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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Blommer Chocolate to close its Chicago Manufacturing Plant
and Expand and Transform other Facilities.**

(March 22, 2024) Chicago, IL -- As Blommer continues to evolve their business strategy to provide our customers with great products at a great value, the decision has been made to close the Chicago manufacturing facility. The Chicago facility is the original (1939) manufacturing plant of the Blommer group.

The location and age of the Chicago facility coupled with increasing repair and maintenance of the building and equipment has elevated operating costs and created production reliability issues. The corporate headquarters, Applications Lab and New Research & Development Center will remain in downtown Chicago at the Merchandise Mart to continue the Blommer Chicago legacy.

Fuji will invest further in R&D by expanding the lab capabilities in Chicago Merchandise Mart. The new R&D Center will support future development, concept testing, processing and ingredient research, continued application evaluation and creation to enhance the customer experience. It supports Blommer's continued technical mission of bringing creative solutions to their customers. This new R&D Center will open in Fall 2024.

"It was an incredibly challenging yet inevitable decision to close the Chicago plant. However, in order to propel Blommer to the next level, we must embrace progress, transformation and elevation," says Mark Okita, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President of Commercial. "Our planned expansion to the Campbellford Canada operation is the next step toward our transformation. This marks a new chapter for us as Blommer, as well as our customers. It is imperative that we challenge ourselves aggressively to ensure that this becomes the best chapter yet."

This decision allows the company to focus their efforts and resources on the remaining manufacturing facilities of East Greenville, PA, Union City, CA, and Campbellford, Ontario and sets Blommer up for transformation and future growth. Over the next several years, Blommer will invest \$100 million USD in our three remaining production facilities.

"One of the major factors in the Blommer transformation is expanding our service to the specialty confectionery coating business by investing in the Campbellford facility," says Neil Fulton, General Manager – Campbellford. The company will invest \$60 million USD to make this facility one of the largest confectionery coating manufacturing facilities in North America, with the additional capacity coming online in April 2026.

Over \$40 million USD is the combined capital investment planned for the East Greenville, PA and Union City, CA facilities. This investment will increase operational efficiency and reliability, as well as automate processing and packaging equipment.

“Blommer boasts a distinguished legacy within the industry, built upon years of invaluable experience and expertise” says Tomoki Matsumoto, Chief Executive Officer. “Now it is time for us to evolve ourselves to the next stage. We are committed to fortifying relationships with our customers and offering sustainable tailored to their unique business needs. We promise to become the most trusted business partner for all stakeholders”

This transformation and improvements to our facilities will have Blommer poised to remain a major competitor in the high-quality chocolate and specialty compound market. Blommer will be better equipped to provide reliable service to our customers as we continue our future growth path.

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Blommer Chocolate Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Fuji Oil Holdings, is the largest cocoa processor and ingredient chocolate supplier in North America. With more than 900 employees and three strategically located manufacturing facilities in North America, the company provides comprehensive business solutions for domestic and international customers of all sizes in the confectionery, baking and dairy industries. Among Blommer’s core competencies are cocoa bean processing, chocolate manufacturing, commodity risk management, and product and process R&D. The company is a leader in advancing sustainable cocoa farming as a founding member of the World Cocoa Foundation and by delivering impact with farmer programs in Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Ecuador. Founded in 1939, the family-owned and operated company maintains an outstanding reputation for customer service and quality. For more information about Blommer Chocolate Company, please visit www.blommer.com. For more information about Fuji Oil Holdings, please visit <https://www.fujioilholdings.com/en/>.