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NEWS RELEASE

DOE's Solar Decathlon Homes

Competitors Harness Extra 'Solar Power' from Soybeans

October 13, 2009—University and college teams have traveled across the nation to compete in the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Solar Decathlon on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. At least four are using products made from soybeans to boost their chances in the contest of cutting-edge energy efficiency and renewable energy innovation for homes. Just as solar panels collect the sun's energy, the naturally renewable soybean plant converts the sun's power to create diverse soy-based products with multiple environmental benefits.

Entries from The Ohio State University, the University of Kentucky and Virginia Tech have installed decorative hardwood plywood that uses soy as a bonding agent in plywood in kitchen cabinets, wall paneling and more. The soy product does not emit harmful fumes from urea formaldehyde. To make their building more energy efficient, the Iowa State University team chose a spray foam insulation that uses soy to reduce its petroleum content.

"We applaud these collegiate teams for their innovative uses of soy biobased products," said United Soybean Board New Uses Committee Chairman Lewis Bainbridge. "They are blazing trails for more green jobs with American-made products from renewable resources."

The decorative hardwood plywood is provided by Columbia Forest Products and features a soy-based PureBond® assembly technology, which has no formaldehyde in its chemical makeup. Cedar Rapids, Iowa-based Sage Companies assisted Iowa State's use of the spray foam insulation made by Biobased Technologies®. Both are cost competitive compared to petroleum-based counterparts with the same physical attributes.

DOE's Solar Decathlon consists of 10 individual contests that evaluate the teams' skills in architecture, home design, and communications. The homes constructed by the teams must produce enough electricity and hot water from solar panels to perform all the normal functions of a home. The start of the competition marks the culmination of more than two years of hard work by the student teams. The 20 teams assembled their homes on the National Mall in early October. Following the opening ceremony on October 8, the homes will be open for public tours October 9-13 and 15-18.

USB is made up of 68 farmer-directors who oversee the investments of the soybean checkoff on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers. Checkoff funds are invested in the areas of animal utilization, human utilization, industrial utilization, industry relations, market access and supply. As stipulated in the Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soybean checkoff.

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For more information about the DOE Solar Decathlon, go to <http://www.solardecathlon.org/>