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SunOpta Inc. Announces Rik Jacobs to Succeed Steve Bromley as President and Chief Executive Officer Effective October 1, 2015

TORONTO, July 7, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- SunOpta Inc. ("SunOpta") (Nasdaq:STKL) (TSX:SOY), a leading global company focused on organic, non-genetically modified and specialty foods, today announced the appointment of Rik Jacobs to President and Chief Executive Officer effective October 1, 2015. In conjunction with this appointment, Jacobs will also become a member of the Board of Directors.

A photo accompanying this release is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=34265>

Jacobs will succeed SunOpta's current CEO Steve Bromley, who will assume the role of Vice Chair effective October 1, 2015. Bromley will complete the transition in leadership and support Jacobs and the Board on key corporate development activities until the end of 2015.

Bromley joined the organization in 2001 and has led SunOpta as CEO since 2007. During that time SunOpta has built competitive advantage in growing segments, while disposing of non-core assets and repositioning the business. The CEO transition reflects a key moment in SunOpta's continued transformation as it increasingly focuses on execution and accelerated performance now that the strategic foundation has been established.

Jacobs has been a key architect of SunOpta's strategic foundation, working closely with Bromley, and he has been a driving force behind the transformational efforts focused on leveraging core assets within the company's global operating platform. He has extensive international food industry experience in general management, sales, strategy and marketing with Tetra Pak, PepsiCo, Royal Dutch Ahold and the Coca-Cola Company.

"The time for succession is right as our focus increasingly turns to execution and accelerated performance," said Alan Murray, Chair of SunOpta Inc. "Rik is a dynamic leader who has done an incredible job transforming the structure, talent and processes necessary to support SunOpta's solid strategic foundation. He has tremendous global food industry expertise, knows SunOpta deeply, and is a leader who we are confident will accelerate growth and performance."

"We are indebted to Steve for his long-standing commitment to SunOpta and for his strong leadership," Murray added. "He has created the strategic foundation in place today and he has made great strides in repositioning the business and SunOpta's core assets in growing segments and categories."

"I believe SunOpta has tremendous competitive advantages that come from our integrated, global operating platform," said Jacobs. "We are well positioned in growth categories driven by consumer trends, and we have a great opportunity to leverage our strengths and accelerate stakeholder value. I am very excited to lead this organization and our team at such a pivotal moment in our ongoing transformation."

"I am proud of what we have accomplished at SunOpta, including refocusing our business on core growing segments, disposing of non-core assets, and creating competitive advantage through our global operating platform," Bromley said. "As our focus increasingly shifts to executing against our strategic foundation, the timing is right to transition to Rik's leadership, and I am looking forward to supporting him and the Board in that transition and on continued corporate development activity as the year unfolds."

About SunOpta

SunOpta Inc. is a leading global company focused on organic, non-genetically modified ("non-GMO") and specialty foods. The Company specializes in the sourcing, processing and packaging of organic and non-GMO food products, integrated from seed through packaged products; with a focus on strategic vertically integrated business models. The Company's organic and non-GMO food operations revolve around value-added grain, seed, fruit and vegetable based product offerings, supported by a global sourcing and supply infrastructure. The Company also holds an approximate 66% ownership position in Opta Minerals Inc. (TSX:OPM), a producer, distributor, and recycler of industrial minerals and silica-free abrasives. Opta Minerals is a non-core holding.

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

Forward-looking information

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, our positioning for growth, our competitive advantages, and our ability to accelerate growth and performance. Generally, forward-looking statements do not relate strictly to historical or current facts and are typically accompanied by words such as "expect", "believe", "anticipate", "estimate", "intend", "project", "potential", "continue", "could", "would", "should", "might", "plan", "will", "may", "predict" or other similar terms and phrases 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, but not limited to, general economic conditions, continued consumer interest in health and wellness, ability to maintain product pricing levels, current customer demand, planned facility and operational expansions, competitive intensity, cost rationalization, product development initiatives, and alternative potential uses for our capital resources. Whether actual timing and results will agree with expectations and predications of the Company is subject to many risks and uncertainties including, but not limited to, global economic conditions, consumer spending patterns and changes in market trends, decreases in customer demand, delayed or unsuccessful product development efforts, potential product recalls, working capital management and continuous improvement initiatives, availability and pricing of raw materials and supplies, potential covenant breaches under our credit facilities, and 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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Rik Jacobs