

WEBSTER

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11th November 2008

The Manager
Companies Announcement Section
Australian Stock Exchange
Level 4
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SYDNEY NSW 2000

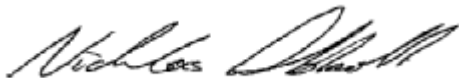
Via elodgement

Dear Sir/Madam,

WEBSTER LIMITED
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 11 NOVEMBER 2008
CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

In accordance with Listing Rule 3.13.3, I attach a copy of the prepared address to be given by the Chairman of Webster Limited at the Annual General Meeting to be held at 10.30am (AEST) today.

Yours faithfully,



Nicholas Abbott
Company Secretary

Chairman's Address

Webster continued to consolidate its operating base during 2008 with strong contributions from its horticulture operations and its interest in the aquaculture sector. Net profit after tax for the year was \$6.1 million in comparison to \$2.3 million in the prior year. Directors agreed to maintain the ordinary final dividend at 4.5-cents per share.

Highlights since last years Annual General Meeting (AGM) are summarised as follows:

- The Webster Fresh vegetable operation delivered another solid result in 2008. The onion operation had an excellent year but that was partially offset by a lower than expected return from carrots.
- The Walnut business was busy and activity included completion of the Riverina orchard of 800 hectares, as well as maintenance of existing orchards and planning for future harvesting and processing. Webster acquired the outstanding shares in Webster Walnuts Pty Ltd during the year, further enhancing the company's walnut strategy.
- Webster's interest in ASX listed salmon business Tassal Group Limited generated another pleasing result with Tassal reporting that it is experiencing strong earnings momentum.
- The divestment of the industrial businesses and the company's interest in Kelp Industries Pty Ltd was completed during the first half of the year.

I am also pleased to provide a little more detailed summary of key operating and financial outcomes of 2008.

WEBSTER FRESH

- Webster Fresh is a counter-seasonal producer and marketer of onions and carrots for both the export and domestic markets. It has a strong focus on food safety and product traceability and prides itself on the reputation it has gained globally for high quality and reliability of supply.
- Integral to the business is the strong relationships it has developed over many years with major global supermarkets, independent retailers and specialist importers.
- Favourable growing conditions in Tasmania contributed to the onion result with respect to quality and yield, whilst pricing was generally sound in the domestic and export markets. The combination of these factors delivered a result that was ahead of management expectations.
- The carrot operation did not achieve profit expectations in an extremely competitive market environment. Late in the financial year The Company committed to the purchase of a carrot processing line to increase capacity, improve efficiencies and address product handling issues. Specialist agronomy staff have been recruited to focus on improving the in-field performance as well.
- Webster Fresh (the division) reported earnings before interest and tax of \$2.5 million, with early signs indicating that it will also perform to expectation in 2009. Volume increases are expected in both onions and carrots as we continue to focus on increased scale and growth in earnings.

WEBSTER WALNUTS

- The Walnut division manages orchards in Tasmania and New South Wales (NSW) with a combined area of approximately 2,200 hectares.

- In Tasmania the division owns a walnut nursery in the North West of the state and manages a 540 hectare orchard located on the East coast. It also manages 100 hectares of joint venture orchards in Tasmania. In NSW Webster manages 250 hectares of orchard owned by a private investor and 1,350 hectares are managed on behalf of Gunns Limited, which is the responsible entity under managed investment schemes (MIS).
- Webster Walnuts not only provides orchard management services to these orchards, but also undertakes harvesting, processing, drying and marketing functions. During the year it reported earnings before interest and tax of \$2.4 million. It is expected that as volumes increase in future years, walnuts will be exported to Europe and East Asia as a counter seasonal supply. Existing distribution relationships that have been developed by Webster Fresh in Europe are expected to be important. Some of the European countries are the highest per capita consumers of walnuts in the world.
- During 2008 Webster Walnuts concluded the last of the planting of the Riverina orchard of 800 hectares that was developed in the prior year. Orchard management practices both in Tasmania and NSW resulted in good tree growth with yields expected to increase further in the coming year. The increase necessitates the construction of a hulling and drying line in NSW and that work is nearing completion. The facility will be commissioned prior to the first commercial harvest in March 2009.
- In January 2008 Webster acquired the remaining 50% of Webster Walnuts Pty Ltd increasing its shareholding to 100%. The company owns a 540 hectare orchard on the East coast of Tasmania. During 2008 the yield from the orchard was significantly improved on the prior year as it was largely unaffected by frosts.
- Further frost mitigation strategies have been put in place to assist in protecting the 2009 crop. However, a frost on 23rd October has caused damage, despite all night efforts by our orchard staff assisted by two helicopters and wind machines to encourage movement of air from the warmer inversion layer above the orchard. Early assessments suggest that at worst, production will be below management's expectation for 2008/09 and at about last year's level of approximately 420 tonnes. A definitive forecast will not be possible until all flowering is complete and the fruit is 'set'. There has been no damage to the mainland plantations.
- Webster does not presently foresee water shortages experienced in some regions of Australia having a significant effect on its walnut operations on the mainland. The situation at Swansea is not as encouraging with winter rainfall at virtual record lows with little inflow to the orchard storages. Unless we receive above average rainfall during summer a water rationing program will need to be implemented in some parts of the orchard, with a further reduction in production expected if this eventuates. Water availability remains a matter of ongoing management focus.

SALMON

- Webster is the largest shareholder in Tassal Group Limited, currently with a holding of 26%. The Webster share of Tassal's earnings amounted to approximately \$5.6 million for the year. Tassal continues to focus on being more globally cost competitive through innovation and capital investment.
- Further shares in Tassal were acquired during the year through participation in the dividend reinvestment plan and 'on market' purchases.
- Directors note that Tassal has reported strong earnings momentum and expects to deliver an increase in underlying net profit in 2009, attributable, in the main, to volume increases and continued unit cost reductions.

OUTLOOK

- Webster expects a stronger result in 2009 with current trends indicating an increase in earnings from Webster Fresh as well as from increased profit projections as reported by Tassal.
- Webster Fresh is in the final stages of a major capital expenditure project in the carrot business to improve the position of the operation and has commenced work in onions to increase volume by more than 14%.
- Walnut production, in Tasmania which was expected to increase will probably be at last years levels, with NSW anticipated to begin production in 2009. Funding opportunities are continuing to be explored to enable further walnut orchard developments in the future.

**David Robinson
Chairman
Webster Limited
11 November 2008**