

Not for Dissemination in the United States or to U.S. Persons

Opta Minerals Inc. completes \$18,000,000 Initial Public Offering of Units

WATERDOWN, ONTARIO, February 17, 2005 – Opta Minerals Inc. (TSX: OPM) announced that it has completed its previously announced initial public offering led by Loewen, Ondaatje, McCutcheon Limited and a syndicate of underwriters that included First Associates Investments Inc. and Canaccord Capital Corporation. Pursuant to the initial public offering, an aggregate of 4,500,000 units of Opta Minerals were issued and sold to the public at a purchase price of \$4.00 per unit, for aggregate gross proceeds of \$18,000,000. Each unit consists of one common share of Opta Minerals and one-half of a common share purchase warrant. Each whole warrant, to be listed under the symbol “OPM.WT” on the Toronto Stock Exchange, entitles the holder to purchase one common share of Opta Minerals at a price of \$5.00 any time on or before February 17, 2007.

The underwriters have also been granted an over-allotment option to purchase up to an additional 450,000 common shares of Opta Minerals at a price of \$3.99 per share and up to an additional 225,000 warrants at a price of \$0.01 per each one-half warrant. The over-allotment option is exercisable at any time on or before March 19, 2005 for the purposes of covering over-allotments, if any, and for market stabilization in connection with the offering.

Opta Minerals was previously a wholly-owned subsidiary of SunOpta Inc., a public company listed on both the TSX and the Nasdaq Small Cap Market. Immediately prior to the closing of the offering, SunOpta completed an internal reorganization of its corporate and capital structure pursuant to which all of its interest in the assets and subsidiaries comprising its Opta Minerals Group was transferred to Opta Minerals.

The common shares and warrants sold pursuant to the offering have not been, nor will they be, registered under the United States Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and such common shares and warrants may not be offered or sold within the United States or to, or for the account or benefit of, U.S. persons absent registration or an applicable exemption from U.S. registration requirements. This press release does not constitute an offer to sell, or the solicitation of an offer to buy, common shares or warrants of Opta Minerals in the United States.

About Opta Minerals:

Opta Minerals is a vertically integrated producer, manufacturer, distributor and recycler of silica-free loose abrasives, industrial minerals, specialty sands and related products for use primarily in the foundry, steel, marine/bridge cleaning, roofing shingle and municipal water filtration industries. With its head office in Waterdown, Ontario, the Company also has production and distribution facilities in Ontario, Quebec, Louisiana, South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and New York and one of the broadest product lines in the industry.

About SunOpta:

SunOpta is an operator of high-growth ethical businesses, focusing on integrated business models in the natural and organic food markets. For the last six consecutive years, SunOpta was included in Profit magazine's 'Profit 100' list of the 100 fastest growing companies in Canada. SunOpta currently has three business units: the SunOpta Food Group, which specializes in sourcing, processing and distribution of natural and organic food products integrated from seed through packaged products; the StakeTech Steam Explosion Group that engineers and markets clean pulping systems using patented steam explosion technology; and the Opta Minerals Group. Each of these business units has proprietary products and services that give it a solid competitive advantage in its sector.

For further information please contact:

David Kruse
President and Chief Executive Officer of Opta Minerals Inc.
(905) 689-6661

or

Jeremy Kendall
Chairman of SunOpta Inc.
(905) 455-1990