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SunOpta Announces Expansion of Aseptic Processing and Filling Operations to Meet Increased Demand

TORONTO, Dec. 4, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- SunOpta Inc. (Nasdaq:STKL) (TSX:SOY), a leading global company focused on natural and organic foods, today announced a significant expansion project at its Allentown, Pennsylvania facility to meet continued customer demand for aseptically processed healthy beverages.

The expansion will add aseptic beverage processing and filling capabilities to SunOpta's existing manufacturing facility in Allentown, Pennsylvania. The Allentown facility currently produces resealable pouch products, and the addition of aseptic beverage capabilities will create a dual purpose consumer products facility that further leverages existing infrastructure while at the same time increasing SunOpta's footprint to better serve North American and International customers. The new aseptic capabilities are expected to be in production in the fourth quarter of 2015, at an estimated initial cost of \$25 million, with room for further expansion at the facility as demand grows.

"The expansion of our integrated aseptic platform aligns with our strategy to aggressively grow our value added consumer packaged foods portfolio," said Steve Bromley, Chief Executive Officer of SunOpta Inc. "Demand for aseptically processed healthy beverages continues to grow as consumers focus on health and wellness, and we are well positioned to participate in these fast growing categories. This expansion will enhance our North American aseptic processing footprint, increase capacity and allow us to better serve our customer portfolio."

Earlier this year, SunOpta announced the expansion of its aseptic processing and filling capabilities in Modesto, California with the addition of an additional processor and two multi-serve fillers to increase processing potential, expand capacity and further the broad range of packaging formats provided from the facility. The first new filler is expected to begin production before the end of 2014, and the processor is expected to be commissioned during the first quarter of 2015. The second filler is expected to be commissioned in April 2015.

SunOpta's vertically integrated aseptic beverage capabilities are unique and incorporate raw material sourcing through ingredient production and finished packaged products, providing for control of quality, organic certification, and traceability from the farm to finished packaged product. Current production capabilities include soymilk, rice beverage, almond beverage, hemp milk, sunflower milk, ancient grain beverages, coconut based beverages, nutritional beverages, teas, dairy products and broths among others. SunOpta's aseptic processing operations are currently located in Alexandria, Minnesota and Modesto, California. The Allentown expansion will add strategically important east coast capabilities. Together, the operations of Alexandria, Modesto and Allentown are expected to provide SunOpta with one of the largest integrated healthy beverage processing platforms in North America.

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 66.0% 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, the expected timing and cost of the planned expansion of our processing and filling capabilities in Allentown, PA and expected timing of production and commissioning of the new fillers at our Modesto, CA plant, as well as the anticipated benefits of the expansion of these facilities. Terms and phrases such as "will", "expected", "estimated", "continues" 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 the time required to complete additional capacity as a result of prior expansion activities, that all third party and regulatory approvals will be obtained 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 possible labour or construction delays in connection with the expansion of the facilities, potential installation, processing or other operational issues which might affect timing or capacity, issues with respect to throughput and product quality, delays with or inability to secure ingredients and consumer preferences and acceptance of our products, 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.

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