# Sonoco's North American Recycled Paperboard Mills, Rigid Paper Container Plants Receive All Chain-of-Custody Certifications

September 9, 2008

Certifications Further Validate Sonoco's Commitment to the Environment, Sustainability

HARTSVILLE, S.C.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sept. 9, 2008--Sonoco (NYSE:SON), one of the largest diversified global packaging companies, today announced it has received chain-of-custody certifications from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as well as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). The certifications, which recognize 13 Sonoco recycled paperboard mills and two recycled rigid paper container plants in the United States and Canada, provide formal validation for the Company's sustainable fiber sourcing practices and its overall commitment to environmental stewardship.

Chain-of-custody certification means a company has a tracking system in place that records the possession and transfer of wood fiber from its origin to its end use, including the manufacturing, production and processing stages. Sonoco now holds all three certifications recognized within the industry: the FSC (SW-COC-003307), SFI (Pwc-SFICOC-294) and PEFC (Pwc-PEFC-294).

"We have a long history of sustainability and these certifications are just another example of how we are continuing each day to strengthen our environmental commitment," said Jim Bowen, Sonoco's senior vice president of global paper operations. "Sonoco's achievement of all three certifications reflects our continued leadership in the industry and provides assurances to consumers and to our customers that we're doing things the right way. Consumers are more interested than ever in knowing the products they are buying are contributing to a sustainable future. It lets them know that we're effectively implementing the highest environmental standards possible in our business and operating practices."

Specific standards must be met by companies seeking certification from any one of the three entities. These standards require internal audits, management reviews and annual audits conducted by an independent organization. The standards also require that specific procedures be implemented so that the flow of fiber through the manufacturing process is properly tracked and recorded.

"To receive all three certifications in North America is certainly an honor," said James Harrell, division vice president and general manager, Paper North America. "But I believe our ability to achieve these certifications is a reflection of what we stand for as a Company and how we've always conducted our business.

"We will continue to work toward certifying our remaining global recycled paperboard mills and recycled rigid paper container facilities in the future to assure that the programs, plans and procedures we've put in place are successfully meeting our goals," he added.

Sonoco utilizes nearly 100 percent recycled fiber consisting of mainly post-consumer sources. The Company uses approximately 1.9 million tons of reclaimed fiber annually, thus saving millions of trees and extending the life of available landfill space by removing the materials from the waste stream.

Sonoco began its program to achieve certification in July 2007. The process included internal mill audits, multi-site compliance audits and site surveillance audits. These audits were all completed by May 2008.

About FSC

FSC is an independent, non-governmental, not for profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. It provides standard setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services for companies and organizations interested in responsible forestry. Products carrying the FSC label are independently certified to assure consumers that they come from forests that are managed to meet the social, economic and ecological needs of present and future generations. FSC has offices in more than 45 countries.

About SFI Inc.

SFI Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative program (www.sfiprogram.org), a sustainable forestry certification program that is internationally recognized and among the largest in the world. Across North America, 152.6 million acres (61.7 million hectares) are certified to the SFI 2005-2009 Standard, which is based on principles and measures that promote sustainability, including measures to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk and forests with exceptional conservation value. The SFI Standard includes unique fiber sourcing requirements that promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI Inc. also has chain-of-custody certification, which is used to tell buyers how much certified fiber is in a specific product.

About PEFC

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) is a framework for the assessment and endorsement of nationals forest certification systems that have been developed based on internationally recognized requirement for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organization covering nationals systems from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tons of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from currently more than 194 million hectares of certified forest. This is an area which is larger than the combined forest area of all European Union member states. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organizations.

About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco is a $4.0 billion global manufacturer of industrial and consumer products and provider of packaging services, with more than 330 operations in 35 countries, serving customers in some 85 nations. For more information the Company, go to our Web site at http://www.sonoco.com.

Mills and Plants Achieving Certification

Paper Mills

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Hartsville, SC
Menasha, WI
Newport, TN
Hutchinson, KS
Trent Valley, Ontario, CAN
Holyoke, MA
Sumner, WA
Brantford, Ontario, CAN
Lancaster, OH
DePere, WI
Richmond, VA
City of Industry, CA
Rockton, IL

Recycled Rigid Paper Container Plants

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Norwalk, CA
Wapato, WA

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