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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Emporia, Kansas-- Simmons Pet Food, Inc. announced today that it will be moving forward with a multi million dollar expansion at its Emporia pet food processing complex. The company plans to have the new line operating in the fourth quarter of 2014.

The canning line expansion will initially add more than 50 new jobs, with the expectation of reaching over 80 new positions when line capacity is filled.

Simmons Pet Food president, David Jackson, speaks with enthusiasm about the company's continuing investment in Emporia. "The people of Simmons Pet Food are proud of our commitment to this community", commented Jackson. "So, too, we appreciate Emporia's long-standing support of our business. We look forward to prospering together as demand for our products continues to grow".

"The City of Emporia is excited to hear the news about the expansion at Simmons Pet Foods. We look forward to a continued partnership in the future." stated Mayor Jon Geitz. The City of Emporia, the Kansas Department of Commerce and the RDA has worked collaboratively with Simmons Pet Food on this expansion.

"We are pleased that Simmons Pet Food is continuing to invest and create more full-time jobs in Emporia." stated Kent Heermann President of the Regional Development Association of East Central. "This is the second expansion in more than a year. In 1st quarter 2013 Simmons added a new production line with more than 30 full-time employees. The City of Emporia with the assistance of the RDA received a \$500,000 economic development grant from the Kansas Department of Transportation to fund the majority of paving cost of Warren Way. This improvement will provide better access to and from Simmons Pet east and west buildings and other Park III tenants."

The new line will increase the processing capabilities of the Emporia facility by over 240 million cans per year. Jackson notes, "The additional production in Emporia will position us to support all of our customer's needs for the next few years as well as give us room to grow with new customers. Simmons Pet Food is investing significantly across our canned, dry, and treats product lines as we expand our ability to prepare great food for cats and dogs across North America. "

Simmons Pet Food is the leading supplier of custom and private label pet food solutions in the U.S. and Canada.

The Regional Development Association of East Central Kansas (RDA) is a collaborative effort of the City of Emporia, Lyon County Commissioners, the Emporia Area Chamber of Commerce, Emporia Enterprises, Emporia State University, Emporia Main Street and the Flint Hills Technical College.

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