



## Sonoco Teams Up with Industry Leaders to Take on Sustainability and Food Waste

September 24, 2019

**Two-day Sustainability and Food Waste Summit featured recycling tours, keynote talks, panel discussions and more**

HARTSVILLE, S.C., Sept. 24, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Sonoco (NYSE: SON), one of the most sustainable, diversified global packaging companies, held its first Sustainability and Food Waste Summit, Sept. 17-18, in Hartsville, S.C. The event brought together leaders in the packaging and food production industries for two days of presentations, panel discussions and open dialogue around the complex issues of sustainability and food waste.

The Summit attracted a diverse mix of attendees representing a variety of professional disciplines including food scientists, packaging engineers, brand owners, sustainability officers, environmental scientists, financial analysts, supply chain experts, academics, consultants and others with an interest or potential role to play in further improving our global sustainability ecosystem.

Day One of the Summit consisted of a series of facility tours organized to give participants an up-close look at the different steps and technologies involved in the recycling process. The all-day immersion session included visits to a Sonoco Material Recovery Facility (MRF); a grinding facility specializing in redemption and post-industrial and PET bottles; a toll washer of post-consumer, post-industrial and deposit PET flake and pellet; and Sonoco's Innovative Packaging Solutions (iPS) Studio, where participants were shown how rPET flake is transformed into food trays.

Sonoco President & CEO Rob Tiede opened Day Two with an overview of the challenges associated with sustainability and food waste and a thoughtful appeal to attendees to work together toward the development of new technologies, new approaches and new ways of doing things to protect the planet for future generations.

Tiede was particularly passionate about the critical issue of food waste, a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. "To whom much is given, much is expected," said Tiede. "We can do better. By delivering innovative packaging solutions, we can have a major impact on the reduction of food waste, while increasing access to fresh, nutritional foods for millions of people. In fact, if we were able to recover all our wasted food, we could provide a 2000-calorie diet to 84% of the population."

Tiede pointed out that solving the food waste challenge won't be easy and will require the collective intellectual capital and collaboration of industry experts and thought leaders in food science, agriculture, horticulture, packaging, transportation and material science. In response to this challenge, Sonoco recently committed \$2.725 million to Clemson University to fund Sonoco FRESH, an initiative devoted to developing new technologies and packaging innovations to optimize the fresh food lifecycle. "Our mission is to deliver breakthroughs that help the entire packaging industry," said Tiede. "Meeting this challenge will require a holistic approach to the entire lifecycle and reimagining the processes, science and technologies associated with harvesting, packaging, supply chain and consumer education."

Tiede's address was followed by the Summit's Keynote Speaker, Dr. Jonathan Foley, a renowned environmental scientist, sustainability expert, researcher and author who currently serves as the Executive Director of Project Drawdown, a world-class research project that lists among its top priorities the immediate reduction and eventual elimination of food waste.

In his remarks Foley noted that, "Globally, some 30 to 50 percent of food produced never makes it to the table. In developing countries, roughly 50 percent of food waste is created before it ever leaves the farm. The other 50 percent is the result of spoilage during transport and processing. Dr. Foley made an interesting distinction when talking about the concept of sustainability. He spoke about the limitations surrounding the word itself and the idea of altering our thinking to focus on striving to thrive, not just sustain. He identified a number of tangible opportunities through new technologies, better land and resource management, and simple changes in consumer and industry behavior that could turn resources we are currently wasting into solutions that could decrease food waste, increase access to food, reduce greenhouse gasses, impact climate change and help global citizens thrive in brand new ways.

Following the keynote, Tiede presented a \$5,000 check on Foley's behalf to Edna Ogwangi, chief impact officer for Rise Against Hunger, an organization whose mission is to end hunger by providing food and life-changing aid to some of the world's most vulnerable citizens.

Additional presentations and panel discussions rounding out the Summit took an in-depth look at the growing problem of ocean plastics and the important role of recycling in mitigating its impacts, as well as the latest additions to Sonoco's portfolio of sustainable packaging solutions.

For additional highlights and takeaways from Sonoco's 2019 Sustainability and Food Waste Summit, visit <https://www.sonoco.com/2019-sustainability-food-waste-summit>.

### About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging, and displays and packaging supply chain services. With annualized net sales of approximately \$5.4 billion, the Company has 23,000 employees working in more than 300 operations in 36 countries, serving some of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is committed to creating sustainable products, services and programs for our customers, employees and communities that support our corporate purpose of *Better Packaging. Better Life.* The Company ranked first in the Packaging sector on *Fortune's* World's Most Admired Companies 2019 as well as being included in Barron's 100 Most Sustainable Companies for 2019. For more information on the Company, visit our website at [www.sonoco.com](http://www.sonoco.com).

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