**DuPont Makes Key Polymer Ingredient from Corn Instead of Petroleum**

Press Release: May 1, 2001, Source: DuPont

WILMINGTON, Del., May 1 /PRNewswire/ -- DuPont has successfully manufactured a critical ingredient for its newest polymer, Sorona™, using a fermentation process based on corn sugar, a renewable resource. Before this development, the substance could only be produced from petrochemicals.

The chemical, PDO, also known as 1,3 propanediol, was produced by DuPont and Tate & Lyle scientists at a pilot plant located at Tate & Lyle’s Decatur, Ill., facility. Tate & Lyle, a major corn-based products company with expertise in fermentation processes, is one of two DuPont development partners in the effort. The other is Genencor International, which is developing the innovative biocatalyst for the process at its Palo Alto, Calif., research center.

PDO is a key ingredient in the manufacture of DuPont™ Sorona™ 3GT polymer, which can then be spun into apparel-grade textile fibers. Fabrics made with Sorona™ fiber are soft to the touch, exhibit excellent stretch and recovery characteristics, can be dyed readily and feature the easy care attributes of polyester.

“We are extremely pleased with this development because it offers solid proof that biotechnology can and will deliver far-reaching, transformative benefits in a wide variety of areas,” said Ellen J. Kullman, DuPont group vice president and general manager of DuPont Bio-Based Materials. “Sorona™ is the newest polymer platform from DuPont and the first in what we believe will be a family of bio-based products with exciting consumer and industrial applications.”

DuPont recently started up a new continuous polymerization plant at Kinston, N.C., for the manufacture of Sorona™ polymer. The PDO used in that process is made for DuPont from petrochemical feedstocks by Degussa, a German company. The new Kinston plant has the capability to switch to corn- based PDO once process economics and market demand justify the change. DuPont™ Sorona™ is the first product developed by the company’s Bio- Based Materials business. It is one of the most significant new polymers developed by the company in recent years. The Bio-Based Materials unit serves as the company’s focal point for the application of modern biology to industrial markets.

DuPont (NYSE: DD - news) is a science company, delivering science-based solutions that make a difference in people’s lives in food and nutrition; health care; apparel; home and construction; electronics; and transportation. Founded in 1802, the company operates in 70 countries and has 93,000 employees.