Campbell Soup Moves Up Quarterly Dividend

CAMDEN, N.J. (AP) — Campbell Soup Co. said Tuesday that its board agreed to pay the company's regular quarterly dividend in December rather than in January and declared a second dividend for payment before the end of the year.

The regular 29-cent dividend will now be paid on Dec. 28 to shareholders of record as of Dec. 14. The dividend was previously set to be paid on Jan. 28 to shareholders of record as of Dec. 26.

The Camden, N.J.-based food company's board also declared an additional dividend on the company's capital stock of 29 cents. That dividend will have the same payment and record dates as the regular dividend.

Campbell said the second dividend is intended to be in lieu of the quarterly dividend that would have been paid in April 2013.

Many companies are moving up their quarterly payouts or issuing a special end-of-year payment to protect investors from potentially having to pay higher taxes on dividend income starting in January.

The companies are reviewing their dividend policies now that it appears investors could soon pay higher taxes. Since 2003 investors have paid a maximum 15 percent on dividend income. But that historically low rate will expire in January unless Congress and President Barack Obama reach a compromise on taxes and government spending.

As it stands, dividends will be taxed as ordinary income in 2013, the same as wages, so rates will go up depending on which income bracket a taxpayer is in. For the highest earners, the dividend rate would jump to 43.4 percent.

Campbell shares slipped 5 cents to $36.59 in midday trading.

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