



## **Sonoco Introduces New Product Line for Carriers and Pallet Components That Offers Savings and Performance**

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HARTSVILLE, S.C., Sep 30, 2009 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Sonoco (NYSE:SON), one of the largest diversified global packaging companies, today introduced new Firma(TM) brand carriers and pallet components, a line of transport packaging products engineered to address problems associated with traditional pallets.

Sonoco will unveil the new product line at Pack Expo in Las Vegas, Oct. 5 - 7. The Firma carrier product line includes FirmaLoad(TM) bulk bag carriers, FirmaCore(TM) lightweight carriers, FirmaDeck(TM) lightweight corrugated carriers, FirmaMax(TM) recycled plastic carriers and FirmaGuard(TM) components.

Made from a variety of sustainable materials such as recovered paper, recycled plastics and compressed wood, the Firma carrier product line includes patented and patent-pending product designs developed by Sonoco's packaging design engineers. The Company's commitment to sustainability drove development teams to seek environmentally responsible materials and production methods for the Firma brand carriers and pallet components.

"The new line is another example of Sonoco's commitment to sustainable packaging solutions," said John Colyer, vice president, Industrial Converting - North America. "The Firma products also address many of the problems you find in traditional pallets, which are more difficult to dispose of and often add to shipping costs because of their heavier weight. And if not properly maintained, they can cause product damage through protruding nails and splintering."

Firma carriers are designed with the total supply chain in mind beginning with the selection of recycled raw materials, the carrier's weight and the environmental impact related to its transport to the point of use. This continues through the use and handling of the carrier, including workplace safety. They are 100 percent recyclable, so they don't become solid waste landfill contributors like many traditional pallets. Space and transit cost savings deliver additional advantages over traditional pallets, and Firma carriers are exempt from ISPM-15, a global export regulation controlling the spread of pests and disease.

The Firma product line grew from two marketplace challenges: the increasing regulation of wood pallets by companies and countries around the world, and the need to be better stewards of the environment.

"In terms of design, the product line was originally inspired by Sonoco's leadership in protective packaging for the appliances industry," said Ron Lanier, sales and marketing manager - pallets and components. "Strong interest from customers and the industry in the areas of performance, cost and sustainability confirmed the commercial viability of these products."

The Firma brand strategy was established on the key product attributes of strength and the use of more sustainable materials. Firma -- meaning firm, fast or stable in various languages - was chosen as a collective brand name, illustrating Sonoco's intent to offer firm, fast and stable transport packaging products. For more information about the Firma line of carriers and pallet components, visit <http://www.sonoco.com/sites/sonocotranspack/index.html>.

### **About Sonoco**

Founded in 1899, Sonoco (NYSE: SON) is a \$4.1 billion global manufacturer of industrial and consumer products and provider of packaging services, with about 300 operations in 35 countries, serving customers in some 85 nations. Sonoco is a proud member of the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index (DJSI), a global composite index that recognizes leading global companies in terms of economic performance, environmental stewardship and social responsibility. Sonoco also has been ranked as one of the 100 greenest large companies in the United States in *Newsweek's* inaugural

Green Rankings, which evaluated the country's 500 largest companies on their environmental performance, green policies and reputation. Sonoco, which was listed 94<sup>th</sup>, had the best ranking of any U.S.-based packaging company. For more information on the Company, visit our Web site at <http://www.sonoco.com/>

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