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The Chia Co Receives Investment from VO₂ Partners and Arlon Group

VO₂ Partners and Arlon Group have made a growth equity investment in The Chia Company, the world's largest producer of Chia, to support its fast growth and global expansion.

CEO John Foss founded The Chia Co in 2003. Foss, a fourth generation Australian farmer, started the Chia industry in response to a significant shift in demand for healthier natural foods. Chia is the highest plant based source of Omega 3, Fiber and Protein. The Chia Co has developed the only fully traceable global supply chain for Chia, with every product traceable back to the paddock on which it was grown. As well as supplying global food manufacturers such as Kellogg and Pepsico, The Chia Co produces its own brand of Chia products, stocked in national retailers such as Whole Foods Markets.

"VO₂ and Arlon are exciting partners for us. Their investment supports our vision to make the nutrition in Chia available to consumers on a daily basis. Their experience in agribusiness, food manufacturing and consumer retail markets builds on our expertise in farming and the global health food market" says Foss.

According to their new partners, John and his management team have built The Chia Co brand the right way. "We have been enormously impressed with the caliber of The Chia Co's management team and with their ability to build an authentic brand to capture the extraordinary opportunity for Chia globally. We are extremely pleased to be partnering with them," said Laurence Levi, CEO, VO₂ Partners.

"We are thrilled with the opportunity to invest in the growth of the premier global Chia supplier. Management led by John Foss has developed leading and proprietary agronomy practices for Chia and our investment can help augment the company's supply, brand and overall category growth," said Benjamin Fishman, Managing Principal, Arlon Group.

As part of the investment Stacy Madison, founder of Stacy's Pita Chips, which sold to Pepsico in 2006, will join John Foss and April Helliwell on The Chia Co board of directors, along with Anders Petersen from VO₂ Partners and Hunter McCrossin from Arlon Group.

The investors have taken a minority stake in The Chia Co. Terms of the deal have not been disclosed.

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About VO₂ Partners

VO₂ Partners is an investment firm based in New York and backed by the family office of Gary Comer, who founded Lands' End and sold it to Sears Roebuck in 2002 for \$1.9 billion. VO₂ Partners was founded in 2011 and focuses exclusively on investing in active & healthy living companies at a key inflection point in their development. They provide financial capital to fund growth and intellectual capital to drive successful execution by leveraging operating and strategic expertise.

About Arlon Group

Arlon Group, based in New York, invests in middle market companies across all segments of the food and agriculture value chain, including production, processing, distribution, food service and retail. It seeks to achieve long-term returns by combining its well-developed investment process in the food and agriculture sectors with the strategic insight of an experienced industry participant. Arlon Group believes that its long-term perspective, food sector expertise, and commitment to partnering with management teams make it a strong partner to food businesses that are pursuing stable growth. For more information, visit www.arlongroup.com.

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