

## A message from Brenda

Welcome to the Sara Lee Corporation 2009 Sustainability Report. In this second annual report we discuss our sustainability strategy and highlight our fiscal 2009 accomplishments. Sustainability is a long journey and we have much to learn, plan, measure and do. There have been, and will continue to be challenges on this journey. We believe, however, that by working together we can honor our commitment and ensure a brighter future.

This year's theme of "Now, for the Future" really sums up the way we approach sustainability. We know that the actions we take today will have a great impact on the future and are critical to achieving our Sustainability goals. That is why Sara Lee has adopted our Sustainability Statement which is one of the guiding lights that help senior management run this company.

"Sara Lee is committed to promoting wellness and nutrition, supporting our communities and protecting our planet in a manner consistent with our core values."

Fiscal 2009 was an exciting year for us in the area of sustainability, as it marked the first time we set corporate wide global environmental goals. We have tracked our performance in water, waste and energy utilization for several years, and now have set and share our goals in these areas. As you will see in our performance section, we had significant success in water reduction and in decreasing the percentage of waste sent to landfills. We still have progress to make toward achieving our energy reduction goals, and we are determined to meet them by 2012.

On the wellness and nutrition front, we continued to introduce products that met our consumers' evolving needs. In the U.S., our Sara Lee brand introduced a line of high-protein, lower sodium lunchmeats. Our Sanex team in Europe developed Sanex Zero percent, a new shower gel formulated to enhance benefits to the skin while minimizing chemical additives. Our Wellness progress also extends to our employee initiatives and training, as demonstrated by our employee safety metrics which show a reduction in workplace safety incidents.

Our social responsibility efforts are anchored by our ethical standards, employee programs and community outreach. Our progress there is continued through the work of our Sara Lee Foundation, which supports food-related, and

women's self-sufficiency programs, and supports diversity through highly-visible, cultural programs. In addition, our European-based Douwe Egberts Foundation focused on improving the living conditions of coffee producers and their families. Examples of their efforts are presented throughout this online report.



While we are striving to make a positive impact throughout the world, there are many challenges we face on this journey. Economic uncertainty is a global issue, and we've seen its effects in the markets of the more than 200 countries where we do business. However, we have not let these challenges or the current economic conditions dampen our spirit to be more sustainable, or stop us from moving ahead with our programs and initiatives. Whether it's introducing a line of portion controlled desserts, reducing our energy usage with higher efficiency lighting, or supporting ethical tea production, our efforts are certainly resulting in progress today, and they will continue to do so for many years to come.

I encourage you to visit each section in this online report to truly get a measure of the progress we are making around the world. I look forward to continued success in the future.

**Brenda C. Barnes**  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
September 16, 2009