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Presentation

Jacob Broberg

Good morning, and welcome to Cloetta's quarterly results. My name is Jacob Broberg, head of investor relations, and as always I have Bengt Baron, CEO and Danko Maras, CFO with me. So I will now leave the presentation to Bengt. Please go ahead.

Bengt Baron

Good morning, everybody. First quarter: I'd like to start out with the highlights of the quarter. We're very pleased to have a third quarter with organic growth – 0.6% organic growth, but adding FX and adding the Nutisal business, we actually had a growth of almost 6% in the quarter, versus last year. So, yeah, third quarter in a row with organic growth.

Underlying EBIT was down versus last year – SEK77 million versus, last year, SEK91 million. I'd like to emphasise that this is our smallest quarter, historically, from a seasonal variation or annual variation. So the numbers – the differentials might seem large on a percentage basis, but in an absolute it's actually not that big of a difference – SEK14 million. And on top of that, if you look at the three driving factors, which is lower production volumes causing absorption issues, foreign exchange and increased investments in marketing and promotions, we could actually have been ahead of last year taking those into account. But Danko will talk more about that in a sec.

Items comparing – comparability is coming down, as we continue to work towards the completion of the restructuring. Operating profits – you start and see the convergence of reported and underlying. Differential is minimal – so it's SEK52 million versus SEK58 million. And also, I would say, very pleasing on the growth, but we're equally pleased on the cash flow from operating activity, which was SEK91 million in the quarter versus, last year, minus SEK16 million. And also it's an indication of us actually approaching the phase where we have less and less of restructuring, and you see the cash flow flowing through as we actually said at the outset, about two years ago.

Factory restructure – I'll make some comments, but we are getting very close to completion. So three activities left, and I'll leave that as a cliff-hanger and come back to that a little bit later. Likewise, Nutisal – we actually completed the deal and acquired the company on 8th January, and we are in the integration phase. And we'll also have a little bit more detail in a couple of slides. Net debt underlying EBITDA is at 4.4x versus, last year, 4.7x.



Looking at the sales number: overall growth, as I said, 5.9%. The general markets, we would say, are marginally positive. There are always ups and downs by segment and by market, but we would say mostly it was marginal positive. Third consecutive quarter with growth, and we actually grew in six out of nine markets. Especially strong growth in Denmark and Germany, and, as you may recall, a year ago in Denmark we were still battling it out – sort of the end of the price increases after the sugar cost increases back in 2011. We have resolved that issue, and now we are back into full distribution, and that is having an impact when you're comparing to last year. And also in Germany we have managed to increase our distribution, and therefore we're driving some nice gains. Italy, after three consecutive quarters of growth for us, was in decline and – primarily driven by the market decline. We saw market growth in the fourth quarter, but now we see a market decline. I would like to remind everybody that Italy is a much smaller proportion of the totality in quarter one, two and three, whereas in Q4 it more than doubles in size – relative size, as we have big players in the seasonal business. Contract manufacturing continues to decline, but that is non-branded production, so it is not, in our view, as important as the organic growth in our core markets.

So, on that positive note, I would like to hand over to Danko.

Danko Maras

Thank you very much, Bengt, and good morning, everyone. Let me just start by talking a little bit about the top line, and then I'll move into the different line items on the underlying profit and the reported profit.

As Bengt was saying, we have had 5.9% growth in the quarter, and the predominant reason for that is, of course, that we have the acquisition of Nutisal, which stands for approximately 3% of that. But also we continue to have benefits coming through from the fact that the euro currency continues to be strong, and becomes stronger. And let's remember that a large part of our sales are in the euroland area, and therefore we are having a 2.3% benefit coming through continuously. This is also the third quarter in a row where we have benefits from exchanged rates. But above all it's the third consecutive quarter where we have top-line growth which is organic, so the underlying sales is continuing to show the strength that we have shown now for three quarters in a row, and that's a good thing to see.

When we come down to the underlying EBIT, you can see a result of SEK77 million versus SEK91 million, and Bengt was alluding to that. There's a difference of about SEK14 million. One has to look at the proportion of EBIT in the quarter relative to the full year. And here, as you might remember, we have talked about production volume and absorption issues in conjunction with securing the manufacturing strategy and doing the security of our products to deliver them out in the market. In Q1 this year we had an impact of actually producing less than last year, and that's an absorption effect that we might be seeing coming back and forth in the quarters, because they are phasing-related. On a full-year basis, we're very comfortable with the fact that we have volumes, as we have indicated before. But one should be aware that, with small EBIT contributions in a quarter, it can actually have an impact in the quarter.

The other part is FX, and it might be a bit confusing when I say that the euro is strong, and therefore we have top-line growth, but there are some transaction exposures in Norway and Sweden which actually are affecting the commercial operations in Norway and Sweden, and those transaction exposures are impact because of the strong euro. And therefore we are initiating price increases in both Norway and Sweden to take those into mitigation. In the



context of the total impact, it is not significant, but it is contributing to our erosion on EBIT in the quarter.

And then, finally, we are investing in A&P, even though we will see – in our line items you see relatively flattish cost on selling expenses and G&A, but we're actually reducing our index[?], so net/net it's sort of a flattish number. So, on the underlying EBIT, that's the explanation. If we then move down to operating profit, we see this convergence that Bengt was talking about. We have less restructuring in the quarter, relative to last year, and that continues more and more, so that the impact that we're seeing in the quarter is SEK52 million, approximately SEK6 million off from last year. We will continue, of course, to have this convergence, and if you look at the bottom line you can see that the profit for the period was minus SEK12 million. One contributing factor there is, of course, that we are still having restructuring costs, but another part which might be relevant to perhaps look at when you compare to prior year is that, last year, in the finance net, you saw a one-time gain of SEK37 million, which we don't have this year. And that's because we are applying hedge accounting to the finance net item. I can explain more in detail on those questions if you would have them for me later on – to explain it further on.

So those are the line items for our results. If I were to go in and just talk a little bit, also, about how this looks like by the phasing of it, I think the tables on the next slide – on page 5 – it's illustrating it a little bit more, where you can see our top-line growth on the left side, but also the proportions of our EBIT over the quarters. It's a good historical reflection of how we are delivering our EBIT going forward. And I think the most encouraging one we're seeing here on the right side is, of course, the cash flow, which for the quarter, from operating activities, was SEK92 million. We should perhaps also add that, if we are including the – if we're not including the working capital movements from Nutisal, it would have been even higher up to about SEK113 million. So, a very, very strong cash flow in the quarter, and that's very encouraging – makes me very pleased to see.

If we move down to below operating activities, on the next page, just a couple of numbers coming through again. You can also see there the SEK91 million on the operating activities, versus last year's negative – minus SEK 16 million. But also, the fact that yet again the convergence of us not having cash outs from restructuring, then investing in the manufacturing strategy. You can also see a decline in the investing activities – SEK36 million versus SEK54 million – continuing in the right path that we have been indicating all along. And, of course, this quarter we've made the acquisition of Nutisal, and that you can see on the line item for investing activities. That's what we actually paid for Nutisal. So our net debt, as Bengt was indicating, is 4.4x on EBITDA. And one might be saying, if the acquisition would not have happened, we have – we would have reduced our net debt to about 3.156 – so, SEK75 million than we currently have. So, indicating strong cash flow generation, acknowledging the fact that we did an acquisition in the quarter, still having very good cash flow operation – from operations. And with that, I give the word back to Bengt.

Bengt Baron

Update on the integration of Nutisal: so we mentioned the company and the brand was acquired on 8th January, so it's very, very early on, and very much integration mode. We believe it's of strategic importance, and it demonstrates our ambition to move into a broader offering – product offering within the Munchy Moments sphere, as we talked about, in our home markets. We took over the sales responsibility within the Cloetta sales organisation in



Sweden on 1st April, so it's very, very fresh. In the other markets and in Denmark – of course, Sweden is by far the largest market at this point in time. However, we've also launched in, in Finland in – through our own organisation in the month of March, so, early on. So everything is moving in the right direction. We have said all along that it will be EPS-accretive in 2015, so it will impact us negatively under 2014 as we're investing into growth and taking over and also integrating the production and supply chain into the overall operations. But we feel so far, so good, and we are on track with the integration of Nutisal.

Factory restructuring progress: we're moving ahead. Production was terminated in Gävle at the end of 2013. What is remaining are two things. One is to sell the property, which is an ongoing process, and number two is actually relocation of equipment. And that is primarily one major packaging line, which is currently – has been moved and is being installed in Levice. But those two things are what is remaining, and then of course we need to ramp up production fully in Levice and Ljungsbro, as they are taking on the brunt of the Gävle production.

Then the third major activity is the insourcing to Ljungsbro of Tupla, the count line – the market-leading count line in Finland. As we said, that is on track and is expected to be done late Q2/early Q3. So, all in all, we are moving along as we should.

Focus areas: we will continue to focus on profitable growth. Three quarters down – we will continue to focus on organic growth. Factory restructurings – only three things, as I said. Make sure the packaging line goes up and performs well in Levice, sell the Gävle property and completing the Tupla insourcing. And then we also, of course, paying a lot of attention into our new baby: the integration and acceleration of the Nutisal-branded sales in our core markets and beyond.

Before opening up the floor for questions, a little lit of flavour of some product launches during an active quarter. I think it's also a nice illustration of the variety of launches. Starting in Italy with a very unique milk-based product, Galatine, which has launched line expansions. Going into Finland, which is a geographic roll-out of existing products under the Center brand. Going down to Sweden, where you have – if you look at the Powerbreak, that is actually the Tupla product, but in a Swedish wrapping and branding. But also, I think, Viva Lakrits Calabria, where we are continuing to broadening our offering within the liquorice category, which we are attempting to establish in the Swedish market. And this is a premium offering, on top of the Viva Lakrits offering. And then you have a couple of other examples of new packaging or product line extensions or cross-border initiatives. So, all in all, continue to be active in the marketplace.

With that, I would like to open up for questions.



Q&A

Operator

Ladies and gentlemen, I remind you that, if you want to ask a question, you will have to press 01 on your telephone keypad. That's 01 and you'll enter the queue.

The first question comes from Mr Erik Sandstedt from Handelsbanken. Please go ahead, sir.

Erik Sandstedt

Hi there, thanks. This is Erik Sandstedt with Handelsbanken. I've got a few questions here. Firstly, do you have a view on why the Italian market showed a weak development after a couple of more stable quarters, and how did you perform relative that market?

Bengt Baron

It's difficult to tell. I mean, one of the things – if you look over time, our markets are growing somewhere between 0% and 2%. So it's not rapid growth, and of course there are variations from quarter to quarter. And I do not have a specific reason for this quarter. We've been positively surprised a couple of quarters. It was a big – I mean, a big Christmas season. Maybe it's a backlash, so I think we need to give it a couple of quarters. Then how we perform – I think we are sort of defending our market position, as we reiterate, in Italy, where we are not as big a player in quarters one through three. It is actually in Q4 where we are really, really big and it becomes very important for us with the seasonal sales.

Erik Sandstedt

Yeah, perfect. Thanks. More of a nitty-gritty question, perhaps. Net financial expense were SEK50 million in the quarter. Should we analyse that and assume interest rates posted around SEK200 million on an annual basis, or is it fair to assume a lower level as you pay down debt?

Danko Maras

Well, first of all, Erik, welcome to the teams. It was nice to hear from you. I would say, if you look at our annual report, which I'm sure you have read through now, you can see that our effective interest rate that we had in 2013 was 3.8%, so it's a gradual decline. Our actual interest expense for 2014 – we don't do any forward-looking statements there, but it's roughly in line with that level in 2014. That's as much as I can say.

Erik Sandstedt

Yeah, perfect. Thanks. Also, on FX, if you look at the current FX rate, do you foresee also a negative impact on your operating profits in the second quarter?

Danko Maras

Well, if I knew what currencies would do going forward, I would be making a lot of millions here. But you can see a relatively stable weakening of the Norwegian Krone. So it's been stable but weak, and it hasn't deteriorated any further. So that, of course – we will look at this very carefully. On the Swedish Krona versus the euros, I guess there are a lot of people having views about that. But, over the long run, perhaps important to remember that a strong euro is good for Cloetta over the long run. So, rather than specifying anything on a quarter,



just perhaps keep that in mind – that the retranslation issues that you are seeing as a favourable turnover growth actually have an impact also on underlying profit in the end.

Erik Sandstedt

Yeah, perfect. One final question, if I may. Would you care to comment how much exactly you spent more on marketing and sales initiatives in this quarter to drive growth?

Bengt Baron

Bengt here. Honest answer? No. The – and the reasons – because, I mean, you have these phasings issues, and we don't want to get into reconciliation every quarter – what did you do last year, reminding everybody last year on the [inaudible]. I think that the – I think the core message is: we will continue to invest in our brands, and driving the brands and growth in the marketplace, even if it has an impact in an individual quarter.

Erik Sandstedt

Perfect. Thank you very much.

Operator

The next question comes from Christian Bang[?] from Danske Bank. Please go ahead.

Mikael Holm

Hello. This is Mikael at Danske. Just a clarification on the currency. Did you say that the transaction effects were larger than the translation effects in the quarter – the negative transactions were larger than the positive of[?] transaction?

Danko Maras

Are you referring – hi, Mikael. Are you referring now to EBIT or top line or...?

Mikael Holm

EBIT.

Bengt Baron

Yeah. In – you could – yes, that is the immediate impact. The fact that you are having units acquiring goods during the quarter – they will have to pay for the spot rate. So these fluctuations that are immediate will impact the results, of course. But if you continue to have a very strong euro ongoing, that will, in the long run, give a benefit to the company.

Mikael Holm

Okay. And you also talked about pricing – price increases. Is that price increases that are implemented already, or do you – or is it something you intend to do, going forward?

Bengt Baron

They are communicated, and they should be implemented in the summertime. There is a lead time on all of these things, in both directions. So they are communicated to trade, yes.

Mikael Holm

And just on the Nutisal acquisition, because you were a bit – looking at the year-on-year development in the underlying EBIT. I guess you should have had [inaudible]. But was Nutisal – was that a major negative delta, year-over-year, on the underlying EBIT?



Bengt Baron

I wouldn't say it's a major negative on underlying, but of course it impacts. As we said, it should be EPS-accretive in 2015.

Mikael Holm

Okay. And just my final question. It's related to the raw materials situation. We've seen the sugar price be on a declining trend for quite some time. Your raw material costs – how did they develop year-over-year in Q1?

Bengt Baron

There are ups and downs, and the sugar is going down. Of course, cocoa's going up. Almonds are going through the roof. There is nervousness around wheat and wheat-related products due to the Ukraine issue. So it is a little bit of a shaky market right now, but, as you know, we have some forward buys. It takes a bit of time before it really flows through. And, more importantly, if it comes down or goes up, it will be a temporary effect, because in the long run, we have as a strategy that the consumer is either going to pay the price if it goes the wrong way or enjoy the benefits if they go the right way. It's also important in credibility versus in-trade.

Mikael Holm

Okay. Thank you.

Operator

The next question comes from Fredrik Villard from Carnegie. Please go ahead.

Fredrik Villard

Hi. Good morning. I was wondering if you were willing to quantify in one, two, three which will – of the effects Nutisal and production absorption on the gross margin. Which was the biggest and which was the smallest of these effects?

Danko Maras

Good morning, Fredrik. Danko here again. So if you look at the gross margin – you compare it to last year – you could actually say that the two key contributions to the gross margin, as reported, are the production absorption issues that we are having, number one, and then the second part would be by Nutisal. And here you need to think about the dilutive effect that we were referring to – that if you combined branded and private label within the Nutisal business, we will be driving the branded side, of course, but given the fact that we acquired the business just in the middle of January, you will have that immediate effect in the gross margin. So it's about 50/50, you could say, on those two. FX, of course, plays in, but in – if you want to have that priority-setting, those two are the most relevant ones for the quarter.

Fredrik Villard

Okay, cool. Thanks. The second question is with regards to inventory level. I mean, there's significant release of working capital in the quarter, which helps drive your cash flow. And we've – in previous quarters, we've talked about that you're building inventory and you're having a higher inventory than you wish at the end of the quarter. I was wondering if you would want to comment on your satisfaction with the inventory now?



Danko Maras

Well, I would say first of all, if you look at the balance sheet in the quarter, of course you will have to include the Nutisal piece on receivables, payables and inventory. And then it looks like inventory's increasing, but the fact that it's not increasing. That's as far as we go. So you can see that we have good effects in this respect.

Fredrik Villard

Okay, thanks. And the final question – I mean, sure, 0.6 is organic growth, and it's the third consecutive quarter growth. But given you're – I mean, you're alluding to the – more – the relative more spend on A&P. Did you expect more, or was this the anticipation you had – that this increased A&P spending was going to drive 0.6% organic growth?

Bengt Baron

I wish it was as simple as spending more A&P and you immediately get more organic growth, or vice versa. So, I mean, of course, what is key is that the continuous investment in the brands and in the market to drive it. Then you have peaks and troughs, depending on seasonality, depending on launch windows and – of initiatives. And then, also, I mean, again, this being our smallest quarter, it has the biggest impact in the – on the EBIT in the individual quarter. So we are happy with it. We are consistently driving organic growth. That is important, and that's what we – that's the part where we want to stay. Then, of course, we always want to grow faster. Regardless of what the number would be, we would like to grow faster. That's just the way that we would like to operate.

Fredrik Villard

Okay. Thanks.

Operator

The next question comes from Mr Tomas Meerits from Lancelot. Please go ahead, sir.

Tomas Meerits

Thank you. Good morning, gentlemen. I wanted – wondered if you could elaborate on the under-absorption issue, because you mention a lot of things in the report and in the presentation which – I can't really judge which ones are really significant. So you mentioned, you know, decreased contract manufacturing, relocation of equipment, this packaging thing, ramping up production in the Ljungsbro production. So could you just talk about – a bit why the under-absorption happened? You know, was it planned, or is ramping up not going as you [inaudible]?

Danko Maras

Hi, Thomas. Danko here. So I would say, of course, we work under the umbrella of a manufacturing strategy, so the activities that we are doing have the effect of the fact that we are sometimes producing to secure inventory that is primarily driven by this fact of making sure that we are not out of stock of our products. Had we not had a significant change programme, you would have a more stable production scheduling, and you would have less of these issues. But now, when we are ramping down some of the activities – Gävle was closed already by the end of the fourth quarter or the beginning of the first days in January. These implications will mean that the factory productions will have an effect, compared to last year, when you look at the fixed cost in the factories and how they are spread out over the quarters. So it's nothing unusual. I think in many companies you see absorption effects being related



to. We haven't really alluded to them in a large extent in the past, but, as we are now coming back to more status quo, we will refer to them. And I think the more important part is, is this an issue? No. Absorption is normal. We will produce as per the requirements for the business, and all of that is according to plan. So we feel that these phasing issues on absorption is something to acknowledge, but not to feel worried about.

Bengt Baron

And then I think – Bengt here. I think also – I mean, just to add to that, I think it's not an effect that actually arises this year. It is in comparison to last year, where last year was impacted by the fact that we were building inventory before taking down lines – moving lines, not producing, building down the inventory, then starting up lines, then producing again. This year it's much more continuous. We have a couple of steps left, as I said and as you also mentioned, but it's much more stable and continuous than what we have been through over the past two years. So I think one important message – it's not about this year being up or down. It's much more in comparison.

Tomas Meerrits

Yeah. No, I think it's natural that, you know, when you move equipment – when you ramp down somewhere – it's going to have an effect. But also – so a lot of it is non-cash, then, I guess. I mean, what you said, Danko – it sounded like a big part of this – for example, depreciation in Gävle, which is not really that relevant, and once you sell it you probably have a capital gain, as it were. Is that fair to say? I mean, that quite a bit of it is depreciation in Gävle? Because there's not a lot of people working there, right?

Danko Maras

Well, Thomas, I'm more than happy to have a one-on-one with you, if you want to, and I can work a little bit through how the fixed cost allocation goes out on products and how you produce it, but it effectively is how do you spread out your costs in factories over the products that you produce? And the more you produce compared to prior year, the more you spread out those costs. And that has a timing impact, but it doesn't have an impact on the results at all, if you stay flat on inventory levels and you are driving your sales. So I think depreciation, per se, doesn't really have any impact on it, but I'm more than happy to sit down with you one-on-one and go through that a little bit more in detail, so that you get a better understanding of it.

Thomas Meerrits

Thanks. Yeah, [inaudible]. And then – so, finally, just – I mean, if you – if you sum it up, is this – is it going according to plan? i.e., because then you build inventory to be able to deliver goods while you're relocating. And so there's – this does not mean, then – okay, here's my question. Is it going to plan, i.e. you will not have a problem delivering going forward, because you have built up inventory and this under-absorption – underproduction was planned? Is that fair to say?

Danko Maras

Yeah, that's fair to say. And last year we were building a lot of inventory, having an effect in last year's numbers. This year, we are not building inventory. We are just doing steady-state.

Thomas Meerrits

Okay. Thanks a lot.



Operator

The next question comes from Alya Korotonozhkina from Deutsche Bank. Please go ahead.

Alya Korotonozhkina

Hello, good morning. I have a couple of questions. The first one is on financial expenses. This interest of SEK50 million – could you give more colour on that? What does it include? Any pensions? What is the proportion of third-party borrowings – so just basically what drives this SEK50 million?

Danko Maras

Yes. I can say that the majority of those other financial expenses are external borrowing, but there is also interest on pensions. The fact that we are hedging our interest expense – we have – we secure interest rates to make sure that we don't have any volatility on this going forward, and therefore we also have some interest-rate swaps. And that you can see on other financial expenses, as well. But you also have to look at the financial income, because those are the income parts of the – of the swaps. But, overall, the majority of it relates to external borrowing cost. However, not all of it. Some of it are pension-related. Some of it are also related to amortisation of financing and transaction costs that were part of the initial borrowing arrangement that we put in place. Those are being amortised, and they are not cash-related. So I rather do the reference back to, what is the effective interest rate that we are paying to the bank? And that was 3.8% in 2013.

Alya Korotonozhkina

Right. But – so can you quantify what – how much is external borrowings?

Danko Maras

External borrowing is SEK3.2 billion in the quarter.

Alya Korotonozhkina

Mm-hmm. Thank you. Another question is on depreciation. It increased by 9% year on year, and is it because of recent acquisition of the nuts business, or because – given that you have factories closure, I would expect it to go down year on year?

Danko Maras

Well, it's – it's not a major increase of depreciation, so we should perhaps keep in mind that the fact that we have been ramping up with machinery and equipment in the manufacturing strategy is adding to the capitalisation of our machinery and equipment, but at the same time we are taking out old equipment. So it should be relatively the same. What we are also doing, to perhaps keep in mind, is that we're implementing an ERP system where the costs are being capitalised. But in total, we are seeing a relatively similar depreciation level as we did in previous years. So we don't expect it to increase significantly.

Alya Korotonozhkina

Right. Thank you. And, last question, on the restructuring costs. Can you give a guidance for the year? Will they continue to be in Q2, Q3, Q4?



Danko Maras

We have talked about having restructuring expenses in the initial outset that would be approximately up to SEK450 million, or around that level. And we feel confident that we will continue to be guiding in that direction, but it also means – the way we work with our supply chain – that some of the costs will also come out a bit later. But, overall, we are keeping it around that level in 2014, because we will then in the completion of this project, we will be able to do the full evaluation when we are done with it.

Alya Korotonozhkina

Okay. Thank you very much.

Operator

The next question comes from Mr Christian Hellman from Carnegie. Please go ahead, sir.

Christian Hellman

Yes, thanks. Christian Hellman here, from Carnegie. Just – most of my questions have already been answered, but one question, I do have left. Just, could you say something about Easter? Has that impacted Q1 in any way – that Easter being in Q2 this year, and quite late? And – yeah, that Easter should be a big part of your business.

Bengt Baron

Well, good morning, Christian. Well, Easter's actually not that big of an impact on our business. I mean, it's more pick and mix seasonal products, and we're not very big on the seasonal products. Of course we have some of them, but it's not really material, so therefore we've not sort of really tried to go out to specify it. So it should not have a big, major impact.

Christian Hellman

All right. Okay, great. Thanks.

Operator

There are no further questions at this time. Please go ahead, speakers.

Jacob Broberg

Okay. Thank you very much for listening – asking questions. So, speak to you next time. Thank you and goodbye.