PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab to Expand Its European Pest Elimination Business

ST. PAUL, Minn., Nov 17, 2003 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Ecolab Inc. announced it will expand its pest elimination business in Europe through an agreement to purchase Nigiko, a Paris-based provider of commercial pest elimination services throughout France. Nigiko primarily operates through Amboile Services, which is one of the leading providers of pest elimination services in France. Nigiko pest elimination sales are approximately EUR 45 million (or $50 million). The agreement is subject to several closing conditions, including antitrust review. Closing is expected to occur in early 2004. No other details were announced.

Commenting on the acquisition, Allan L. Schuman, Ecolab's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "This marks our second pest elimination acquisition in Europe and an extension of our pest business to the Continent. More importantly, it brings our premium service to yet another major country in Europe, and represents another step in building our pest elimination business around the globe. We will make continued investments in this and other global commercial cleaning and sanitizing markets as we continue to implement our proven growth strategy to provide an expanding range of customer solutions and continue our strong business growth."

With sales of $3.4 billion, Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, pest elimination, maintenance and repair products for the hospitality, foodservice, 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.

SOURCE: Ecolab Inc.

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