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## **Land O'Lakes Sponsors 25th Annual Nobel Peace Prize Forum**

March 4, 2013 -- With the world population projected to reach 9.2 billion by 2050, agricultural and food companies must partner with people around the world to innovate and sustainably produce 70 percent more food with fewer resources. By addressing food security head-on – through improved production practices, innovative technology and better access – agribusiness is working at a grassroots level to promote economic opportunity and stability in some of the world's most unstable and impoverished regions.

That is the message Land O'Lakes President and CEO Chris Policinski will deliver to attendees of the 25th annual Nobel Peace Prize Forum – the only Nobel-affiliated event outside of Norway. Land O'Lakes, Inc. is the lead sponsor of this year's Forum, which begins this week in Minneapolis.

"In this interconnected world, our futures are tied to the health and stability of local economies all over the globe," says Policinski. "During the past three decades, Land O'Lakes has improved the quality of life for millions of people through more than 275 development projects in 76 developing nations by nurturing hundreds of thousands of smallholder farmers, including those in post-conflict regions who are seeking a path toward food security, stability and a more lasting peace."

Policinski will be joined by David MacLennan, president and chief operating officer, Cargill and Jeff Simmons, president, Elanco, to discuss the connections between food security and peace during a Friday panel moderated by former CNN Washington Bureau Chief Frank Sesno. Among other topics, Policinski will discuss agricultural cooperatives and their ability to bring would-be opponents closer together at a local level, encourage democratic decision-making and promote ongoing stability in areas where peace is fragile and, in some cases, only recently secured.

In addition to Policinski's participation in this week's panel, the company's global development work in Sri Lanka and Kenya will be the focus of a separate presentation during Saturday's Science and Health Day.

## **Improving food security, strengthening peace through small farm cooperatives**

In 2012, nearly 140,000 people in 28 developing countries were supported by Land O'Lakes International Development, a full-fledged development organization housed within Land O'Lakes, Inc., since 1981. While Land O'Lakes International Development's food security programs help farmers maximize the outputs of their crops and livestock and enable yields that are sufficient for both household consumption and sale at market, some Land O'Lakes activities promote stability and economic opportunity in countries that have been ravaged by conflict.

For example, Land O'Lakes International Development worked in partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to increase the incomes of farmers in Eastern Sri Lanka through the Dairy Enhancement in Eastern Province (DEEP) program and the USAID Kenya Sector Dairy Competitiveness Program (KDSCP), both robust dairy development programs.

"The outcomes from both programs speak to the interconnectedness of food security and the potential for a deeper, more lasting peace in areas marred by conflict," says Policinski, who plans to underscore this point during Friday's panel discussion. "These dairy development programs helped Muslim, Tamil and Sinhalese farmers in Sri Lanka come together after nearly 30 years of ethnic conflict and farmers in central and eastern provinces of Kenya unite following the 2008 post-election violence that left 1,300 Kenyans dead. Both programs helped farmers link their economic futures through the creation of inclusive, democratically operated dairy cooperatives."

In joining such cooperatives, members could access training, new technology, equipment and previously unavailable financing.

"In just three years, more than 4,100 people participated in the DEEP program and participants saw their annual incomes jump 75 percent," says Jon Halverson, vice president of Land O'Lakes International Development, who will feature the company's efforts in Sri Lanka and Kenya during the Forum's Science and Health Day, alongside program participants from both countries. "Through KDSCP we led peace and reconciliation events that helped dairy farmers from several tribes come together and rebuild the value chain. This came as a response to not only the post-election violence, but also the invasion of the Saboat Land Defense Forces into the Rift Valley that displaced 66,000 people."

## **Land O'Lakes International Development releases 2012 data**

By sharing agricultural expertise and strengthening economic opportunities, infrastructure and institutions at the local level, often across ethnic, religious or political lines, Land O'Lakes International Development works actively with hundreds of partner organizations at the grassroots level to address the challenge of food security. Newly released data from Land O'Lakes International Development's work in 2012 includes:



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- Nearly 300 producer groups, cooperatives, and other farmer-based associations assisted or established;
- More than 60,000 producer groups and cooperatives were assisted, 45 percent of whom are women;
- More than 40,000 farmers adopted new or improved farming innovation and techniques;
- More than 20,000 jobs created or strengthened; and,
- More than 63,000 women and men received training to enhance their agricultural productivity and strengthen food security.

High resolution photos, video, graphic elements, key numbers and additional information about Land O'Lakes, Inc., Land O'Lakes International Development and the company's food security efforts throughout the world are available for download at [www.landolakesnppf.com](http://www.landolakesnppf.com).