PRESS RELEASES

Dec 16, 1998

Ecolab Acquires Leading South African Food & Beverage Supplier Of Cleaning And Sanitizing Products

ST. PAUL, Minn., December 15, 1998: Ecolab Inc. announced it has acquired selected assets of Brent Chemical Technologies of Johannesburg, South Africa. Brent is a leading manufacturer and marketer of cleaning and sanitizing products and services to the food and beverage markets in South Africa. Brent sales are approximately $5 million.

Terms of the agreement were not announced.

Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, maintenance and pest elimination products and services for the hospitality, health care and light industrial markets. For the year ended December 31, 1997 Ecolab reported sales of $1.6 billion; including European joint venture sales of $0.9 billion, Ecolab's global sales coverage was $2.5 billion. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

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