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SunOpta Inc. Completes Sale of Its Fiber and Starch Business

TORONTO, Dec. 23, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- SunOpta Inc. (Nasdaq:STKL) (TSX:SOY), a leading global company focused on natural and organic foods, today announced that it has completed the sale of its fiber and starch business to J. Rettenmaier & Söhne Group (JRS) for \$37.5 million.

SunOpta plans to use the proceeds from the sale to, among other things, invest in areas of the company which align with its vertically integrated business model which leverages its global sourcing and supply capabilities and designed to deliver a higher value add to customers and lead to improved margin. In line with this strategy, SunOpta recently announced plans to invest approximately \$25 million in an aseptic facility expansion in Allentown, PA.

"With the sale complete, we will use this as an opportunity to invest in areas of the company that fit our core, two-touch strategy where we control the supply chain and provide additional value to our customers," said Steve Bromley, Chief Executive Officer at SunOpta. "I want to wish the transitioning employees a successful career at JRS and thank them for their contributions to SunOpta's growth."

Under terms of the agreement, SunOpta sold its fiber and starch business including operations in Louisville, KY, Cedar Rapids, IA, Cambridge, MN, Fosston, MN and Galesburg, IL. All employees of these operations are now part of JRS' portfolio of food operations.

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, fruit and vegetable based product offerings, supported by a global infrastructure. The Company also has 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.

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 proposed use of the proceeds and anticipated benefits from our vertically integrated business model and two-touch strategy. Terms and phrases such as "plans", "will" 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 there is no material change in our plans for the expansion of our Allentown, PA facility or to our sourcing and supply capabilities. 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 labor or construction delays and or cost overruns in connection with the expansion of the Allentown, PA facility, potential installation, processing or other operational issues which might affect timing or capacity 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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