

Sonoco Releases 2013 Annual Report to Shareholders

March 17, 2014 8:31 AM ET

Company's Annual Meeting to be Held April 16, 2014

HARTSVILLE, S.C., March 17, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Sonoco (NYSE: SON), one of the largest diversified global packaging companies, today announced that its 2013 Annual Report to Shareholders is now available on the Company's website at www.sonoco.com in the Investor Relations section. The report, entitled *Re-envisioning Sonoco*[™], reviews Sonoco's 2013 financial performance and examines how the Company's consumer, industrial and protective packaging businesses are satisfying its customers around the world with innovative packaging solutions (IPSTM).

"In 2013 we began assembling our unequalled range of packaging products and services, combined with a broad spectrum of technical capabilities and a unique, formalized process for innovation we call our i6[™] Process, to form our 360-degree Customized Solutions[™] business model. This business solutions model is truly unparalleled in the markets that we serve and we believe it will allow us to fulfill our purpose of providing our customers with innovative packaging solutions (IPS) that enhance our customers' businesses and brands," wrote Jack Sanders, president and chief executive officer, in his letter to shareholders.

"Last year, following the successful integration of the largest acquisition in our history, which provided us a strong position in custom-engineered protective packaging, we said that our portfolio of packaging businesses was complete and we were focused on optimizing and enhancing our existing technologies. Yet to continue to grow our businesses, particularly in a period of weak global growth, we knew we must find new ways to innovate and provide value to our customers. Our goal is to become a solutions company that just happens to offer packaging versus a packaging company that offers multiple solutions. There is a distinct difference between these two approaches and we believe that difference creates an opportunity for accelerated growth."

Sanders noted that in 2013 Sonoco delivered on many of its financial, operational and strategic commitments, while launching an effort to re-envision Sonoco to achieve future accelerated growth. The Company delivered record sales, gross profits and cash flow from operations in 2013, while free cash flow more than doubled. Despite a recession in Europe, slowing emerging markets and higher pension and operating costs, Sonoco's base earnings grew nearly 5% to the third highest level in Company history.

Sonoco also delivered on its commitment to enhance shareholder value by providing a 45.2% total return in 2013, which was nearly 30% better than the return on the S&P 500 and the Company's best return performance in a quarter of a century. These efforts enabled Sonoco to achieve record net sales of \$4.85 billion, a \$62 million, or 1.3% increase from 2012, along with record gross profits of \$874 million. 2013 base earnings grew by nearly 5%, and free cash flow (cash flow from operations minus net capital expenditures and cash dividends) was \$245 million in 2013, more than doubled from \$101 million last year.

Annual Meeting and Proxy Information

Sonoco has mailed the 2013 Annual Report and Form 10-K and proxy statement to its shareholders in preparation for its annual meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, April 16, 2014, at the Center Theater, 212 North Fifth Street, Hartsville, beginning at 11 a.m. ET. Shareholders who are unable to attend the meeting in person can still access a live webcast via the Internet in the Investor Relations section of the Company's website at <http://investor.sonoco.com>, under the Webcast section. Those planning to listen should connect to the live webcast at least 10 minutes prior to the start. The meeting webcast also will be archived on the Investor Relations section of Sonoco's website.

About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging, and display and packaging services. With annualized net sales of approximately \$4.9 billion, the Company has 19,900 employees working in more than 335 facilities in 33 countries, serving many of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is a proud member of the 2013/2014 Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. For more information on the Company, visit our website at www.sonoco.com.

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

SOURCE Sonoco

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