



SUNSWEEET GROWERS INC.

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Sunsweet Purchases Land, Begins Construction of Facility in Chile

Grower owned co-op looks to diversify fruit sources to protect global demand for products

Yuba City, CA (November 17, 2005) – Sunsweet Growers Inc., the nation’s leading marketer of dried plums, specialty dried fruit products and fruit juices, is constructing a fruit drying facility on land it has purchased in Chile. The facility will protect Sunsweet during short California crop years and provide access to low-price markets currently inaccessible with California fruit.

“Sunsweet is on course to modestly diversify our sourcing,” said Gary Thiara, Sunsweet’s Chairman. “Global demand for our products is growing. The new Chilean facility will provide Sunsweet access to prune and other fruit production in the southern hemisphere, and it will insulate the Sunsweet brand from future crop disasters like those that hit our California growing base in 2004 and 2005.”

“With a distribution base in more than 60 countries, it’s become increasingly risky to source all of our prunes and raisins solely from California’s central valleys,” added Sunsweet President Arthur Driscoll II.

Driscoll said that by building its own drying facility, Sunsweet can ensure that the Chilean dried fruit meets the company’s quality standards. “While our international facilities are managed with the help of experienced joint-venture partners, they benefit from Sunsweet’s proprietary systems and our team’s quality-control standards,” he said. “Our global customers expect quality products that can only be achieved by using Sunsweet’s proprietary drying, processing and pitting methods.”

Sunsweet Chilean Purchase 2-2-2

Sunsweet's foreign presence also opens the door to participate in and influence local markets, according to Driscoll. “We can work with other local producers to promote, advertise, and fund research supporting the unique values of dried fruit globally,” he said. “We expect our Chilean investment to provide benefits in the near term to Sunsweet, its grower-owners, and its business partners.”

Sunsweet Growers Inc., established in 1917, has more than 88 years of experience and heritage in producing the highest quality dried fruits. The California-based cooperative is the worldwide leader in dried plums and related products. Most recently, the product portfolio has been expanded to include a full line of dried fruit snacks all designed to fit today's need for healthy and convenient food choices.