



## SunOpta Announces the Opta Minerals' Underwriters Have Exercised Their Over Allotment Option

TORONTO--March 16, 2005--SunOpta Inc. (SunOpta or the Company) (Nasdaq:STKL) (TSX:SOY) today announced that the over-allotment option granted to the underwriters in connection with the initial public offering of Opta Minerals Inc. (Opta Minerals) (TSX:OPM) was exercised in full and has closed for gross proceeds of CDN \$1,800,000, bringing the aggregate gross proceeds to Opta Minerals under its initial public offering to CDN \$19,800,000. A syndicate of underwriters, led by Loewen, Ondaatje, McCutcheon Limited, and including First Associates Investments Inc. and Canaccord Capital Corporation, purchased an additional 450,000 common shares and 225,000 common share purchase warrants at a purchase price of CDN \$3.99 and CDN \$0.02, respectively. The warrants are listed under the symbol "OPM.WT" on the Toronto Stock Exchange and each warrant entitles the holder to purchase one common share of Opta Minerals at a price of CDN \$5.00 any time on or before February 17, 2007.

Approximately CDN \$500,000 of these proceeds will be used to repay debt owing to SunOpta with the remainder available for internal growth projects and acquisitions within Opta Minerals.

Steve Bromley, President and Chief Operating Officer of SunOpta and a Director of Opta Minerals commented, "We are extremely pleased with the completion of the initial public offering including the exercise of the over-allotment option. Many exciting growth opportunities lie ahead for Opta Minerals and we look forward to solid growth in this business."

### About Opta Minerals:

Opta Minerals is a vertically integrated producer, manufacturer, distributor and recycler of silica-free loose abrasives, industrial minerals, specialty sands and related products for use primarily in the foundry, steel, marine/bridge cleaning, roofing shingle and municipal water filtration industries. With its head office in Waterdown, Ontario, the Company also has production and distribution facilities in Ontario, Quebec, Louisiana, South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and New York and one of the broadest product lines in the industry.

SunOpta Inc. is an operator of high-growth ethical businesses, focusing on integrated business models in the natural and organic food markets. For the last six consecutive years, SunOpta was included in Profit magazine's 'Profit 100' list of the 100 fastest growing companies in Canada. The company has three operating 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.

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