

AXEL JOHNSON AB

Press release

Stockholm, February 20, 2009

Year-end report for 2008

- During the year, the Axel Johnson Group's consolidated sales rose to SEK 19,881 million (19,557). Sales of partly owned Axfood and Mekonomen amounted to SEK 31,663 million (29,189) and SEK 2,646 million (2,530), respectively.
- Operating profit amounted to SEK 993 million (1,167). Following impairment losses, profit after net financial items was SEK 909 million (1,314). In the preceding year, profit included capital gains totaling SEK 164 million.
- In 2008, several acquisitions were completed. Axel Johnson International acquired Certex Lifting, UK, Peter Harbo, Denmark, Porin Laakeri, Finland and the Swedish companies Elektro-Dynamo AB, EN Components and LVD Lastvagnsdelar. The Åhléns group acquired the retail chain Parfymeri Mitti, and in January Axfood purchased PrisXtra. Mekonomen entered into an agreement with Micro AB to acquire eight Micro stores and Servera strengthened its position in southern Sweden by acquiring RP Frukt. Svensk BevakningsTjänst expanded its operations during the year through the acquisition of Parkab.
- The Axel Johnson Group's financial position was further strengthened. Reported shareholders' equity rose to SEK 5,894 million (5,573). At year-end, cash and cash equivalents amounted to SEK 2,569 million (2,058) and net cash assets to SEK 1,514 million.

Key figures

<i>SEK m</i>	2008	2007
Net sales	19,881	19,557
Operating profit	993	1,167
Operating margin, %	5.0	6.0
Profit after net financial items	909	1,314
Profit for the year	515	880
Equity	5,894	5,573
Equity ratio, %	56	60

CEO's comments

Despite a slackening economy, with markets that were difficult to navigate, we as a trading group fared well during 2008. Most of the companies reported favorable earnings despite generally weaker economic conditions. Consolidated sales increased by SEK 324 million and profit after financial items amounted to SEK 909 million. Profit was charged with current goodwill amortization of SEK 207 million.

Axel Johnson International had a successful year, with growth from acquired companies as well as organically. Within Axfood, Willys had its best year ever and Mekonomen strengthened its position in a shrinking market. Novax, which invests in growth companies, evaluated a large number of business proposals in 2008, but no new acquisitions were implemented.

Servera, which reported its best earnings ever, achieved notable successes in 2008 including a growth rate of about 10 percent. SvenskBevakningsTjänst also noted a record-breaking year and strengthened its position as Sweden's third-largest guard services company. Expansion within the Åhléns group continued, with 38 new department stores and regular stores opened in Sweden, Finland and Norway. However, the

Åhlens group's results were negatively impacted by the prevailing economic climate, and the company's sales weakened.

The long-term efforts of recent years, with the aim of improving our customer offerings by building and developing our operations, have created a stable platform for future growth. Acquisitions of new businesses, divestments of operations and healthy cash flows in existing companies provide us with a solid financial position. The Axel Johnson Group is currently debt-free. Although 2008 turned out to be the weakest year on the stock market since the 1930s, we have considerable unrealized surplus values in our balance sheet. This provides us with the potential to be proactive and to continue to expand our operations during 2009.

Stockholm, February 18, 2009

Comments on companies

Sales and earnings per company

SEK m	Sales		Profit/loss after net financial items	
	2008	2007	2008	2007
Axel Johnson International	6 065	5 187 *	284	287 *
Axfood	31 663	29 189	1 011	1 086
Mekonomen	2 646	2 530	261	267 **
Novax	542	508	-15	-11
Servera	6 857	6 193	166	148
Svensk BevakningsTjänst	636	546	42	28
Åhlens group	5 789	5 683	187	266

* Figures for the year of comparison, 2007, have been adjusted to take into account divested operations.

** Figures for the year of comparison, 2007, have been adjusted to take into account capital gains of SEK 151 million from the divestment of properties.

▲ AXEL JOHNSON INTERNATIONAL

Demand for Axel Johnson International's products and services rose during the year, and the group reported continued favorable growth. The group continued its expansion, in part by purchasing the UK company Certex Lifting, the Danish company Peter Harbo and the Swedish companies LVD Lastvagnar and Elektro-Dynamo AB. In August, Mats R Karlsson assumed the position of new president.

axfood

During the year, Axfood displayed favorable sales growth, healthy profitability and a high level of cost control. Willys achieved its highest profit ever, and the company's continued efforts to invest in perishable goods and increasing the product range had a favorable outcome. Hemköp continued with its action plan, focusing on such areas as cost control, price and product range strategies and improved control over the gross margin. Dagab focused on improving even more in perishable goods, and Axfood purchased PrisXtra, resulting in a strengthened presence for Axfood in Stockholm. In December, Axfood and Vi-butikerna signed a cooperative agreement entailing that Dagab will supply perishable goods to Vi-butikerna beginning in 2009. Axel Johnson's holding in Axfood amounts to approximately 46 percent.

Mekonomen



In 2008, Mekonomen intensified its brand efforts and launched several new concepts. Through MekoPartner, a chain of independent repair shops affiliated with Mekonomen, the company strengthened its offering to repair shops. The launch of the combined repair shop and store concepts, Mekonomen Mega and Medium, and the optimization of other stores' retail space resulted in increased sales. In November, the company entered into an agreement with Micro AB regarding the acquisition of eight Micro stores. Axel Johnson's holding in Mekonomen amounts to 29 percent.

NOVAX

No new acquisitions were implemented by Nova in 2008. During the year, the Novax companies expanded, with several new stores and an increased international presence. DesignTorget noted growth of approximately 10 percent, and opened an Internet store in 2008. Novax acquired another 5.3 percent of Filippa K, bringing the shareholding to 56 percent. Filippa K continued its international expansion, which included the opening of a concept store in Hamburg. In 2008, the prevailing economic climate resulted in weakened market conditions for Novax's subsidiaries.



During the year, Servera continued to take market share and further developed its customer offering. Through a conscious strategy, the company focused on customers in the private restaurant segment and broadened its product range in meat, deli items and cheese. In 2008, Servera established a presence in the shipping market, with several shipping companies as new customers.

BEVAKNINGSTJÄNST



In 2008, Svensk BevakningsTjänst strengthened its market position, increased its assignments with existing customers and signed agreements with about 1,500 new customers. Its new business area, Parking, increased the company's presence in the Stockholm area, and Svensk BevakningsTjänst foresees considerable expansion potential for this part of its operations.

ÅHLÉNS

The Åhlens group initiated a comprehensive strategy and change project to strengthen its customer offering and thereby increase sales. The company's focus on fashion was intensified, resulting in the department stores' index figures outperforming the sector as a whole. Despite greater competition in the beauty products market, Kicks reported favorable earnings. During the year, Kicks acquired the retail chain Parfymeri Mitti in Skåne and opened a total of 21 new stores in the Nordic countries. In 2008, the Åhlens group's operations were impacted by the prevailing economic trend, which had a negative effect on sales. Thomas Axén took up the role of new president of the Åhlens group in April 2008.

For further information, please contact:

Fredrik Persson, President and CEO, tel. +46 (0)8-701 61 59

Lilian Fossum, Executive Vice President and CFO, tel. +46 (0)8-701 61 58

Sofia Gustafsson, Press Relations Officer, tel. +46 (0)8-701 61 18

Axel Johnson AB is a family company in its fourth and fifth generations that builds and develops profitable business within retail trade and trade-related services in the European market, with a main focus on the Nordic region. Group companies currently comprise Axel Johnson International, Novax, Servera, Svensk BevakningsTjänst, the Åhléns group and the partly owned listed companies Axfood and Mekonomen. www.axeljohnson.se

Axel Johnson AB is one of three separate groups in the **Axel Johnson Group**, together with AxFast and the US company Axel Johnson Inc. In addition, the Axel Johnson Group has an ownership interest in Nordstjernen. The Axel Johnson Group is owned by Antonia Ax:son Johnson and her family.

