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Eastman-Spartech Alliance Offers Added Value to Thermoforming and Fabrication Markets



ST. LOUIS, (Mar. 20, 2001)— Spartech Corporation (NYSE:SEH) and Eastman Chemical Company (NYSE:EMN) have signed a joint marketing agreement to provide new *Spectar* sheet to the North American thermoforming and fabrication markets. Spartech Plastics, a division of Spartech Corporation, will extrude the sheet using Eastman's popular Spectar copolyester. Under the terms of the agreement signed at Spartech's headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri,

Spartech becomes the exclusive North American distributor of *Spectar* sheet.

"This integrated marketing effort leverages our extensive capacity and market penetration with Eastman's innovative polymer R & D and technical support services to provide our customers a significant competitive advantage," stated Brad Buechler, Spartech Chairman, President and CEO. "The point-of-purchase design market is driven by rapid change. Close business partnerships with suppliers like Eastman provide the agility we need to satisfy our customers and remain competitive."

"We're enthused to package our extensive technical support and award-winning Spectar copolyester with Spartech's leading edge processing and distribution capabilities to provide added value to these growing markets," said Phil Griswold, vice president and general manager of Specialty Plastics at Eastman. "The strong synergy between our two companies brings us closer to our customers and supports initiatives to develop solutions that closely meet the needs of our customers and channel partners. Today's complex supply chains require strong collaboration among channel partners to ensure that the customer remains integral to the developmental process."

Developed to fill a growing niche in the display market for a crystal clear, durable material that was competitively priced, *Spectar* copolyester has become Eastman's fastest growing specialty plastic. The companies are optimistic that providing *Spectar* in sheet form will add to its appeal and enhance the *Spectar* brand.

Available around mid-year, new *Spectar* sheet will bear the mark "*Spectar* sheet by Spartech." Both companies intend to expand marketing efforts of *Spectar* sheet into new market niches including building and construction, industrial protection and additional food display applications, since *Spectar* copolyester is FDA approved.

Leading designers and fabricators use Spectar sheet for its design flexibility, processing versatility and durability to maintain its good looks in some of the harshest retail environments. It offers designers creative license to innovate high-tech displays and signs without the fabrication limitations of traditional acrylic and polycarbonate materials. *Spectar* sheet doesn't require predrying and forms easily under hot or cold conditions. Immune from stress whitening and crystalline haze, *Spectar* sheet readily accepts virtually any decorating option without compromising clarity and gloss.

Spartech is a leading producer of engineered thermoplastic materials, polymeric compounds and molded & profile products which has over 50 facilities located throughout North America and Europe, with annual production capacity and sales of more than 1.2 billion pounds and \$950 million, respectively.

Eastman, headquartered in Kingsport, Tennessee, manufactures and markets plastics, chemicals and fibers. The company has approximately 15,000 employees in 30 countries and had 2000 sales of \$5.3 billion.