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Ashland to introduce Natrosol Performax™ HEC to the European coatings market at the 2013 European Coatings Show

SCHAFFHAUSEN, Switzerland - Paint manufacturers are constantly looking for innovative and cost-effective solutions to increase paint performance while meeting the ever-increasing governmental regulations to reduce volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Ashland offers a unique range of market-leading innovative products for the coatings industry featuring rheology modifiers, defoamers and biocides. This, combined with its worldwide production network and formulation expertise, puts Ashland in the unique position to cooperate with its customers to create innovative solutions for overcoming virtually any challenge in formulating decorative paints.

At the 2013 European Coatings Show taking place in Nuremberg, Germany from 19 - 21 March, Ashland will present its unique range of products and services to the worldwide Coatings industry.

Ashland's customer advantage - a broad range of additives
For over 50 years, formulators have relied on Natrosol™ hydroxyethylcellulose (HEC) thickeners to deliver cost-effective, robust thickening, creamy in-can consistency and user-preferred application properties to both interior and exterior paints.

Today, Ashland is introducing ground-breaking innovation to the marketplace with its new Natrosol Performax™ HEC that delivers unprecedented process flexibility and quality control to paint manufacturers.

The Natrosol Performax™ technology triggers rapid and complete dispersion in any water-based medium, even under low shear conditions. This allows manufacturers to add HEC in dry form at any point of the manufacturing process, eliminating extra process steps such as the preparation of pre-slurries or dissolutions of HEC, saving operational costs. The result is a faster, more efficient, less costly production process.

"Our innovative Natrosol Performax HEC offers paint makers much more flexibility in their production process. It improves grinding and reduces energy, thus optimizing the process," said Griffin Gappert, new product leader, Coatings Specialties, Ashland Specialty Ingredients.

In addition to innovative chemistries like Natrosol Performax HEC, Ashland has its complete portfolio of coatings additives, expertise and technical service to offer. "From rheology modifiers like Natrosol HEC and Aquaflow™ nonionic synthetic associates thickeners (NSAT) to JaypolTM dispersants and FungitrolTM biocides, Ashland not only has the full additives tool kit for paint making, we also have the knowledge and experience to help customers achieve tailor-made, innovative solutions for their challenges," said Hilbert Esselbrugge, global applications leader, Coatings Specialties, Ashland Specialty Ingredients.

Understanding global trends to provide local solutions
"Ashland is uniquely positioned to understand what our consumers want," explained Shruti Singhal, director, global marketing for Coatings Specialties, Ashland Specialty Ingredients. "We understand market trends and can spot unmet market needs on a global level. We understand how our customers' R&D teams translate these needs into solutions that are customized to local markets worldwide."

Ashland Specialty Ingredients is one of the few coatings additives suppliers with a production facility and laboratory network spanning the world, specifically in the area of HEC and NSATs. "We take pride in our worldwide presence, as this allows us to truly listen and respond to our customers and their local market needs," said Singhal. "Combined with our global leadership in the industry and our constant push for innovations that benefit our customers, Ashland is the solution provider for the global coatings market."

An example of Ashland's expansion in the coatings market is its increased presence and focus in water-based wood coatings in Europe. "We have a complete additive solution offering to meet the critical needs of our customers for factory applied water-based wood coatings," Singhal explained.

"Ashland's researchers are striving to innovate and help our customers win in the marketplace," said Ricardo deGenova, director, global research and development, Ashland Specialty Ingredients. He noted that Ashland will present six papers on technology developments at the ECS congress. These include:

- Surfactants for Use as Codispersants in Architectural Coatings
- Decoding Paint Application "Feel
- Novel HEC for Direct Dry-Powder Addition

- Novel Rheology Modifers for Formulating near 0-VOC Waterborne Coatings
- Perfectly Tailoring the Performance of Water-based Premium Quality Decorative Paints
- Quantitative Performance Assessment of New Foam Control Agents in Waterborne Coatings

Ashland Specialty Ingredients offers industry-leading products, technologies and resources for solving formulation and product performance challenges in key markets including personal care, pharmaceutical, food and beverage, coatings and energy. Using natural, synthetic and semi-synthetic 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.

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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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
Media Relations
Jennifer Knoblach
+31 (0)10 497 5529
jknoblach@ashland.com