

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOBEYS' CEO TO RETIRE NEXT FISCAL YEAR

Succession Process Underway

STELLARTON, NS – Empire Company Limited's Board of Directors today announced that Bill M^cEwan, President and CEO, Sobeys Inc., has expressed his intention to retire early in the company's next fiscal year due to a continuing health issue. The implementation of the company's succession process to replace Mr. M^cEwan is underway.

"Bill recently advised our Board of his intention to retire and we obviously respect and support the decision he has made," said Rob Dexter, Chair, Empire Company Limited. "Our succession process has been designed to identify a successor who will continue to drive the Company's food focused strategy forward. We will consider all suitable candidates and are fortunate to have very strong internal candidates."

The succession process is being overseen by the Board's Human Resources Committee.

Mr. M^cEwan, who has been President & CEO of Sobeys since November 2000, will continue in his role until the completion of a successful transition expected early in the company's next fiscal year which begins May 6, 2012.

"Although Bill has advised of his intentions to retire for personal reasons, it is important to note that Sobeys' progress and performance will continue under his very capable leadership, including the advancement of all the strategic initiatives currently underway during this orderly transition period. We continue to be very supportive of these initiatives and are pleased with the progress being made at Sobeys," added Paul Sobey.

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About Empire Company

Empire Company Limited is a Canadian company (TSX:EMP.A; EMP.PR.B) headquartered in Stellarton, Nova Scotia. Empire's core businesses include food retailing and related real estate. With over \$16 billion in annual sales and approximately \$6.5 billion in assets, Empire and its related companies employ approximately 49,000 people. More information about Empire can be found at www.empireco.ca.

About Sobeys Inc.

Proudly Canadian, with headquarters in Stellarton, Nova Scotia, Sobeys has been serving the food shopping needs of Canadians for 104 years. A wholly-owned subsidiary of Empire Company Limited (TSX:EMP.A), Sobeys owns or franchises more than 1,300 stores in all 10 provinces under retail banners that include Sobeys, IGA, Foodland, FreshCo, and Thrifty Foods, as well as Lawton's Drug Stores. Sobeys and its franchise affiliates employ more than 95,000 people. The company's goal is to be widely recognized as the best food retailer and workplace environment in Canada. More information on Sobeys Inc. can be found at www.sobeyscorporate.com.

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