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SARA LEE CORPORATION OPENS THE KITCHENS OF SARA LEE

120,000-square-foot innovation campus is Sara Lee North America's new research and development center of excellence

DOWNERS GROVE, Ill. (April 17, 2009) – Sara Lee Corp. (NYSE: SLE) today announced the opening of its new North American innovation campus, The Kitchens of Sara Lee. The 120,000-square-foot research and development center of excellence is located at the company's headquarters in Downers Grove, Ill.

The Kitchens of Sara Lee, which began construction in March 2007, houses more than 100 research and development professionals, including chefs, scientists, engineers and packaging designers. This marks the first time the company has had all of its North American food and beverage research and development capabilities under one roof.

“Our dedication to innovation, and in turn increasing consumer and customer value, has been an integral part of Sara Lee's transformation,” said Brenda Barnes, chairman and chief executive officer of Sara Lee Corp. “Now, with The Kitchens of Sara Lee, we are fully equipped to turn consumer insights into products that differentiate us in the marketplace.”

The state-of-the-art features of the Kitchens of Sara Lee allow research and development teams to test product, processes and preparations before implementing mass production. Highlights include:

- Packaging Labs with rapid prototyping capabilities can shape plastic and paper prototypes in minutes and test packaging before suppliers begin production.
- Meat Labs offer bench-top product formulation capabilities, and also simulate Sara Lee plant processes to test product components and packaging prototypes before they enter full-scale production.

- The Bakery Pilot Plant allows a better understanding of how formulas will translate to commercial-size facilities, and offers new process testing and bench-top product formulation.
- Foodservice Kitchens feature plug-and-play equipment that can be custom-arranged to replicate a quick-service restaurant or a foodservice operation.
- Sensory and Product Performance Labs assist with turning consumer insights into desired product attributes and scalable design that increases value to customers.

Because of the new facilities' flexibility and customizable resources, Sara Lee North American businesses are better positioned to further improve the innovation process. The Kitchens of Sara Lee brings the research and development teams closer to the brands on which they work, which increases speed-to-market for new products.

“Our vision is to be the most insightful, most innovative and most disciplined food company in the categories we operate in. The Kitchens of Sara Lee represents an exciting new stage for our innovation vision,” said Philippe Schaille, vice president, marketing, strategy and research and development. “By connecting our consumer, customer and operator insights to the product development process, the new facility will enable our teams to increase success rates for new products.”

The new innovation campus is named “The Kitchens of Sara Lee” in honor of the company founded by Charles Lubin in 1949 and acquired by Consolidated Foods in 1956. Consolidated Foods became Sara Lee Corporation in 1985. Mr. Lubin’s daughter and Sara Lee namesake, Sara Lee Schupf, attended the opening to acknowledge the dedication in memory of her father.

About Sara Lee Corporation

Each and every day, Sara Lee (NYSE: SLE) delights millions of consumers and customers around the world. The company has one of the world’s best-loved and leading portfolios with its innovative and trusted food, beverage, household and body care brands, including *Ambi Pur*, *Ball Park*, *Douwe Egberts*, *Hillshire Farm*, *Jimmy Dean*, *Kiwi*, *Sanex*, *Sara Lee* and *Senseo*. Collectively, these brands generate more than \$13 billion in annual net sales covering approximately 200 countries. The Sara Lee community consists of 44,000 employees worldwide. Please visit www.saralee.com for the latest news and in-depth information about Sara Lee and its brands.