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Research that reveals the complexity of acne presented at the Avant Institute Winter Symposium

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. - Recent findings that reveal the pathogenic role of a widely studied bacterium called *Propionibacterium acnes (P. acnes)* has prompted many academic researchers to rethink how acne vulgaris develops and how it may be better managed. Previously, P. acnes was considered by researchers to further inflame skin, following the establishment of acne lesions. New research now suggests that certain strains of the bacterium may play a more direct role in acne formation. Academic and skin care industry scientists from around the world recently gathered at the Avant Institute Symposium to learn more about the details of this ground-breaking acne research and to apply the information in their own studies.

"Recent publications on acne points to the complexity of this skin condition, and why there has been no simple solution to a problem that afflicts more than 90 percent of the population at some point in their lives," said Dr. Paul Mouser, Ph.D., principal scientist, Ashland Specialty Ingredients, a commercial unit of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH).

"During the Avant Winter Symposium, nearly 100 attendees and presenters evaluated data that could help industry better assist consumers in managing acne and improve the look of their skin," Mouser concluded.

The one-day symposium included key research findings, presented primarily by academicians:

- "Acne Pathogenesis: Overview and Recent Advances," by Professor Diane Thiboutot;
- "Scarring and Post-inflammatory Hyperpigmentation," by Dr. Mouser;
- "Metabolomics of Sebum in Healthy and Acne Skin Conditions," by Dr. Emanuela Camera;
- "Applying the Biofilm Concept to Acne: the Case of Propionibacterium acnes," by Professor Tom Coenye;
- "Mild Cleansing and Moisturizing Approaches for Consumers with Acne and Oily Skin," by Dr. Martin Vethamuthu;
- "Targeted Delivery for Acne Therapy: Lost in Translation," by Professor Annika Vogt;
- "Challenges to the discovery and development of an acne product," by Dr. Braham Shroot; and
- "Spectroscopic Studies of Deposition of Care Products on Skin," by Dr. Mark Davies.

The Avant Institute was established by Ashland Specialty Ingredients in 2009 to foster and promote scientific research relevant to the development and commercialization of technologies for the personal care industry. Held twice a year, the Ashland Avant Institute Symposium serves as a forum to advance the latest ideas in science and to apply that knowledge in commercialization activities.

The Avant Institute Symposium for spring 2014 is scheduled to take place April 3, in Hamburg, Germany. The event topic is "Hair: From Root to Tip." Research professionals and formulators interested in hair care solutions may pre-register for the symposium. For more information, contact Linda Heider, symposium coordinator (lheider@ashland.com).

About Ashland Specialty Ingredients
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.

About Ashland
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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