For Immediate Release

Contacts:
Tom Provost, 304-513-0100, provost@kureha.com
Liz Gershon, 201 513 6310, gershon@kureha.com

New Kureha PGA Polymer Plant Begins Operation

CHARLESTON, W.Va., Sept. 26, 2011 — The grand opening of Kureha PGA LLC located at the DuPont site in Belle, W.Va., was held Monday, Sept. 26. The specialty plastics facility is dedicated to the production of polyglycolic acid (PGA), a high performance polymer. The plant conducted its initial operation in mid-June 2011 and began commercial production in August. It is expected to produce 8.8 million pounds (4,000 metric tons) of PGA per year.

The polymer is marketed under the trade name Kuredux® PGA. Its properties include high strength, biodegradability and low gas permeability. These properties make it an excellent candidate for food and beverage packaging. Kuredux® also has very desirable end-of-life characteristics. It has been certified as a biodegradable plastic in the United States, Europe and Japan. In addition, when used in multi-layered PET bottles as an inner layer, the bottle can be recycled using standard PET recycling processes.

Since Kuredux® PGA reduces the amount of CO_2 that escapes from a carbonated soft drink bottle, such multi-layered bottles may soon provide longer shelf life to the consumer, while maintaining their excellent recyclability. By extending shelf life, the amount of spoilage and disposal is reduced, adding to the package's sustainability.

In addition to offering outstanding gas barrier, Kuredux® PGA provides a controlled rate of degradation, high abrasion resistance, excellent chemical resistance, and high strength and tenacity. This unique combination of properties has resulted in application development programs in medical (suture) applications, enhanced oil recovery and natural gas exploration, as well as in the high-tech electronics market and other industrial programs.

According to Dr. Takao Iwasaki, President and CEO of Kureha Corporation, the entire Kuredux® effort fits the company's DNA. "We believe that product development is very similar to farming: you have to plant the seeds of your ideas, water the crop, feed the soil, endure storms, and wait patiently for the crop to bear fruit. After working for more than a decade on the technology, this breakthrough product is being commercialized. This effort at Kureha shows us more than ever that we are not just the sum of our knowledge, we are the products of our imagination."

-more-

Dr. Iwasaki adds that Kuredux® PGA is an example of a new breed of material innovations – one that meets ever-increasing performance requirements, while providing more sustainable solutions for future generations.

Groundbreaking for the facility was held on April 7, 2008, and construction began in January 2009. By co-locating on the DuPont Belle W.Va. site, Kureha can easily obtain its primary feedstock, glycolic acid, from this facility, reported to be the world's largest glycolic acid plant.

Currently the plant occupies 3.5 acres and employs a staff of 35. Kureha PGA LLC is a subsidiary of Kureha America Inc., the North American subsidiary of Kureha Corporation. Kureha Corporation is a leading global supplier of specialty chemicals and plastics used in consumer packaging, household products, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and other industrial applications. Kureha Corporation is headquartered in Japan. For more information, visit www.kureha.com and www.kureha.co.jp.

# # #

An Online Media Kit with downloadable video, images and background information is available at www.wvcommerce.org/kureha.