

August 3, 2005



# Central Garden & Pet Announces Record Third Quarter Earnings for Fiscal 2005; A 20% Increase in Diluted Earnings Per Share to \$1.03; Innovation, Acquisitions and Operating Margin Improvement Initiatives Drive Performance

WALNUT CREEK, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 3, 2005--

Tightens Guidance to 10% Sales Growth and 25% EPS Growth for Fiscal 2005; Announces Preliminary Fiscal 2006 Diluted EPS of Approximately \$3.00

Central Garden & Pet Company (Nasdaq:CENT) today announced record results for its fiscal third quarter ended June 25, 2005.

Net sales for the fiscal third quarter were \$413.2 million, an increase of 10.4% from \$374.4 million in the third quarter of fiscal 2004. Net income was \$22.2 million for the quarter, an increase of 23.6% compared to \$17.9 million in the third quarter of fiscal 2004. Fully-diluted earnings per share was \$1.03, compared to \$0.86 in the third quarter of fiscal 2004, an increase of 19.8%. Depreciation and amortization expense in the quarter was \$5.1 million.

Net sales for the Garden Products segment were \$249.8 million, an increase of 9.3% compared to the third quarter of fiscal 2004. Operating income for the Garden Products segment was \$21.4 million, an increase of 28.0% compared to the third quarter of fiscal 2004. Net sales for the Pet Products segment were \$163.4 million, an increase of 12.0% compared to the third quarter of fiscal 2004. Operating income for the Pet Products segment was \$23.6 million, an increase of 20.0% compared to the third quarter of fiscal 2004.

"We continue to build our brands and execute our disciplined growth strategy," noted Glenn Novotny, President and Chief Executive Officer of Central Garden & Pet. "Innovative new products with higher margins and contributions from strategic acquisitions are fueling the growth of our branded products portfolio. We are also focusing on creating greater operating efficiencies that, we believe, will service our customers more effectively and generate better returns for our shareholders. We remain on track for our fiscal 2005 financial objectives and are comfortable with an approximate earnings per share estimate range of \$2.50 to \$2.52 and sales of approximately \$1.4 billion. This represents a 25% increase in diluted earnings

per share for the fiscal year. We are also announcing our preliminary fiscal 2006 diluted earnings per share guidance of approximately \$3.00."

Net sales for the first nine months of fiscal 2005 were \$1,057.6 million, an increase of 10.7% from \$955.8 million in the comparable period of fiscal 2004. Net income was \$47.1 million for the first nine months of fiscal 2005, an increase of 30.2% compared to \$36.1 million in the comparable period of fiscal 2004. Fully-diluted earnings per share was \$2.19 for the first nine months of fiscal 2005, compared to \$1.74 in the comparable period of fiscal 2004, an increase of 25.9%.

Net sales for the Garden Products segment for the first nine months of fiscal 2005 were \$579.0 million, an increase of 8.2% compared to \$535.4 million in the comparable period of fiscal 2004. Operating income for the Garden Products segment in the first nine months of fiscal 2005 was \$44.8 million, an increase of 10.2% compared to \$40.7 million in the comparable period of fiscal 2004. Net sales for the Pet Products segment for the first nine months of fiscal 2005 were \$478.6 million, an increase of 13.8% compared to \$420.4 million in the comparable period of fiscal 2004. Operating income for the Pet Products segment in the first nine months of fiscal 2005 was \$65.3 million, an increase of 41.2% compared to \$46.2 million in the comparable period of fiscal 2004.

The Company will discuss its fiscal third quarter 2005 results on a conference call today at 4:30 p.m. ET. The conference call will be simultaneously broadcast over the Internet through Central's website, <http://www.centralgardenandpet.com/>. To listen to the webcast, please log on to the website prior to the scheduled call time to register and download any necessary audio software.

Central Garden & Pet Company is a leading innovator, marketer and producer of quality branded products for the pet and lawn and garden supplies markets. Our pet products include pet bird and small animal food and supplies, aquarium products, flea, tick, mosquito and other pest control products, edible bones, cages, carriers, pet books, and other dog, cat, reptile and small animal products. These products are sold under a number of brand names, including Kaytee, Super Pet, All-Glass Aquarium, Oceanic, Kent Marine, Energy Savers Unlimited, Zodiac, Pre-Strike, Altosid, Nylabone, TFH, Four Paws and Interpet. Our lawn and garden products include grass seed, wild bird food, weed and insect control products, decorative outdoor patio products and ant control products. These products are sold under a number of brand names, including Pennington, Norcal Pottery, New England Pottery, GKI/Bethlehem Lighting, Lilly Miller, Matthews Four Seasons, AMDRO, Grant's, Sevin, Over'n Out and Cedar Works. For additional information on Central Garden & Pet, including access to the Company's SEC filings, please visit the Company's website at <http://www.centralgardenandpet.com/>.

"Safe Harbor" Statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995: The statements contained in this release which are not historical facts, including future earnings guidance, are forward-looking statements that are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those set forth in or implied by forward-looking statements. These risks are described in the Company's Securities and Exchange Commission filings including, without limitation, the resolution of litigation between the Company and Hebert Axelrod. Central undertakes no obligation to publicly update these forward-looking statements to reflect new information, subsequent events or otherwise.

(Tables Follow)

Central Garden & Pet Company

Consolidated Statements of Income  
(Unaudited)

(In thousands, except per share amounts)

	Three Months Ended		Nine Months Ended	
	June 25, 2005	June 26, 2004	June 25, 2005	June 26, 2004
Net Sales	\$413,193	\$374,431	\$1,057,623	\$955,766
Cost of Goods Sold and Occupancy	282,941	256,506	714,456	663,744
Gross Profit	130,252	117,925	343,167	292,022
Selling, General and Administrative Expenses	92,037	86,183	255,760	222,363
Income from Operations	38,215	31,742	87,407	69,659
Interest Expense	(6,130)	(4,959)	(17,038)	(13,523)
Interest Income	127	89	337	411
Other Income	2,939	1,665	4,593	1,935
Income Before Income Taxes	35,151	28,537	75,299	58,482
Income Taxes	12,968	10,596	28,228	22,342
Net Income	\$22,183	\$17,941	\$47,071	\$36,140
Basic Earnings Per Common Share:	\$1.06	\$0.89	\$2.27	\$1.81
Diluted Earnings Per Common Share:	\$1.03	\$0.86	\$2.19	\$1.74
Weighted Average Shares Outstanding:				
Basic	20,890	20,086	20,735	19,968
Diluted	21,603	20,974	21,454	20,753

Central Garden & Pet Company

Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets  
(Unaudited)

(In thousands)

June 25,      June 26,      September

	2005	2004	25, 2004
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Assets			
Current Assets:			
Cash and Equivalents	\$9,910	\$18,211	\$12,221
Restricted Investments	15,327	15,307	14,936
Accounts Receivable	207,108	187,360	183,979
Inventories	277,381	242,972	237,913
Prepaid Expenses and Other	21,016	10,235	15,811
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Total Current Assets	530,742	474,085	464,860
Property & Equipment - Net	112,255	101,760	105,612
Goodwill	362,923	310,560	338,384
Deferred Income Taxes and Other Assets	69,802	56,423	51,341
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Total	\$1,075,722	\$942,828	\$960,197
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Liabilities & Shareholders' Equity			
Current Liabilities:			
Accounts Payable	\$99,896	\$106,241	\$105,933
Accrued Expenses	88,524	75,403	64,948
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt	1,772	1,026	1,025
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Total Current Liabilities	190,192	182,670	171,906
Long-Term Debt	343,669	288,450	304,775
Other Long-Term Obligations	4,182	1,564	3,720
Convertible Redeemable Preferred Stock	3,000	3,000	3,000
Shareholders' Equity	534,679	467,144	476,796
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Total	\$1,075,722	\$942,828	\$960,197
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SOURCE: Central Garden & Pet Company