



REMARKS

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2022 Annual Meeting of Shareholders

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Check against delivery

Welcome to our Annual General Meeting – an occasion that always makes me both thoughtful and very grateful. This is my 27th AGM at Maple Leaf Foods.

“One must wait until the evening to see how splendid the day has been,” said one Greek philosopher. Hold that thought. I will come back to it.

I think constantly about our progression as a company – an organization full of passionate, purposeful people – and where we are heading on our journey...how we can have positive impact.

The Maple Leaf Foods vision is to be the most sustainable protein company on earth. Our story begins and our story ends with this one clear thought. Please never lose sight of this.

The pandemic’s challenges have made me appreciate the years I’ve served here because they have delivered so many life lessons on which I rely often, especially when facing uncertainty. There have been daunting moments, challenges overcome and more reasons than I can count to be so very optimistic about our future.

Although none of us had navigated a pandemic before, our experiences taught us what it meant to face a challenge -- and I KNEW there was a bright spot on the other side if we could stay focused and maintain our confidence. The price of that knowledge, and one I’ll happily pay time and again, is more than a few grey hairs!

I’m gratified to say that after two years of endless chaos, our company continues to demonstrate purposeful intent, strategic clarity, marketplace distinction, astounding resilience, and the ability to drive growth and deliver record financial performance by creating value for **all** stakeholders.

We hold nothing but pride in these outcomes.

The Blueprint to which you hear me refer so often has been our strategic guide through the bedlam of the past two years, helping us advance our vision to be the most sustainable protein company on earth.

We made progress in so many areas, because we are unwavering believers in stakeholder capitalism. We know that the best path to creating enduring value for shareholders is by creating value for all stakeholders.

It is important that we ground ourselves in what this means to us, what is distinctive about the ethos which defines Maple Leaf:

First, is horizon. We are long-term decision makers and will not be thrown off course by the curse, but hypnotic allure, of short-termism.

Second, we serve all our stakeholders, including shareholders, but reject the overt primacy of shareholders.

Third, we recognize our natural environment as a vital stakeholder in our company.

Fourth, we are willing to have a view of advocacy on matters important to society and not just our narrow corporate interest.

And finally, we actively seek to connect these defining features of our culture and vision to the financial success of the company over time, so we don't force an existential trade-off between virtue and money.

Investors in Maple Leaf should do so with an equal conviction to these principles.

That said, of course, we keep an active, intense focus on our near-term financial performance.

As a result, in 2021, our Meat business, representing 96% of our revenue, delivered impressive topline results, up 8% on a 52-week equivalent basis, while delivering record Adjusted EBITDA of \$527 million and a strong Adjusted EBITDA margin of 12.1%. The fact that we achieved these results during the second year of a pandemic makes me beyond proud.

We did it while facing COVID-related absenteeism that at times approached 30% at select sites. We faced inflation, supply chain disruptions, and volatile markets. And still, our Meat Group delivered a second sequential record year.

Unfortunately, our plant-protein business did not fare as well, pressured by the same challenges that impacted the entire competitive landscape. The category slowed markedly after three years of exceptional growth through 2020. Our results mirrored the category, with U.S. dollar sales down -4.7%, on an equivalent 52-week basis.

In response, we did what we do so well – we took a deep and disciplined look at the plant-based meat alternative category and consumer behaviour to understand why. Today, we are confident that growth in this category will continue to exceed conventional grocery, but our expectations have been significantly moderated. We now believe it can deliver steady and attractive category growth rates between 10-15% and we will invest in the business at an appropriate level to match the projections our analysis yielded.

Our leading retail plant-based brands remain an important part of our portfolio. We now expect this business to be EBITDA neutral or better in the latter half of 2023.

There are many bright spots as we look ahead, and one of the most exciting is our new London poultry plant, where progress continued in 2021. Once completed later this year, it will be the most advanced of its kind ever built in North America.

It will truly transform our poultry business.

The facility will have state-of-the-art food safety, people safety and animal care technologies. It will increase our value-added processing capacity and reduce costs by consolidating production from three aging plants into one highly efficient site.

We project it will contribute incremental annualized EBITDA of over \$100 million when fully ramped up.

In 2021, despite the COVID chaos, we completed a 73,000 square foot expansion at our Winnipeg plant, creating our Maple Leaf Bacon Centre of Excellence. The project significantly expands production capacity for our growing pre-cooked bacon line to meet rising market demand, adding an expected \$30 million to EBITDA annually when fully operational.

We also acquired an existing food facility in Indianapolis and transformed it into the world's first dedicated scale tempeh plant, a growing plant-based category where we lead the market.

Our vision to be the most sustainable protein company on earth is what increasingly differentiates us in the marketplace. If there was ever any doubt that our vision was the correct one, recent news on climate change should dispel it. Our commitment to our planet has deepened and become even more urgent.

Just last month a United Nations report warned that unless countries drastically accelerate emissions reductions from coal, oil and natural gas, the goal of limiting global warming to relatively safe levels, will likely be out of reach by the end of the decade. That is a terrifying prospect.

In 2021, we completed our second year as the world's first scale carbon neutral food company. To our knowledge, no other food company has taken the same step to become carbon neutral now, and this has got to change. We don't have years to wait.

We continue to pursue ways to reduce our footprint. Most excitedly, we have our eye on game changing technologies which have the capacity to fundamentally alter the footprint of our industry; things like regenerative agriculture and anaerobic digestion. Our science-based targets are always on our mind – and we have a comprehensive plan to achieve or exceed them.

Currently, sustainable meat – which includes raised without antibiotics and other welfare and environmental benefits – now comprises more than 16% of our meat sales – more than any scale meat company we know. In the U.S., over 17,000 stores now carry our sustainable meat items, fueling our 35% growth in the U.S. over the last two years. We have ambitious plans to continue this momentum, given our leadership in such a high growth category, and we're deeply encouraged by the increasing priority that consumers place on sustainable meat.

We've also set a goal to use 100% sustainable packaging by 2025 – a very ambitious target given the complexity of balancing our commitment to food safety with our environmental ambitions. We are increasing our efforts to achieve what we see as a visible differentiator in the market and an important part of our environmental action plan.

But we must do more! This means accelerating our market position in raising animals without antibiotics, it means extending our animal care practices across the industry, and it means accelerating our leadership in the real food movement. Last year, we completed the conversion

of 100% of our company-owned barns to our Advanced Open Sow Housing system that gives pregnant sows the freedom to eat, play, and live in social groups. This is a world-leading system, and we need to do more to encourage others to follow.

I began my career in the food industry as a salesman, so customer connection is something I know well and invest a lot of time in. Aside from the impact we are having, the most gratifying dimension of our vision to be a broadly sustainable enterprise, is the momentum we are seeing where some of the largest customers in North America are seeking higher level strategic relationships with Maple Leaf as a result of our work – differentiating work – we are doing to create a better industry and a better world.

As good as we feel about this, all of our progress has occurred against an alarming social and political backdrop. Gross inequality and social injustice continue, with endless human conflict that presents an existential threat to civilization.

This has played out in heartbreaking ways in the unimaginable, unjustified, and unprovoked attack on Ukraine. I've heard directly from our Ukrainian team members about the pain of watching their homeland being decimated for no purpose other than sheer power and control. We've tried to be generous in our support of relief efforts, and we hold the people of Ukraine in our hearts as we hope desperately peace will come soon.

Closer to home, we continue efforts to reduce the Canadian tragedy of food insecurity by fixing the system that allows it to continue.

In one of the world's richest nations, over 5.8 million people struggle to reliably access the food they need.

We are determined to advance structural change through the Maple Leaf Centre for Action on Food Security by working collaboratively with civil society, government, and private sector partners.

We've shown leadership in all areas of creating a sustainable enterprise: making better, more sustainable food, being better stewards of the animals in our care, advancing social justice, and finding clear paths to meet our science-based targets, all while maintaining our carbon neutral position.

We are world leaders in health and safety, with an industry-leading Total Recordable Injury Rate that has continued its sustained downward trend. We will not stop until no one – and I mean NO ONE -- gets hurt at Maple Leaf!

Our leadership in global food safety is grounded in learning, investment, and preventative action. A suite of operating practices support our commitment to continuous improvement in quality and food safety.

Clearly, Maple Leaf Foods is a company with big ambitions, and we are powered by our culture and our people, the secret sauce in having significant impact.

Last year we developed the next generation of our People Strategy, which seeks to constantly enhance our values-based culture, attract and build amazing talent, form high performing and diverse teams, and create enduring engagement with our team members – all of them.

Nearly three decades after I started at Maple Leaf, I'm proud to say that we are not your average food company – and we don't ever want to be. In fact, we don't ever want to be average at anything! We measure our worth by the *shared value* we create, and we are delivering on that goal.

Today, at my 27th Annual General Meeting, our company is solid. More mature. Wiser and sounder. And with that perspective, I'd like to share a personal story as my final subject for the day.

Let me ground it in a thought from the Actor/Director, Ron Howard who observed that being in the middle of the aging process provided "*good human drama.*"

I will take you back to March of 1995, to a day I remember like yesterday. My father, brother and I, along with two colleagues, got on the elevator to the 15th floor of 30 St Clair in Toronto, which was Maple Leaf's head office at the time.

We were starting due diligence on a transaction to acquire this storied, iconic business alongside financial partners, which was my first step into this world. It was a company whose history dated back to 1898, but which had experienced decades of neglect under the ownership of a UK holding company.

Shortly after the acquisition – the birth of the modern Maple Leaf – we discovered just how troubled it really was. There was no discernable culture that bound people together. A hodgepodge of legacy businesses littered the portfolio. The industry was wildly fragmented with excess small-scale capacity galore. Factories were sub-scale, inefficient with antiquated technologies and deplorable conditions.

I got a call from my brother Scott right after he visited our wiener manufacturing facility to let me know the product we were producing had 63 days of shelf life but was unsaleable after 14. Our supply chain was dominated by an outmoded direct store delivery model.

Our customer relationships were transactional at best. Our brands were tired and deteriorating. Our product development capacity had been decimated. Our labour cost was 60% higher than our principal US competitors who had just then become net exporters of pork, a competitive disadvantage that would be fatal in time. And, once the accounting smoke cleared (and, there was more creative accounting in those days), it was apparent that the company was bleeding cash in its core meat business, threatening the viability of the entire enterprise.

So, what inspired me? Easy...the people! This was an iconic Canadian company with almost 100 years of history. It was populated by truly remarkable people who believed in it, and in what it could be again. At 36 years of age, the team and I had just enough hubris to feel like we could fix

anything and restore greatness to what was once a symbol of the country.

But it would be a different Maple Leaf. A modern Maple Leaf. A world leading Maple Leaf.

I was struck by the advice of one of the most successful retailers in our country's history – Dick Currie at Loblaw, who told me: *“Michael, never lose sight of the fact that truly great companies take a very, very long time to create.”*

That was my father and his brothers' legacy before me, at McCain Foods. Focus on people and culture. Be somewhat strategic, but mostly excellent at execution. And take time to BUILD the business in the right way. Persistence matters!

It has been just over 27 years since first walking into the Maple Leaf offices, and it has been a labor of love, conviction, and partnerships. Here we are in 2022 and the modern Maple Leaf is admired worldwide as a leader in our space. We have a “change the world” vision, reflecting the purpose we embrace to raise the good in food. We have earned a broad reputation as progressive, populated by the best talent in a winning culture.

We are stewarding the best brands which reflect today's consumers and growing them profitably. We are leaders in safety, quality, innovation, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare. After billions of dollars in investment, we have world-class assets, and we are expanding our boundaries beyond Canada with so much more to do. Our financial success, both top line and bottom line, is leading our industry and accelerating. We have proven this iconic Canadian company can achieve global greatness.

Twenty-seven years, overcoming almost every obstacle imaginable. How did it happen? It is no secret. The people of Maple Leaf!

From day one, I have believed that our people and culture will define our future, and my greatest honour is the opportunity to work shoulder to shoulder with some of the best, the brightest, most inspiring, capable and driven people I have ever known.

My pride has come from watching this team grow, fail a little, overcome, grow some more, and succeed; over and over again. The names to shower tributes on are endless. Individually they have been remarkable. Collectively they are my inspiration.

There are five people in particular, who deserve a specific shout out on our journey. My long-time business partner Richard Lan, who served as Chief Operating Officer.

My brother Scott McCain who was also a Chief Operating Officer. Michael Vels, the foundation building CFO in whom we had unwavering trust. Gary Maksymetz, the Chief Operating Officer who followed Richard. And finally, Curtis Frank, my current Teammate who is now the Chief Operating Officer.

Why am I telling you this story? Because after 27 years, it is time for me to begin a transition to hang up my CEO reins. Aging has a way of sneaking up on you – good human drama. And I

don't actually feel old.

Yet I was the youngest person in the room most of my life, and now I am not. There are more mountains to climb, and this fantastic team needs a fresh set of leadership eyes.

So, the Board and I have agreed to a transition plan where I will become the Executive Chair and CEO right after this meeting, and step down from the CEO role before next year's AGM. We will be handing the CEO reins to Curtis Frank, our current President and COO. This business is in an incredible place, with an amazing future and a remarkable team. It is time.

The defining feature of Maple Leaf has been talent and culture. There is no better reflection of this than when our talent develops inside the organization; blossoms like a great mighty oak in springtime.

That is Curtis Frank. He has been with Maple Leaf for 21 years, starting shortly after finishing university. He has the agricultural and food roots that growing up in Saskatchewan has embedded naturally in him.

Over his time here Curtis has demonstrated his learning capacity, his deep understanding of all aspects of our business, and his competitive will to win. He gets it done the right way; through his unrivaled ability to gain followership and mobilize every stakeholder in the journey. Curtis is a living embodiment of our Leadership Values, embracing the human side of leadership required to succeed in our progressive organization. He is exactly the leader we need to further our vision. He is ready to step into the leading role and set the course for the next chapter of Maple Leaf Foods.

This company and this team are deeply rooted in my heart and soul, second only to my family.

While I will be stepping down as CEO, and removing myself from the day-to-day activity, my efforts as Executive Chair will shift into a new capacity more heavily oriented to strategy, stewardship, oversight, and guidance.

The McCain family is not going anywhere. We have deep roots in the food industry and in this business, and we are fully committed to Maple Leaf from my generation to the next.

In 2007, my father spoke at a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of McCain Foods Limited, the company he and his brother founded. He began quoting the Greek playwright Sophocles who said, "One must wait until the evening to see how splendid the day has been."

This day – spread over 27 years – has been splendid.

And tomorrow will be even better!