



PureCircle Begins Partnering With U.S. Farmers Who Have Grown Tobacco, To Now Grow Stevia

Partnerships Create New Economic Opportunities for Tobacco Farmers In North Carolina to Grow Sustainable, Highly-Sought After Crop Supplying Stevia Sweeteners to Food and Beverage Companies

December 5, 2017 Chicago, Illinois– PureCircle (LSE: PURE), the world's leading producer and innovator of great-tasting stevia sweeteners for the global beverage and food industries, announces a new stevia farming program in the United States. The program will provide economic opportunities for tobacco farmers looking for a sustainable crop which is in high demand by the global food and beverage industry.

This past fall, PureCircle partnered with North Carolina farmers to successfully plant and harvest StarLeaf™ stevia in small trial plots. PureCircle and its partner-farmers will significantly increase commercial production of StarLeaf™ stevia for the next planting season.

PureCircle's StarLeaf™ is a variety of the stevia plant that contains rich amounts of the most sugar-like tasting, zero-calorie stevia sweeteners. The project in North Carolina is part of PureCircle's global program to scale up StarLeaf™ production, while also providing domestically grown stevia to the North American market.

The trials this fall confirmed stevia grows well in soil and climate conditions that were conducive to growing tobacco. With the declining demand for tobacco, stevia cultivation offers farmers in North Carolina the opportunity to increase returns and productivity of their acreage.

Stevia is becoming the preferred zero-calorie sweetener among consumers and consumer product companies. The percentage of beverage and food products launched containing stevia increased by 13% in Q2 2017 compared to Q2 2016. StarLeaf™ stevia will help companies accelerate launches of reduced and zero-calorie products by making available sweeteners with the most sugar-like taste derived from a plant-based source.

James Foxton, Vice President of Agricultural Operations at PureCircle, said:

“We are proud to introduce stevia as a crop in North Carolina. This program will boost the economic prospects of agriculture in that state by providing a viable alternative to tobacco. We look forward to working together with farmers in expanding stevia production and establishing a North American stevia supply chain for PureCircle.”

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Notes to Editors

About PureCircle

- PureCircle is the only company that combines advanced R&D with full vertical integration from farm to high-quality, great-tasting innovative stevia sweeteners.
- The Company collaborates with farmers who grow the stevia plants and with food and beverage companies which seek to improve their low- and no-calorie formulations using a sweetener from plants.
- PureCircle will continue to: lead in research, development and innovation; produce a growing supply of multiple varieties of stevia sweeteners with sugar-like taste, using all necessary and appropriate methods of production; and be a resource and innovation partner for food and beverage companies.
- PureCircle stevia flavor modifiers work in synergy with sweeteners to improve the taste, mouthfeel and calorie profile, and enhance the cost effectiveness, of beverage and food products.
- Founded in 2002, PureCircle is continually investing in breakthrough research and development and it currently has 72 stevia-related approved patents and 200 pending.
- PureCircle has offices around the world with the global headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- To meet growing demand for stevia sweeteners, PureCircle is rapidly ramping up its supply capability. It recently completed the expansion of its Malaysian stevia extract facility, increasing its capacity to supply the newer and great-tasting specialty stevia sweeteners and helping provide ever-increasing value to its customers.
- PureCircle's shares are listed on the main market of the London Stock Exchange.
- For more information, visit: www.purecircle.com

About stevia

- Given the growing global concerns about obesity and diabetes, beverage and food companies are working responsibly to reduce sugar and calories in their products, responding to both consumers and health and wellness advocates. Sweeteners from the stevia plant offer sugar-like taste and are becoming an increasingly important tool for these companies.
- Like sugar, stevia sweeteners are from plants. But unlike sugar, they enable low-calorie and zero-calorie formulations of beverages and foods.
- Stevia leaf extract is a natural-based, zero calorie, high-intensity sweetener, used by global food and beverage companies as a great-tasting zero-calorie alternative to sugar and artificial sweeteners.
- Stevia is a naturally sweet plant native to South America; today, it is grown around the world, notably in Kenya, China and the US.
- The sweet-tasting parts of the stevia leaf are up to 400 times sweeter than sugar: stevia's high-intensity sweetness means it requires far less water and land than sugar.
- Research has shown that the molecules of the stevia leaf are present and unchanged in the dried stevia leaf, through the commercial extraction and purification process, and in the final stevia leaf extract product. All major global regulatory organisations, across 65 countries, have approved the use of high-purity stevia leaf extracts in food and beverages.
- For more information on the science of stevia, please visit <http://purecirclestevia institute.com>