

Media Release
March 2010

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EMERALD ATTRACTS STRATEGIC EQUITY PARTNER

Emerald Group Australia Pty Ltd (Emerald) announced today that it has taken a significant step toward further developing its position as a leading Australian Agribusiness firm, and increasing its access to international grain markets, by placing a portion of its capital with Sumitomo Corporation of Japan (Sumitomo).

Under the transaction, Sumitomo has acquired a 50% equity stake in Emerald. The remaining 50% will continue to be owned by the existing Emerald directors and staff. The placement of shares will take place effective from March 2010. The value of the shareholding was undisclosed.

Alan Winney, Chairman of Emerald, said today that the investment allowed Emerald to accelerate its growth and further build its range of services. "We anticipate that this strategic alignment with global powerhouse Sumitomo will provide Australian growers with unrivalled access to the premium Japanese market, as well as many other key Asian markets where Sumitomo already has investments in flour milling and other grain processing assets".

Mr Winney added that operationally for Emerald and its grower customers it was business as usual, with the company continuing to create market opportunities for growers, and provide them with a range of grain marketing and risk management services. "The Emerald name, office locations and key personnel will all remain as they are today. We anticipate our capacity to enter into further joint ventures, add new offices, create new products and grow our business will be accelerated by this formal linkage with Sumitomo, and the access this gives us to its worldwide resources. The financial strength of Sumitomo dwarfs that of our main publically listed competitors in Australia and is likely to lead to a change in the whole dynamic of the Australian grains industry," Mr Winney said.

"Sumitomo's investment will provide it with an aligned accumulation base in Australia and a linkage with a company that has a strong reach to the farm gate. At the same time, it will allow us to continue with what we are good at, and to maintain Emerald's core philosophy of working with growers and grower groups to ensure the products developed are tailored to meet their needs and to deliver best possible prices and services," Mr Winney said.

He said Sumitomo's equity placement formalised an existing strong relationship between the companies. "Over the past two years, Emerald and Sumitomo have been working together successfully marketing Australian grain. During this time, we have together become the number one importer of Australian wheat into the premium Japanese market and these sales have boosted our pool returns as a result".

For further media information or an interview with Alan Winney please call:

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Note to Editors

Emerald Group was founded in 2004 and prior to the placement was owned 100% by its directors and staff, who all remain actively involved in the business. Emerald has successfully grown its business to become one of Australia's leading grain companies, providing risk and marketing services, including pools and cash prices to grain growers across Australia.

Over the past six years, the Emerald accumulation network has grown to include eight regional offices located across the grain belt, with this network supported by the Emerald Head Office in Melbourne. The network, including Joint Ventures with grower partners as well as company offices, purchased over 2.5 million tonnes (approx A\$600 million), which is around 8% of national grain production during the recently completed 2009/10 harvest.

The Emerald network includes Joint Venture companies *SQP* in Victoria, *EP Grain* in South Australia and *Southern Ag Grain* in Southern NSW, with offices in Geraldton, Perth, Narrogin, Esperance, Port Lincoln, Ballarat, Horsham and Wagga Wagga. In WA, Emerald has agency arrangements with *WA Farmers* and *Ravensdown United Farmers Co-operative*.

Emerald is a WEA approved wheat exporter and is AFSL authorised financial service provider.

Sumitomo Corporation is one of Japan's leading trade houses, with a history that can be traced back 400 years. Its activities cover a broad range of areas from metals and minerals, to food products, real estate, infrastructure and financial services. Sumitomo Corporation today is a global company, with 145 offices in 66 countries, which in 2009 generated a turnover of A\$44 billion and delivered a Net Asset position of approximately A\$87 billion.

Sumitomo has been active in Australia for nearly 50 years, and its businesses in the agricultural sector include fertiliser and chemical business Summit Rural in WA and a 50% ownership of the ABA grain storage network in eastern Australia. Other Sumitomo interests in Australia include investments in aluminium refineries, coal and copper mines, power plants, as well as interests in automotive industries.

Additional information regarding the Sumitomo investment in Emerald can be accessed by visiting the Emerald website at www.emerald-group.com.au