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BLOMMER CHOCOLATE COMPANY BECOMES INDUSTRY LEADER WITH NEW PALM OIL COMMITMENT

Blommer Chocolate Company Is Industry's First to Offer 100% RSPO-Certified Mass Balance Products in the U.S.; Announces New Initiative in South America

CHICAGO (August 21, 2013) – As part of its ongoing commitment to sustainability, Blommer Chocolate Company, the largest cocoa processor and ingredient chocolate supplier in North America, today announced that following certification from the [Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil](#) (RSPO), it will be the first cocoa producer to offer 100 percent RSPO-certified, mass balance palm oil in the U.S., with certified products becoming available to customers this fall.

“For more than 60 years Blommer Chocolate Company has celebrated a deep-seeded culture and company-wide philosophy of doing what’s right for not only our consumers and our customers, but also making responsible choices to ensure we support a strong farming community for generations to come,” said Peter Blommer, President and COO of Blommer Chocolate Company.

“In addition to our certified palm oil commitment, we’re also working directly with suppliers to better understand and evaluate the entire palm oil supply chain,” said Kip Walk, Corporate Director, Sustainability for Blommer. “As we are doing with the cocoa supply chain, we aim to achieve traceable supplies while working to protect rainforests and biodiversity, endeavoring to minimize the carbon footprint of our supply chain and support the welfare of all stakeholders – including producers and workers – that contribute to this supply. Our palm oil commitment will extend far beyond certification alone to ensure the entire supply chain process – from fields to consumers – is managed responsibly and in line with our three pillars of people, planet, profit.”

Blommer’s palm oil commitment is an extension of its *global Sustainable Origins* initiative, which operates extensive farmer training programs throughout West Africa, Indonesia and the Americas and has reached more than 60,000 cocoa farmers worldwide.

These programs are based on the implementation of Farmer Field Schools, in which farmer groups are trained in pre- and post-harvest agronomic practices that aim to achieve significant increases in cocoa yields. The productivity and quality of cocoa trees is essential to the economic sustainability and wellbeing of smallholder cocoa farming. While Blommer's existing Farmer Field School programs do not currently include palm oil, the company plans to identify opportunities to streamline its operations for more sustainable practices.

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As part of its expanding cocoa sustainability program, earlier this year Blommer launched 36 Farmer Field Schools in Ecuador. This Sacha Gold Program partners with the Provincial Ecuadorian Government and Cimarron Estates to train more than 1,300 farmers extensively in best agricultural practices. Thirty-nine percent of training participants are women. The program will engage, overall, 66 local communities and plans to distribute more than 1.2 million high-yielding seedlings for their harvests.

“From our worldwide cocoa initiatives at origin to creating a responsible and sustainable palm oil supply, we’re dedicated to making a difference in the communities where we source and deliver our products,” said Peter Blommer. “We know by working together with our farmers and suppliers we can create a healthier, more viable network for the future.”

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About Blommer Chocolate Company

Blommer Chocolate Company is the largest cocoa processor and ingredient chocolate supplier in North America. With over 650 employees and four strategically located manufacturing facilities in North America, the company provides comprehensive business solutions for domestic and international customers of all sizes in the confectionery, baking and dairy industries. Among Blommer’s core competencies are cocoa bean processing, chocolate manufacturing, commodity risk management, and product and process R&D.

The company is a leader in advancing sustainable cocoa farming, playing an active role in the World Cocoa Foundation and promoting sustainable farming practices through its privately managed programs in Cote d'Ivoire, Indonesia and Ecuador. Founded in 1939, the family owned and operated company maintains an outstanding reputation for customer service and quality. For more information about Blommer Chocolate Company, please visit www.blommer.com.