

Sonoco Announces Leadership Changes in North American Paper Mill Operations

October 11, 2012 9:01 AM ET

Pignone named vice president, Paper North America; Grups to retire

HARTSVILLE, S.C., Oct. 11, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Sonoco (NYSE: SON), one of the largest diversified global packaging companies, today announced that Marty F. Pignone has been named vice president, Paper North America, effective December 1, 2012. Pignone will replace John M. Grups, 61, division vice president and general manager, who will be retiring from Sonoco following a 36-year career.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20120403/CL80773LOGO>)

In this position, Pignone, 55, will have responsibility for Sonoco's 12 uncoated recycled paperboard mills in the United States, Canada and Mexico and related support functions. He reports to John Colyer, vice president, Paper and Industrial Converted Products.

"Following John's decision to retire after nearly four decades with Sonoco, it was important that we installed a seasoned paper manufacturing veteran to head this manufacturing-intensive operation," said Colyer. "Marty previously led our North American paper mills for eight years and implemented several key safety and operating excellence initiatives that improved performance during his tenure. In this new role, we're asking him to improve operating performance and safety near-term, while further developing our paper manufacturing management team."

Pignone joined the Company in 1997 and was elevated to division vice president and general manager of Paper, North America in 2000. He became vice president, Global Manufacturing in 2009 and later vice president, Operating Excellence, where he has led the Company's global manufacturing improvement initiatives as well as supply management and product quality improvement. Pignone graduated in 1978 from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering and received a Master of Science in business administration from Stanford University in 1991. Prior to joining Sonoco he worked for General Electric and Kodak.

Grups' retirement is effective March 31, 2013. During the transition, he will work with Pignone on several manufacturing initiatives. Grups took over the Company's Primary Materials Group in September 2011 after serving as staff vice president, Operating Excellence for eight years. Grups is a 1974 graduate of the University of Missouri with a Bachelor of Science in mathematics and a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy. He also holds a master's degree from Purdue University in industrial management.

About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging and packaging supply chain services. With net sales of approximately \$4.5 billion in 2011, the Company has more than 19,600 employees working in over 340 operations in 34 countries, serving many of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is a proud member of the 2012/2013 Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. For more information on the Company, visit our website at <http://www.sonoco.com/>.

HiRes photo:

Pignone: <https://www.box.com/shared/x6lax986px>

Grups: <https://www.box.com/s/4a0n8molasg86zbx4nzq>

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Roger Schrum, +1-843-339-6018, roger.schrum@sonoco.com