



## Planting Hope's Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk Is First Plant Milk Globally to Earn the Upcycled Certified™ Mark from the Upcycled Food Association

- Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk is the first plant milk worldwide to earn the Upcycled Certified™ mark, highlighting its sustainability
- The Upcycled Certified™ seal verifies that a product is produced with surplus food or food by-products with verifiable supply chains and a positive environmental impact
- Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk is made with the ultra-nutritious pulp remaining after sesame seeds are pressed for sesame oil production
- Upcycled foods are a rapidly scaling trend with both retailers and consumers who are looking for (and indicating they will pay extra for) food and beverages made with ingredients that avoid food waste

**CHICAGO, IL and VANCOUVER, BC / ACCESSWIRE / February 14, 2023** – The Planting Hope Company Inc. (TSXV: MYLK) (OTCQB: MYLKF) (FRA: J94) (“Planting Hope” or the “Company”), a plant-based food and beverage company focused on producing the world's most nutritious and planet-friendly products, is pleased to announce that their flagship brand Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk is the first plant milk globally to earn Upcycled Food Association (“UFA”) certification and is now able to use the Upcycled Certified™ seal on its packaging and marketing materials. The Upcycled Certified Program is the world’s first third-party certification program for upcycled food ingredients and products. To qualify for Upcycled certification, products must be produced with surplus food or food by-products and contain at least 10% upcycled ingredients, with verifiable supply chains and positive impact on the environment. The Upcycled Certified™ on-package mark helps retailers to feature upcycled products on shelf and provides consumers the opportunity to identify upcycled products and prevent food waste through their purchases.

Products made with upcycled ingredients are one of the fastest-growing trends in packaged food and beverages, as included in Whole Foods Market’s Top 10 Food Trends for 2023<sup>(1)</sup>. More than 60% of natural channel shoppers are aware of the term “upcycled” and are seeking out food and beverages made with upcycled ingredients. *Food Dive* reported in 2022 that “nearly half of consumers said they are actively trying to cut food waste” and that “consumers’ growing concerns around addressing food waste have supported a wave of new products, ingredients and innovation in the food and beverage industry.”<sup>(2)</sup>

As awareness of upcycling increases, consumers are willing to pay extra for goods made with ingredients that were diverted from the waste stream.<sup>(3)</sup> In fact, 62% of customers surveyed by Innova were willing to pay more for food and beverage products that are dedicated to stopping food waste.<sup>(2)</sup> When asked if a seal certifying a product was made with upcycled materials would be a strong indicator of trust, 49% of all shoppers said yes.<sup>(3)</sup> As consumer awareness and demand for upcycled and sustainable products increases, and environmental, social, and governance (“ESG”) goals become a hot-button boardroom issue for retailers, grocery retailers, and foodservice providers are prioritizing products that are demonstrably and verifiably sustainable, like those carrying the Upcycled Certified™ seal.

“We’re thrilled that Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk, the first commercialized sesame milk globally, is also the first plant milk to earn the Upcycled Certified™ mark from the Upcycled Food Association,” said Julia Stamberger, Planting Hope CEO and Co-Founder. “Our mission is to disrupt the plant milk space worldwide with a delicious and highly nutritious non-dairy milk option that’s also highly sustainable and planet-friendly. As sustainability increases as a priority for consumers and as a boardroom-level topic for retailers, we foresee accelerated opportunities and demand for planet-friendly food and beverage products like Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk.”

Sustainability is an important aspect of sesame milk throughout the supply chain. Sesame seed is grown in hot, dry climates and requires little water to thrive. Naturally pest-resistant and self-pollinating, sesame is an effective cover crop, often

rotated with resource-intensive crops like cotton to renew and replenish the nitrogen in the soil. A very functional crop agriculturally, the sesame plant produces oil-rich seeds that are highly nutritious and high in both protein and minerals, including copper, iron, and calcium. After sesame seeds are pressed for oil, the remaining nutrient-dense pulp is typically discarded or used for animal feed. Hope and Sesame® has cracked the code on developing that nutrition-dense pulp into a delicious beverage and culinary ingredient for human nutrition.

In addition to Upcycled Food Association certification, Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilks have earned the following certifications:

- Certified Plant-Based by the Plant Based Food Association
- Non-GMO Verified by the Non-GMO Project
- Gluten-Free Certified by the Gluten Free Certification Organization
- Kosher Certified by the Orthodox Union
- Whole30 Approved® (Unsweetened Original and Vanilla Sesamemilk only), indicating that they are suitable for people following the Whole30 program

Upcycled Food Association certification was launched in 2021 to assist in combatting food waste, a major global problem that has become a strong concern for consumers. According to USDA estimates, up to 40% of the U.S. food supply is wasted each year.<sup>(2)</sup> The Upcycled certification identifies and recognizes innovative products that are incorporating ingredients that were historically contributing to food waste into products for human nutrition; often these upcycled ingredients that were historically waste or byproducts are also extremely nutrient-dense.

Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk has received significant engagement and support from the Upcycled Food Association. The UFA featured Hope and Sesame® in its list of [Upcycled Holiday Recipes](#) and is currently including Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk in a Valentine's Day promotion featuring six other Upcycled Certified™ products. Winners will receive Hope and Sesame® VIP Boxes containing three Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk varieties: Unsweetened Vanilla, Chocolate Hazelnut, and Barista Blend.

Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk will be on display at the Upcycled Food Association's booth at the upcoming industry leading food show, Natural Products Expo West (March 7-11 in Anaheim, California).



## Upcycled Valentine's Day Instagram Giveaway Alert!

This Valentine's Day, win upcycled treats for you or someone special in your life.

Follow us (if you don't already), like, and share any one (or ALL) of our Valentine's Day Giveaway posts between now and 2/14/23 when the giveaway ends, and you could be one of three winners to receive upcycled food prizes.

Click the link below to learn more and enter.

Enter Giveaway



The Upcycled Food Association selected Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk to feature in its Valentine's Day giveaway promotion along with products from [RIND Snacks](#), [Diana's Bananas](#), [Blue Stripes Cacao](#), [Spudsy Snacks](#), [Sunrise Fresh Dried Fruit](#), and [Atomo Coffee](#).

#### Citations:

- (1) <https://foodmatterslive.com/article/whole-foods-top-10-food-trends-for-2023/>
- (2) <https://www.fooddive.com/news/upcycled-food-launches-leap-as-concerns-around-waste-grow-report/626552/>
- (3) <https://www.newhope.com/market-data-and-analysis/monitor-awareness-still-growing-upcycled-products-are-easy-sell>

#### About the Upcycled Food Association and Upcycled Certified™

The Upcycled Food Association (UFA) is the only nonprofit food industry association dedicated to catalyzing the Upcycled economy to reduce food loss and waste across the entire supply chain. Through UFA's flagship third-party verified program, Upcycled Certified™, companies can demonstrate how their products prevent food waste, and showcase their positive impact to retail buyers and consumers. UFA members include pioneering consumer goods companies, retailers, ingredient suppliers, and food system change-makers from around the world. The Upcycled Food Foundation, UFA's nonprofit subsidiary, is dedicated to growing consumer awareness and adoption of upcycled products and ingredients. Upcycled Certified™ is administered by a third-party certification body, Where Food Comes From, which ensures that every Upcycled Certified™ product or ingredient meets the rigorous Upcycled Certified™ Standard. To learn more about the Upcycled Certified™ program, visit [www.upcycledfood.org](http://www.upcycledfood.org) or contact [certification@upcycledfood.org](mailto:certification@upcycledfood.org).

#### About Hope and Sesame®

Hope and Sesame® has cracked the code on unlocking the dense nutrition in tiny sesame seeds to create a plant milk that's good-for-you, planet-friendly, and delicious! Sesame is highly sustainable, thriving in arid climates with very little water, is naturally drought- and pest-resistant, and can self-pollinate. Nutritionally comparable to dairy milk, Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk delivers 8g of complete protein per serving (including all nine essential amino acids) – that's 8x the protein in most almond and nut milks and 2x the protein in most oat milks! Developed for and approved by top baristas, Hope and Sesame® Barista Blend Sesamemilk froths, steams, and foams like a dream, is great for latte art, and delivers 4g of complete protein per 8oz serving. Sesame milk is an excellent source of both vitamin D and calcium, and its core ingredient is the ultra-nutritious pulp upcycled from sesame oil extraction. All Hope and Sesame® products are vegan, Certified Gluten-Free and Certified Kosher, free from soy and dairy, Non-GMO Project Verified, and Certified by the Plant Based Foods Association. Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk is the first and only plant milk to receive Upcycled certification from the Upcycled Food Association. Available in both refrigerated 48 oz bottles (three flavors) as well as shelf-stable long-life recyclable aseptic cartons (seven flavors, including Barista Blend) in both US and Canadian bilingual packaging.

Hope and Sesame® products have received myriad industry and consumer awards, and they keep coming: Hope and Sesame® Barista Blend Sesamemilk was awarded Best Novel Creamer by Good Housekeeping in their 2022 Best Coffee Awards, won Best Product at Coffee Fest Chicago 2022, received the international Gama 2022 Innovation Award for Best Hospitality Product, and was a finalist for Best Product of the Year at the 2022 Specialty Coffee Awards; Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk was awarded Best Milk Alternative and Best Plant-Based Sustainability in FoodBev's 2021 World Plant-Based Food Awards; signature Chocolate Hazelnut Sesamemilk flavor received the 2020 Sofi Award for Best New Product, Plant-Based Milk from the Specialty Food Association.

#### About The Planting Hope Company Inc.

Planting Hope develops, launches, and scales uniquely innovative plant-based and planet-friendly food and beverage brands. Planting Hope's award-winning and cutting-edge products fill key unmet needs in the skyrocketing plant-based food and beverage space. The Planting Hope brand family includes Hope and Sesame® Sesamemilk, Barista Blend Sesamemilk, and Sesamilk™ creamers, RightRice® Veggie Rice, Mozaics™ Real Veggie Chips, and Veggicopia® Veggie Snacks. Planting Hope products are currently found in more than 15,000 retail doors and 70,000 total distribution points

across North America. Founded by experienced food industry entrepreneurs, Planting Hope is a women-managed and woman-led company focused on nutrition, sustainability, and representation.

For more information about Planting Hope please visit [plantinghopecompany.com](http://plantinghopecompany.com), sign up for Planting Hope news emails [HERE](#) and follow on [LinkedIn](#).

An informational webinar on The Planting Hope Company from CEO and Co-founder Julia Stamberger is available [HERE](#).

To follow the brands on Instagram and Facebook, please visit: [@hopeandsesameco](#), [@rightrice](#), [@mozaicschips](#), [@veggicopia](#).

To find Planting Hope products at a store near you in the United States or Canada, please visit the store locator at each brand website: [Hope and Sesame store locator](#), [RightRice store locator](#), [Mozaics store locator](#). Planting Hope products are also available at [plantinghopebrands.com](http://plantinghopebrands.com) and ecommerce retailers including Amazon.com and Amazon.ca.

## Contacts

### Company Contact:

Julia Stamberger

CEO and Co-founder

(773) 492-2243

[julia@plantinghopecompany.com](mailto:julia@plantinghopecompany.com)

### Investor Relations Contact:

Glen Akselrod, Bristol Capital

(905) 326-1888 ext. 1

[glen@bristolir.com](mailto:glen@bristolir.com)

### Media Contact:

Alex Jessup, Jessup PR

(323) 529-3541

[alex.jessup@jessuppr.com](mailto:alex.jessup@jessuppr.com)

*Neither the TSX Venture Exchange nor its Regulation Services Provider (as that term is defined in the policies of the TSX Venture Exchange) accepts responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.*

## Forward-Looking Statements

*This news release contains "forward-looking statements" or "forward-looking information" (collectively referred to hereafter as "forward-looking statements") within the meaning of applicable Canadian securities legislation. All statements that address activities, events, or developments that the Company expects or anticipates will, or may, occur in the future, including statements about the Company's ability to execute on its goals, the timing pertaining to these goals the potential demand for the Company's products, the timing and success of anticipated product launches and distribution of the Company's products, and the Company's business prospects, future trends, plans and strategies. In some cases, forward looking statements are preceded by, followed by, or include words such as "may", "will," "would", "could", "should", "believes", "estimates", "projects", "potential", "expects", "plans", "anticipates", "continues", or the negative of those words or other similar or comparable words. In preparing the forward looking statements in this news release, the Company has applied several material assumptions, including, but not limited to, the assumption that demand for the Company's product will be sustained or increase in accordance with management's projections, that the Company's*

*internal research and analysis is indicative of broader market trends and the Company's anticipated future demand for its products, that changes in consumer preferences in the plant-based food industry will continue in accordance with the Company's expectations, that the Company's current business objectives can be achieved and that its other corporate activities will proceed as expected, and that general business and economic conditions will not change in a materially adverse manner. Although the management of the Company believes that the assumptions made and the expectations represented by such statements are reasonable, there can be no assurance that any forward-looking statement herein will prove to be accurate. Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other factors which may cause the actual results, performance, or achievements of the Company to be materially different from any future results, performance, or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. Although management of the Company has attempted to identify important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in forward-looking information, there may be other factors that cause results not to be as anticipated, estimated, or intended. Risks and uncertainties applicable to the Company, as well as trends identified by the Company affecting its industry can be found in the Company's annual information form dated January 6, 2022 and the Company's continuous disclosure record available on SEDAR at [www.sedar.com](http://www.sedar.com). Such cautionary statements qualify all forward-looking statements made in this news release. The Company undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise, except as required by applicable law.*