Hampton Farms' Launch of Gourmet Roast Nuts a First for Sonoco's XCHB(TM) Series Thermoformed Tub

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Unique shape and clear view of delectable roasted nuts inside deliver a one- two punch

HARTSVILLE, S.C., Feb. 13 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Consumers with a taste for premium snacks have a new, eye-catching option: Hampton Farms' Gourmet Roast nuts packed in Sonoco's eXtra Clear High Barrier (XCHB(TM)) Series thermoformed tubs. The oval-shaped plastic tubs, a first for the nut segment, gives shoppers a clear view of the delectable roasted peanuts and cashews inside.

Hampton Farms, a premier roaster and marketer of in-shell peanuts in the United States, is the first to launch a nut product in Sonoco's XCHB Series high-barrier, multi-layer thermoformed tubs. Sonoco (NYSE: SON) is supplying Hampton Farms with a custom designed deep-drawn oval shaped tub that holds 16 ounces of product. The Gourmet Roast nut line includes chili limon, classic salted, BBQ and organic peanuts; along with organic and salted cashews.

Hampton Farms vice president of sales and marketing Tom Nolan says that the company is extremely pleased with its distinctive package and the role it is playing in the launch of the Gourmet Roast line. "Together with Sonoco, we have developed a unique package design that is not only new to the nut segment, but new to the snack market at large. The shape of the tub combined with the unimpeded view of our gourmet nuts allows us to differentiate ourselves from competing products."

In addition to shelf appeal, Sonoco's XCHB Series thermoformed tub delivers a number of consumer-friendly features. The easy-to-grip shape and wide mouth facilitate snacking. Consumers can dip their hands in without touching the sides of the package. A snap-on top helps keep the nuts fresh after the thermoformed tub is opened. The high barrier properties of the thermoformed tub give the product a 12-month shelf life. The package is recyclable, an added benefit for environmentally sensitive consumers.

"The new Hampton Farms' Gourmet Roast product brings together the best of our plastic packaging technologies, allowing us to supply a package that is functional, attractive and consumer-friendly," says Srinivas Nomula, Sonoco market segment manager. "What's more, Hampton Farms has the unique advantage of being first to market with a new packaging format, a true advantage with a product launch."

In preparation for the national launch of the Hampton Farms' Gourmet Roast nut line, Sonoco assisted Hampton Farms with the purchase of new production equipment that includes filling, nitrogen flushing, sealing, and capping machines. Sonoco also is providing vendor managed inventory services.

Sonoco's XCHB Series thermoformed tubs are suitable for food packaging applications that require oxygen, moisture and/or aroma barriers, including salty snacks, cookies and crackers, confections, cereals and granola, pet foods and treats, and other foods. The thermoformed tubs are designed with a flange suitable for heat-sealed membrane lidding for customers that want an extra layer of barrier protection. Sonoco offers stock and custom tub designs.

Hampton Farms Gourmet Roast Nuts in Sonoco's XCHB Series thermoformed tubs are available in the produce section of grocery stores, online and retail outlets across the country.

About Sonoco

Sonoco, founded in 1899, is a global manufacturer of industrial and consumer products and provider of packaging services, with more than 300 operations in 35 countries, serving customers in some 85 nations. For more information on the Company, visit www.sonoco.com.

About Hampton Farms

Hampton Farms, the fastest growing peanut company in the country, was recently named the number one brand of in-shell peanuts in the United States. The family-owned company is committed to producing the finest snacks available. For more information, visit www.hamptonfarms.com.

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