PRESS RELEASES

Jan 8, 2002

Ecolab Leverages New European Operations

ST. PAUL, Minn., Jan 8, 2002 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Ecolab Inc. announced it has purchased certain operations of Kleencare Hygiene, a subsidiary of LHS Holdings Limited, Manchester, UK. Kleencare provides products, systems and services for the food and beverage industry, providing customer support for the varied hygiene requirements of each segment. Ecolab will acquire Kleencare operations in the UK, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands. These acquired operations have annual sales of around $30 million.

Commenting on the acquisition, Allan L. Schuman, Ecolab's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "On November 30, 2001, we completed the purchase of the remaining 50% of our European operations. Kleencare represents the first step in Ecolab's drive to leverage our now wholly-owned operations in Europe. It bolsters our leadership position in the food and beverage sanitation market and builds on our successful and growing business in that market to drive increased sales growth."

With worldwide sales exceeding $3 billion, Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, pest elimination, maintenance and repair products and services for the hospitality, institutional and industrial markets. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at www.ecolab.com and by telephone at 1-800-FACT-ECL.

CONTACT: Ecolab, St. Paul
Michael J. Monahan, 651/293-2809
Fax: 651/225-3123

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