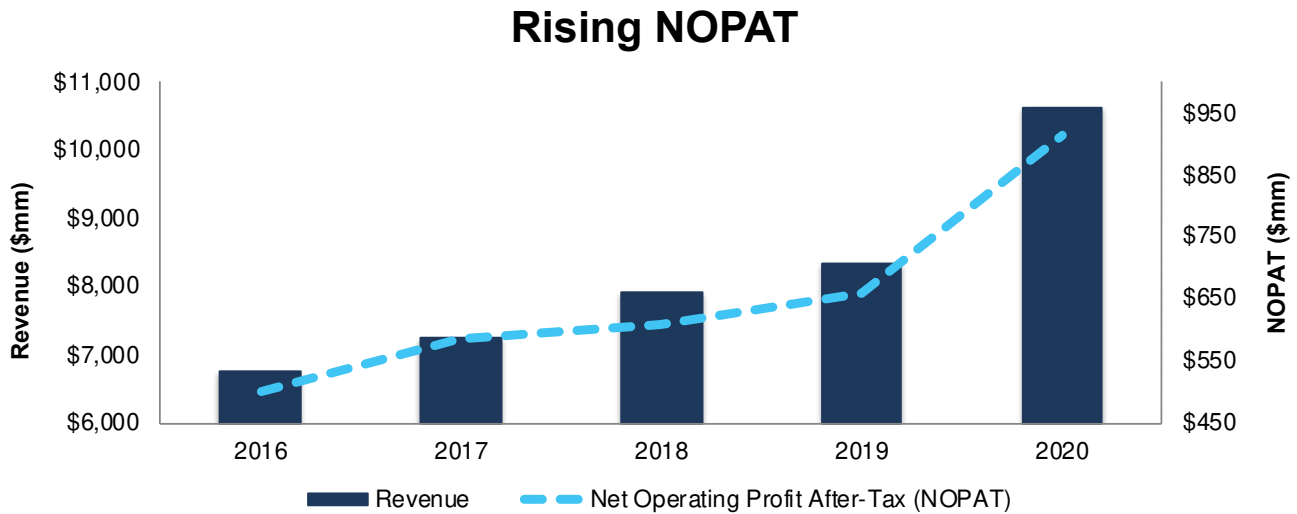
Tractor Supply has grown revenue by 11% compounded annually and net operating profit after-tax ([NOPAT](#)) by 15% compounded annually over the past five years. The firm's NOPAT margin increased from 7% in 2016 to 9% in 2020 while invested capital turns improved from 1.8 to 2.2 over the same time. Rising NOPAT margin and [invested capital turns](#) drive Tractor Supply's return on invested capital ([ROIC](#)) higher from 13% in 2016 to 19% in 2020.

<sup>1</sup> Harvard Business School features our research automation technology in the case [Disrupting Fundamental Analysis with Robo-Analysts](#).

<sup>2</sup> See how our models and financial ratios are superior to Bloomberg and Capital IQ's (SPGI) analytics in the [detailed appendix of this paper](#).



**Figure 1: Tractor Supply NOPAT & Revenue Since 2016**



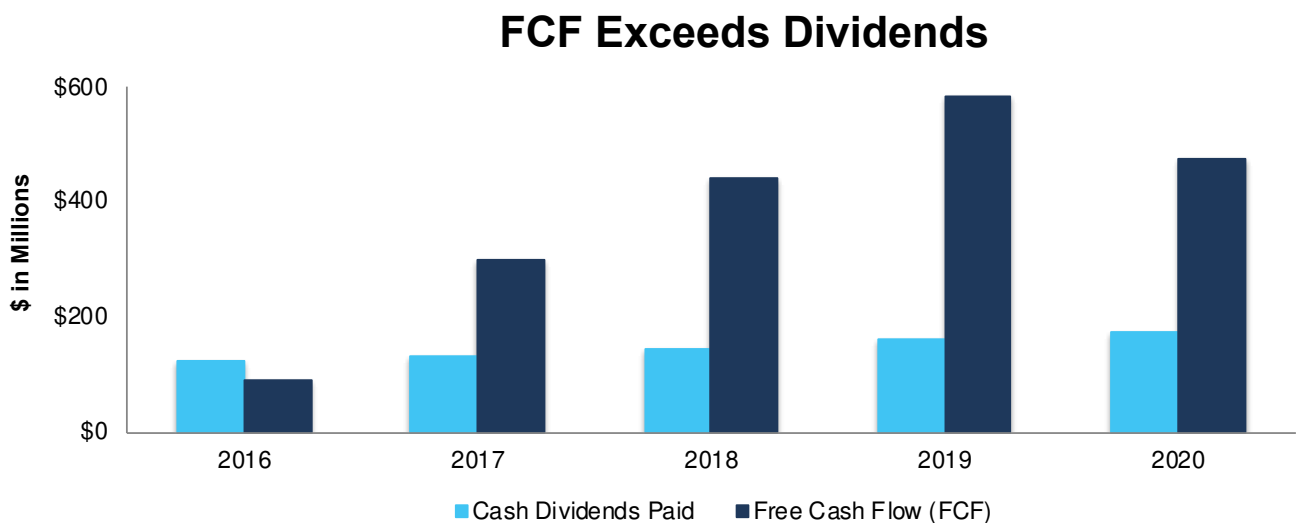
Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

### Steady Dividend Growth Supported by FCF

Tractor Supply has increased its regular dividend in every year for the last decade from \$0.28/share in 2010 to \$1.50/share in 2020, or 18% compounded annually. The current quarterly dividend, when annualized, equals \$2.08/share and provides a 1.2% dividend yield.

More importantly, Tractor Supply's strong free cash flow (FCF) supports the firm's growing dividend payments. Tractor Supply generated a cumulative \$1.9 billion (9% of current market cap) in FCF while paying \$741 million in dividends from 2016 to 2020, per Figure 2. In 2020, Tractor Supply Co generated \$474 million in free cash flow and paid \$175 million in dividends.

**Figure 2: Free Cash Flow vs. Regular Dividend Payments**



Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

Companies with FCF well in excess of dividend payments provide higher quality dividend growth opportunities because we know the firm generates the cash to support a higher dividend. On the other hand, the dividend of a company where FCF falls short of the dividend payment over time cannot be trusted to grow or even maintain its dividend because of inadequate free cash flow.



## TSCO Has Upside Potential

At its current price of \$177/share, TSCO has a price-to-economic book value ([PEBV](#)) ratio of 0.9. This ratio means the market expects Tractor Supply's NOPAT to permanently decline by 10%. This expectation seems overly pessimistic for a firm that has grown NOPAT by 20% compounded annually over the past two decades.

Even if Tractor Supply's NOPAT margin falls to its 5-year average of 8% (compared to 9% in 2020), and the firm grows NOPAT by just 3% compounded annually for the next decade, the stock is worth \$251/share today – a 42% upside. [See the math behind the reverse DCF scenario](#). Add in Tractor Supply Co's 1.2% dividend yield and history of dividend growth, and it's clear why this stock is in March's Dividend Growth Stocks Model Portfolio.

### Critical Details Found in Financial Filings by Our [Robo-Analyst Technology](#)

Fact: we provide [superior fundamental data](#) and earnings models – unrivaled in the world.

Proof: [Core Earnings: New Data and Evidence](#), forthcoming in The Journal of Financial Economics.

Below are specifics on the adjustments we make based on Robo-Analyst findings in Tractor Supply's 10-K:

Income Statement: we made \$258 million in adjustments with a net effect of removing \$166 million in [non-operating expenses](#) (2% of revenue). See all adjustments made to Tractor Supply Co's income statement [here](#).

Balance Sheet: we made \$1.2 billion of adjustments to calculate invested capital with a net decrease of \$1.1 billion. The most notable adjustment was \$64 million (1% of reported net assets) in [asset write-downs](#). See all adjustments to Tractor Supply Co's balance sheet [here](#).

Valuation: we made \$4.4 billion of adjustments with a net effect of decreasing shareholder value by \$2.8 billion. Apart from [total debt](#), one of the most notable adjustments to shareholder value was \$811 million in [excess cash](#). This adjustment represents 4% of Tractor Supply's market value. See all adjustments to Tractor Supply Co's valuation [here](#).

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*Disclosure: David Trainer, Kyle Guske II, Alex Sword and Matt Shuler receive no compensation to write about any specific stock, style, or theme.*

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## *It's Official: We Offer the Best Fundamental Data in the World*

Many firms claim their research is superior, but none of them can prove it with independent studies from highly-respected institutions as we can. Three different papers from both the public and private sectors show:

1. Legacy fundamental datasets suffer from significant inaccuracies, omissions and biases.
2. Only our “novel database” can overcome these flaws and provides [materially superior](#) fundamental data.
3. Our proprietary measures of [Core Earnings](#) and [Earnings Distortion](#) materially improve stock picking and forecasting of profits.

### **Best Fundamental Data in the World**

Forthcoming in [The Journal of Financial Economics](#), a top peer-reviewed journal, [Core Earnings: New Data & Evidence](#) proves our Robo-Analyst technology overcomes material shortcomings in legacy firms’ data collection processes to provide superior [fundamental data](#), [earnings](#) models, and [research](#). More [details](#).

Key quotes from the paper:

- “[New Constructs’] *Total Adjustments* differs significantly from the items identified and excluded from Compustat’s adjusted earnings measures. For example... 50% to 70% of the variation in *Total Adjustments* is not explained by S&P Global’s (SPGI) *Adjustments* individually.” – pp. 14, 1<sup>st</sup> para.
- “A final source of differences [between New Constructs’ and S&P Global’s data] is due to data collection oversights...we identified cases where Compustat did not collect information relating to firms’ income that is useful in assessing core earnings.” – pp. 16, 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

### **Superior Models**

A top accounting firm features the superiority of our ROIC, NOPAT and Invested Capital research to Capital IQ & Bloomberg’s in [Getting ROIC Right](#). See the [Appendix](#) for direct comparison details.

Key quotes from the paper:

- “...an accurate calculation of ROIC requires more diligence than often occurs in some of the common, off-the-shelf ROIC calculations. Only by scouring the footnotes and the MD&A [ as New Constructs does] can investors get an accurate calculation of ROIC.” – pp. 8, 5<sup>th</sup> para.
- “The majority of the difference...comes from New Constructs’ machine learning approach, which leverages technology to calculate ROIC by applying accounting adjustments that may be buried deeply in the footnotes across thousands of companies.” – pp. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

### **Superior Stock Ratings**

Robo-Analysts’ stock ratings outperform those from human analysts as shown in this [paper](#) from Indiana’s Kelley School of Business. Bloomberg features the paper [here](#).

Key quotes from the paper:

- “the portfolios formed following the buy recommendations of Robo-Analysts earn abnormal returns that are statistically and economically significant.” – pp. 6, 3<sup>rd</sup> para.
- “Our results ultimately suggest that Robo-Analysts are a valuable, alternative information intermediary to traditional sell-side analysts.” – pp. 20, 3<sup>rd</sup> para.

Our mission is to provide the best fundamental analysis of public and private businesses in the world and make it affordable for all investors, not just Wall Street insiders.

We believe every investor deserves to know the whole truth about the profitability and valuation of any company they consider for investment. More details on our cutting-edge technology and how we use it are [here](#).



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