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SunOpta Announces Further Expansion of Modesto Aseptic Operation to Meet Increased Demand

TORONTO, Sept. 9, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- SunOpta Inc. (Nasdaq:STKL) (TSX:SOY), a leading global company focused on natural and organic foods, announced that in order to meet continued customer demand, it will further expand its Modesto, California aseptic processing and packaging operation.

Following the announcement of the addition of a third processor in Modesto which will be commissioned during the first quarter of 2015, SunOpta will add two multi-serve (liter/quart) fillers, expanding capacity and furthering the broad range of packaging formats it provides. The first new filler is expected to be in production by the end of fiscal 2014, with the second being commissioned in April 2015.

The Modesto aseptic processing and packaging operation was initially commissioned in 2010, and since that time has undergone a number of expansions to meet continued growing demand. The operation is strategically paired with SunOpta's aseptic processing and packaging operation in Alexandria, Minnesota, and when completed, the expansions are expected to increase annual aseptic beverage packaging capacity to more than 500 million packages.

Steve Bromley, Chief Executive Officer, SunOpta Inc. commented, "Our integrated aseptic platform is currently experiencing tremendous growth. This expansion will further enable SunOpta to grow in low-acid aseptic categories including non-dairy, dairy, nutritional beverages, teas, broths and others, serving a wide range of customers and addressing growing consumer demand for 'convenient and on-the-go' healthy food options. The continued investment in our aseptic platform is directly aligned with our core strategies to aggressively grow our value-added ingredients and packaged foods portfolio and to leverage our integrated platform in becoming a pure play natural and organic foods company."

SunOpta's vertically integrated aseptic beverage capabilities are unique and utilize operations incorporating raw material sourcing through ingredient production and finished packaged products, ensuring control of quality and organic certification, as well as providing 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.

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.

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 estimated timing of completion and increased capacity resulting from the addition of a third processor and additional filling lines at our Modesto, CA plant, as well as our core strategies of growing our value-added ingredients and packaged foods portfolios and leveraging our integrated platform. Terms and phrases such as "continue," "will," "expected," "continued," "believe" 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 effect and increases in 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.

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

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