



Sonoco Sets New Commitments for Sustainable Packaging and Recycling

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Company Supporting Food Industry's Efforts to Reduce Global Food Waste

HARTSVILLE, S.C., Aug. 07, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sonoco (NYSE:SON), one of the largest diversified global packaging companies, announced the expansion of its environmental and social stewardship initiatives to include commitments to achieve greater packaging sustainability and recycling in support of the food industry's efforts to reduce global food waste. These new time-based commitments, along with an update of the Company's ongoing efforts to improve environmental, governance and social measures, are highlighted in its 2017-18 Corporate Responsibility Report, entitled *Better Packaging, Better Life – for a Better World*, which is available on the Company's website at www.sonoco.com/sustainability.

Specifically, Sonoco set out key commitments for more sustainable use and increased recyclability of packaging by 2025, including:

- Sonoco will increase the equivalent by weight, the amount it recycles, or causes to be recycled, from 75 percent to 85 percent, relative to the volume of packaging it places into the global market place.
- Sonoco is committed to increasing the use of post-consumer recycled resins in its plastic packaging from 19 percent to 25 percent.
- Sonoco will ensure that approximately 75 percent of its rigid plastic packaging can carry the relevant on-package recyclable claim.

In addition, Sonoco will not use resin additives that purport to degrade in landfills or waterways by simply breaking up into smaller pieces. Finally, the Company will ensure all of its production facilities using plastic pellets have systems to prevent discharges into the environment.

According to Rob Tiede, president and chief executive officer, "Sonoco believes packaging plays an important role in protecting food from damage and spoilage, while extending shelf life at retail and home. In fact, greater adoption of food packaging technologies to prolong the shelf life of produce and proteins has the potential to divert 72,000 tons of food waste from landfills in the United States, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 329,000 tons per year¹."

Tiede pointed out that solving the food waste challenge requires the collective intellectual capital and collaboration of industry experts and thought leaders in food science, agriculture, horticulture, packaging, transportation and material science. In response to this challenge, Sonoco has committed \$2.725 million to Clemson University to create a joint initiative called SonocoFRESH. Sonoco is also a joint development partner in the Plant City, Fla.-based robotics company Harvest CROO Robotics, which is focused on improving the supply chain for fresh produce by connecting harvesting technology with new packaging technology.

¹Data based on an analysis from the organization Rethink Food Waste through Economics and Data (ReFED). More insights on Sonoco's more sustainable packaging initiatives can be reviewed in a whitepaper: "*How Packaging Can Help solve Our Food Waste Problem*," which is available at www.sonoco.com/sustainability.

"Our mission is to deliver breakthroughs to help the entire packaging industry and ultimately have a major impact on reducing food waste, while increasing access to fresh, nutritional foods for millions of people," Tiede said. "Meeting this challenge requires a holistic approach to the entire lifecycle, and working to identify opportunities to reimagine process, science and technologies associated with harvesting, packaging, supply chain and consumer education and perception."

Sonoco's Corporate Responsibility Report also highlighted several key environmental milestones accomplished over the past year, including reducing total greenhouse gas emissions from operations by approximately 6.2 percent, and reducing total landfill disposal by approximately 9.4 percent.

In addition, the Company's Diversity and Unity Council continued its work to create a diverse workforce within an inclusive environment by sponsoring several business resource groups and fostering diversity and inclusion education, awareness and communication. The Council added the LGBT+ business resource group in 2018, joining military professionals, young professionals and employee volunteer groups.

And, the Company launched the SonocoWORKS apprenticeship program across the U.S. to train internal and external maintenance candidates, both academically and on the job, continuing the Company's tradition of developing highly talented multi-craft professionals.

About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco (NYSE: SON) is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging, and displays and packaging supply chain services. With annualized net sales of approximately \$5 billion, the Company has 21,000 employees working in more than 300 operations in 33 countries, serving some of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is committed to *Better Packaging, Better Life*, and ranked first in the Packaging sector on Fortune's World's Most Admired Companies 2018 list. For more information visit www.sonoco.com.

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