

Darling International Inc. Announces Increased First Quarter Profits

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IRVING, Texas

Darling International Inc. reported increased sales and earnings for its 2004 fiscal first quarter ended April 3, 2004 as compared to the same period of the prior year.

For the 2004 first quarter, the Company's net sales grew 13.1% to \$77.7 million as compared to \$68.7 million for the 2003 first quarter. Increases in finished product prices accounted for the majority of the \$9.0 million net sales increase. For the 2004 first quarter, the Company reported net income of \$3.9 million as compared to \$3.4 million for the 2003 comparable period. The \$0.5 million increase in net income for the 2004 first quarter resulted primarily due to increases in finished product prices, and other income due to a gain on extinguishment of bank debt, which were partially offset by an increase in interest expense.

Darling International Inc. is the largest publicly traded, food processing by-products recycling company in the United States. The Company recycles used restaurant cooking oil and by-products from the beef, pork and poultry processing industries into useable products such as tallow, feed-grade fats and meat and bone meal. These products are primarily sold to animal feed and oleo-chemical manufacturers. In addition, the Company provides grease trap collection services and sells equipment to restaurants.

The Company's shares are traded on the American Stock Exchange under the symbol DAR. In AMEX trading on May 17, 2004, Darling stock closed at \$3.70 per share.

(This media release contains forward-looking statements regarding the business operations of Darling. These statements are identified by words such as "may," "will," "expect," "believe," "intend," "anticipate," "should", "estimate," continue," and other words referring to events to occur in the future. These statements reflect Darling's current view of future events and are based on its assessment of, and are subject to, a variety of risks and uncertainties, including business and economic conditions in its existing markets. Other risks and uncertainties regarding Darling, its business and the industry in which it operates are referenced from time to time in the Company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Darling is under no obligation to (and expressly disclaims any such obligation to) update or alter its forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.)

Darling International Inc.
Consolidated Operating Results
For the Periods Ended April 3, 2004 and March 29, 2003

(Dollars in thousands, except per
share amounts)
(Unaudited)
Three Months Ended

\$ Change
April 3, March 29, Favorable
2004 2003 (Unfavorable)

Net sales	\$77,724	\$68,651	\$9,073
Costs and expenses:			
Cost of sales and operating expenses	58,219	51,050	(7,169)
Selling, general and administrative expenses	9,018	8,520	(498)
Depreciation and amortization	3,775	3,657	(118)
Total costs and expenses	71,012	63,227	(7,785)
Operating income	6,712	5,424	1,288
Other income (expense):			
Interest expense (A)	(1,760)	(492)	(1,268)
Other, net	1,395	583	812
Total other income (expense)	(365)	91	(456)
Income before income taxes	6,347	5,515	832
Income taxes	(2,412)	(2,096)	(316)
Net income	3,935	3,419	516
Preferred dividends and accretion (A)	---	(355)	355
Net income applicable to common shareholders	\$3,935	\$3,064	\$871

Basic and diluted income per share \$0.06 \$0.05 \$0.01

(A) Pursuant to SFAS 150, beginning in the third quarter of fiscal 2003, on a prospective basis, preferred stock dividends and accretion are included in interest expense. Approximately, \$0.3 million of dividends and accretion are included in interest expense for the first quarter of fiscal 2004.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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