



SunOpta Inc. to Acquire Distribue-Vie Fruits & Legumes Biologiques Inc.

TORONTO--March 1, 2004--SunOpta Inc. (Nasdaq:STKL)(TSX:SOY) announced today that it has reached an agreement to acquire the outstanding shares of Distribue-Vie Fruits & Legumes Biologiques Inc. ("Distribue-Vie").

Distribue-Vie specializes in the distribution of organic fresh foods with an emphasis on produce. Select lines of grocery and drink items complement the product mix. Distribue-Vie is the dominant player in the distribution of organic produce in Quebec and operates from a warehousing facility located in Montreal, servicing the key Quebec market along with geographic reach to Eastern Ontario and the Maritime provinces. Distribue-Vie is a profitable company with revenues in the past year of approximately Cdn. \$7.0 million.

The addition of Distribue-Vie to SunOpta's Canadian natural and organic distribution system is expected to bring significant benefits to the customer base in the form of broader product lines and greater support for consumer education of organics through marketing and retail merchandising initiatives.

Jeremy Kendall, Chairman and CEO of SunOpta Inc. commented that "We are extremely pleased to have reached an agreement with Distribue-Vie and we want to welcome Denis Fisette and the Distribue-Vie team to the SunOpta family. When combined with our existing distribution operations, we are yet another step closer to our stated goal of creating a strong and vibrant national natural and organic foods distribution system."

Denis Fisette, President and CEO of Distribue-Vie commented that "We are pleased to become part of the SunOpta organization with its strong commitment to natural and organic foods and environmental responsibility. I am confident that this combination will bring significant benefits to our customer base as we promote the growth, integrity and economics of organic products."

The all cash transaction is subject to completion of definitive agreements and is scheduled to close on March 3, 2004.

SunOpta Inc. is an owner/operator of high-growth ethical businesses, focusing on integrated business models in the natural and organic food markets. For the last five consecutive years, SunOpta was included in Profit magazine's 'Profit 100' list of the 100 fastest growing companies in Canada. The company has three business units: the SunOpta Food Group, which specializes in sourcing, processing and distribution of natural and organic food products integrated from seed through packaged products; the Opta Minerals Group, a producer, distributor, and recycler of environmentally friendly industrial materials; and the StakeTech Steam Explosion Group that engineers and markets clean pulping systems using patented steam explosion technology. Each of these business units has proprietary products and services that give it a solid competitive advantage in its sector.

Note: This news release may contain forward-looking information. Actual future results may differ materially. The risks, uncertainties, and other factors that could influence actual results are described in the Company's annual report to shareholders and in SEC filings.

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