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Ashland receives Ringier 2013 Coatings Technology Innovation Award

Shanghai, China - Ashland Specialty Ingredients, a commercial unit of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) recently received a Ringier 2013 Coatings Technology Innovation Award for its breakthrough Natrosol™ Performax paint thickening technology. It is the third consecutive year Ashland has won the innovation award.

The Ringier Technology Innovation Awards recognize those who have made significant contributions for the advancement of the industry through technical innovation, improved productivity, economic efficiency and market opportunity creation. Ringier Technology Innovation Awards are regarded as one of the most important awards in China's coating industry.

Natrosol Performax was officially introduced to China's market in 2012. This new range of hydroxyethylcellulose (HEC) thickeners allows paint manufacturers to add HEC in a dry form at any point in the paint production process by rapidly dispersing in water-based medium without lumps. This technology provides manufacturers with unprecedented levels of process flexibility, enabling them to streamline paint manufacturing through a better utilization of equipment and resources. This results in improved paint quality and plant output. It also eliminates the need for pre-blending or using the HEC powder at a certain stage in the manufacturing process in order to prevent lumping.

"We are thrilled to receive this award for the third year. It will definitely drive us to continuously develop and bring more value-added innovative products to our customers in the region," said Nandkumar Dhekne, vice president, Ashland Specialty Ingredients, Asia Pacific.

"The launch of Natrosol Performax represents Ashland's commitment to the Asia Pacific region and the growing Chinese coatings market in particular," added Shruti Singhal, global marketing director, Coating Specialties, Ashland Specialties Ingredients. "Our core strengths lie in our global network. We have an excellent team with the professional knowledge and expertise to understand and meet the needs of each of our customers."

About Ashland Specialty Ingredients

Ashland Specialty Ingredients is the #1 global producer of cellulose ethers and a global leader in vinyl pyrrolidones. It offers industry-leading products, technologies and resources for solving formulation and product-performance challenges. Using natural, synthetic and semisynthetic polymers derived from plant and seed extract, cellulose ethers and vinyl pyrrolidones, Ashland Specialty Ingredients offers comprehensive and innovative solutions for today's demanding consumer and industrial applications. Key customers include pharmaceutical companies; makers of personal care products, food and beverages, and cosmetics; manufacturers of paint, coatings and construction materials; and oilfield service companies. See ashland.com for more information.

About Ashland Inc.

In more than 100 countries, the people of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) provide the specialty chemicals, technologies and insights to help customers create new and improved products for today and sustainable solutions for tomorrow. Our chemistry is at work every day in a wide variety of markets and applications, including architectural coatings, automotive, construction, energy, food and beverage, personal care, pharmaceutical, tissue and towel, and water treatment. Visit ashland.com to see the innovations we offer through our four commercial units - Ashland Specialty Ingredients, Ashland Water Technologies, Ashland Performance Materials and Ashland Consumer Markets.

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