



## **Sunopta Endorses Cellulosic Ethanol Initiatives in the State of the Union Address**

TORONTO--Jan. 24, 2007--SunOpta Inc. (NASDAQ:STKL) (TSX:SOY) today commended the current administration for its focus and commitment to commercial deployment of cellulosic ethanol in the State of the Union Address. The new Renewable Fuels Standard will mandate production of 35 billion gallons of biofuel by 2017, a five-fold increase. In addition, the new Farm Bill will include \$2 billion dollars for funding of cellulosic ethanol plants. Cellulosic ethanol is clearly a large part of the solution to America's "addiction to oil" and the policy steps and financial commitment detailed in support of cellulosic ethanol represent significant progress towards this goal.

The availability of corn (starch) as an ethanol feedstock is expected to limit production of ethanol to a maximum 15 billion gallons per year, making a move to cellulosic feedstocks inevitable. To achieve 35 billion gallons per year of ethanol production by 2017, it is clear that cellulosic ethanol will be required in massive quantities in order to fill that 20 billion gallon per year gap as a large part of an overall effort towards energy security and reduction of greenhouse gases.

Cellulosic ethanol addresses the moral issue of using food (corn, wheat) for fuel as numerous agricultural wastes and underutilized forest products can be utilized without impacting costs and supply within the food chain. As economist Lester Brown of the Earth Policy Institute has pointed out, ethanol plants in the U.S. are expected to consume 50% of the U.S. corn crop in 2008 and this will have a significant impact on the cost and availability of foods around the world. Mr. Brown has estimated that the corn needed to fill a 25 gallon tank with ethanol could feed a person for a year.

Cellulosic ethanol also provides significant energy efficiency versus corn starch-based ethanol and produces 95% less carbon emissions than gasoline, a very important factor as the impacts of global warming are felt around the world.

SunOpta's participation in existing cellulosic ethanol projects in China, Europe and the United States confirms that large-scale commercial cellulosic ethanol production is viable now and that production of upwards of 20 billion gallons of cellulosic biofuels by 2017 is an achievable goal. The SunOpta plant provided to China Resources Alcohol Corporation (CRAC) is currently producing cellulosic ethanol made from corn stover on a 24-hour a day basis, and will act as a springboard for CRAC's stated intention to produce 330 million gallons per year by 2012. Likewise, SunOpta has recently announced a joint venture with GreenField Ethanol, Canada's largest producer of ethanol. This joint venture is planning to produce 10 million gallons per year at the world's first true "commercial scale" cellulosic ethanol plant, with larger plants to follow.

### **About SunOpta Inc.**

SunOpta Inc. is an operator of high-growth ethical businesses, focusing on integrated business models in the natural and organic food, supplements and health and beauty markets. 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 SunOpta BioProcess Group (soon to become SunOpta BioProcess Inc.) which engineers and markets proprietary steam explosion technology systems for the pulp, bio-fuel and food processing industries. Each of these business units has proprietary products and services that give it a solid competitive advantage in its sector.

### **Forward-Looking Statements**

Certain statements included in this press release may constitute "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to references to business strategies, competitive strengths, goals, capital expenditure plans, business and operational growth plans and references to the future growth of the business. These forward looking statements are based on certain assumptions and analyses made by the Company in light of its experience and its interpretation of current conditions, historical trends and expected future developments as well as other factors that the Company believes are appropriate in the circumstance. However, whether actual results and developments will agree with expectations and predications of the Company is subject to many risks and uncertainties including, but not limited to; general economic, business or market risk conditions; competitive actions by other companies; changes in laws or regulations or policies of local governments, provinces and states as well as the governments of United States and Canada, many of which are beyond the control of the Company. 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.

CONTACT: SunOpta Inc.

Jeremy N. Kendall, Chairman & CEO

Steve Bromley, President & COO

John Dietrich, Vice President & CFO

Susan Wiekenkamp, Information Officer

905-455-2528, ext. 103

[susan.wiekenkamp@sunopta.com](mailto:susan.wiekenkamp@sunopta.com)

Website: [www.sunopta.com](http://www.sunopta.com)

or

Investment Community Inquiries

Lytham Partners, LLC

Joe Diaz, Robert Blum, Joe Dorame, 602-889-9700

[diaz@lythampartners.com](mailto:diaz@lythampartners.com)

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