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Darden Restaurants Appoints Jim Lawrence to Chief Supply Chain Officer

ORLANDO, Fla., May 7, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Darden Restaurants, Inc. (NYSE: DRI) today announced that Jim Lawrence will succeed Barry Moullet as Senior Vice President and Chief Supply Chain Officer effective May 28 as the Company begins its new fiscal year.

(Logo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20050203/FLTH026LOGO)

In his new role, Lawrence will assume responsibility for sourcing, distribution and quality assurance across the Darden enterprise. As a member of Darden's Operating Team, he will report to Drew Madsen, Darden's President and Chief Operating Officer.

Darden's supply chain team manages more than $3 billion in capital and food product expenditures on an annual basis. To meet the needs of its guests, the company sources more than 35 million cases of product from 1,500 vendors in 35 countries around the world.

Lawrence began his career at Darden in 1995, holding progressively responsible positions in Transportation, Seafood Inventory Management and Distribution and Restaurant Distribution Services. He was promoted to Vice President of Supply Management in 2000.

Lawrence was named a Senior Vice President in 2005 when he was appointed to lead Darden's supply management and food purchasing teams. While in this role, he was responsible for overseeing the design and development of Darden's $150 million state of the art Restaurant Support Center that opened in Orlando in September 2009. Before joining Darden, Lawrence held sales and distribution positions with Mobil Corporation and RJR Nabisco, Inc.

"Jim has played a vital role in our supply chain’s evolution and he is the perfect person to lead our efforts moving forward. With his leadership and knowledge of the business, Jim will ensure the team is continually enhancing our supply chain capabilities so that it remains a competitive advantage for Darden," said Madsen.

Moullet is stepping down after a long and distinguished career with Darden. "As I transition to new opportunities in academia and consulting following some time with family this summer, I am confident that Darden's supply chain organization is in good hands under Jim's leadership," said Moullet, who will assist with the transition prior to his departure.

Moullet joined Darden in 1996 as Senior Vice President of Purchasing and Distribution, and was named Chief Supply Chain Officer in August 2003. "Barry has made immeasurable contributions to Darden by helping in the build out of our supply chain that provides significant competitive advantage," said Madsen. "We are thankful for his service and wish him well in this new stage of his life."

About Darden Restaurants
Darden Restaurants, Inc., (NYSE: DRI), the world's largest full-service restaurant company, owns and operates more than 1,900 restaurants that generate over $7.5 billion in annual sales. Headquartered in Orlando, and employing 180,000 people, Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. In 2012, Darden was named to the FORTUNE "100 Best Companies to Work For" list for the second year in a row and is the only full-service restaurant company to ever appear on the list. Our restaurant brands — Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52 and Eddie V's — reflect the rich diversity of those who dine with us. Our brands are built on deep insights into what our guests want. For more information, please visit www.darden.com.

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