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Sale offers bright future for SPC business

SPC Managing Director Reg Weine today welcomed the sale of the SPC fruit and vegetable processing business (SPC) to Shepparton Partners Collective Pty Ltd (Shepparton Partners Collective), a joint venture between Perma Funds Management and The Eights, saying the new ownership would allow SPC to continue its transformation and to pursue new opportunities in domestic and international markets.

The sale was announced by Coca-Cola Amatil today following a nine-month review and divestment process commencing in August 2018.

Mr Weine said the new owners had committed to offering continuing employment to all SPC's permanent staff.

"That's great news for our team and a vote of confidence in SPC," Mr Weine said.

"It's business as usual at all sites today, and we look forward to working with Shepparton Partners Collective on employment offers to our permanent staff and unlocking growth opportunities for the business as a whole."

Mr Weine said the SPC business operations had been transformed since 2014, with delivery of a four-year \$100 million program to modernise the Shepparton manufacturing base.

"The transformation is a credit to the team, and to Coca-Cola Amatil and the Victorian Government who stood by SPC and helped us reshape the business when it was at risk of closure in 2014," Mr Weine said.

"The investment and upgrade of SPC's processing and automation capability has opened up new export markets Mr Weine said.

"The company had recently entered the China market and expanded its export range through a partnership with China State Farm Agribusiness.

"Investment in a new state-of-art tomato processing line has allowed us to grow our domestic market share in tomatoes and we recently launched Australia's first organic canned tomato. Our award winning functional food range - ProVital™ continues to grow and gain support with dieticians and we see significant potential in this brand" Mr Weine said.

"So, whilst we've made some great progress I'm confident we can do more. We thank Coca-Cola Amatil for their support since 2005 and welcome the chance to explore new options with Shepparton Partners Collective."

From 2014 a \$100 million co-investment program between Coca-Cola Amatil and the Victorian Government delivered new infrastructure at SPC's Shepparton site and enabled the company to reduce fixed costs and improve operational efficiency.

A 2018 strategic review conducted by Coca-Cola Amatil recommended divestment of the SPC fruit and vegetable business as the best means to unlock its growth potential in domestic and international markets.