



January 8, 2013

SunOpta Acquires Value-Added Bulgarian Processing Operation

Expands Presence in a Key Growing Area for Organic Products

TORONTO, Jan. 8, 2013 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- SunOpta Inc. ("SunOpta" or the "Company") (Nasdaq:STKL) (TSX:SOY) today announced that the Company has completed the acquisition of a value-added grains handling and processing facility located in Silistra, Bulgaria. The facility is currently a strategic supplier for SunOpta, producing value-added sunflower kernel, oil and related by-products. The acquisition further expands the Company's global sourcing platform and value-added ingredient capabilities.

The facility, operated as the Organic Land Corporation OOD (OLC), was acquired by The Organic Corporation B.V. (TOC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Company and a division of the International Foods Group. The purchase price was EUR 3.2 million, inclusive of debt, and is subject to normal closing adjustments. Key personnel will remain with the operations and the former shareholders of OLC will be eligible for an earn-out over the next three years based on specified EBITDA targets. The acquisition was funded via existing credit facilities.

Silistra is located in north east Bulgaria, close to the Black Sea and the Danube River Delta. Located nearby in Romania is a sizable agricultural area that is protected and chemical free, with many growers producing organic products including sunflower, flax seed, corn, barley and soy beans. The Company intends to expand its presence in this region across these key product categories and will also expand the facility by adding additional storage and processing capabilities to maximize supply sources for value-added processing.

Gerard Versteegh, President of the SunOpta International Foods Group commented; "The acquisition of OLC allows us to expand our product offerings in both value-added organic sunflower kernel and organic sunflower oil. The location is ideal for securing supply of organic raw materials for further processing and will allow us to expand our capabilities into other organic products that are grown in the UNESCO protected area within the Danube River Delta. We would like to welcome the former employees of OLC to TOC and SunOpta."

Steve Bromley, Chief Executive Officer of SunOpta Inc. commented; "Consistent with our strategy of becoming a pure play natural and organic foods company, aggressively growing our value-added ingredients and packaged foods portfolio, and leveraging our integrated platform, the acquisition of OLC expands our value-added processing capabilities and increases our presence in a key global supply area, while at the same time leveraging our integrated processing platform."

About SunOpta Inc.

SunOpta Inc. is a leading global company focused on natural, organic and specialty foods products. The Company specializes in sourcing, processing and packaging of natural and organic food products, integrated from seed through packaged products; with a focus on strategically vertically integrated business models. The Company's core natural and organic food operations focus on value-added grains, fiber and fruit based product offerings, supported by a global infrastructure. The Company has two non-core holdings, a 66.2% ownership position in Opta Minerals Inc., listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, a producer, distributor, and recycler of environmentally friendly industrial materials; and a minority ownership position in Mascoma Corporation, an innovative biofuels company.

The SunOpta Inc. logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=3958>

Forward-Looking Statements

Certain statements included in this press release may be considered "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and applicable Canadian securities legislation, which are based on information available to us on the date of this release. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, our expansion plans for the facility, our plans to increase our organic sunflower kernel and oil business and our plans to expand into other organic products grown in the region. The terms and phrases "intends," "will," "allows," "becoming" and other similar terms and phrases are intended to identify these forward looking statements. Forward looking statements are based on information available to us on the date of this release and are based on estimates and assumptions made by the Company in light of its experience and its perception of historical trends, current conditions and expected future developments as well as

other factors the Company believes are appropriate in the circumstances including that all third party and regulatory approvals and other conditions to completion of the sale transaction will be satisfied or waived and that there are no material unanticipated variations in budgeted costs. The Company makes no representation that reasonable business people in possession of the same information would reach the same conclusions. Whether actual timing and results will agree with expectations and predications of the Company is subject to many risks and uncertainties including, potential delays or inability to source organic sunflower and other products, possible labour, construction or other delays or issues in connection with the expansion of the facility, cost overruns in the capital expansion activities and the ability to remain competitive and continue to sell our products into Western Europe, as well as other risks described from time to time under "Risk Factors" in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K and its Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q (available at www.sec.gov). Consequently all forward-looking statements made herein are qualified by these cautionary statements and there can be no assurance that the actual results or developments anticipated by the Company will be realized.

CONTACT: SunOpta Inc.

Steve Bromley, CEO

Robert McKeracher, Vice President & CFO

Susan Wiekenkamp, Information Officer

Tel: 905-455-2528, ext. 103

susan.wiekenkamp@sunopta.com

Website: www.sunopta.com