



# NEWS RELEASE

USDA FOREST SERVICE • FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 12, 2011

NR # 20110512-01

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## **Experts in Wood and Biofiber Plastic Composites Convene in Madison**

MADISON, Wis.— International experts in wood and biofiber plastic composites will be in Madison May 16-18, 2011 for the 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Wood and Biofiber Plastic Composites. Representatives from scientific, technical, and commercial communities will be exchanging and disseminating information on the latest advances and future opportunities for these versatile materials.

The conference, along with the additional Nanotechnology in Wood Composites Symposium, seeks to bring together industry, government, and academia to share perspectives on what the future holds for composite products. Notable speakers include Dr. Mohini Sain, a leading innovator in biofiber composites and director of the University of Toronto's Centre for Biocomposites and Biomaterials Processing, on the need for innovation and what it takes to be successful; along with Marc Thometschek and Wayne Song on the latest developments in Europe and China, respectively. Nine scientists from the USDA Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory will also be speaking at the event.

Wood and other natural fibers have been used in composites for years, bringing high-value products to consumers while providing an outlet for waste and recycled materials. The development of wood-plastic composites required the combination of knowledge, expertise, and perspectives of two industries that have historically known little about each other. This conference provides the opportunity for continued interaction as new generation composite materials emerges with the advent of technologies related to biopolymers, biorefineries, and nanotechnology.

Alternating years with its Canadian counterpart, this biennial spring conference has evolved into the largest of its kind. The 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Wood and Biofiber Plastic Composites is organized by FPL and the Forest Products Society. For more information, visit <http://www.woodandbiofibercomposites.org/>

The USDA Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory was established in 1910 in Madison, Wisconsin, with the mission to conserve and extend the country's wood resources. Today, FPL's research scientists work with academic and industrial researchers and other government agencies in exploring ways to promote healthy forests and clean water and improve papermaking and recycling processes. Through FPL's Advanced Housing Research Center, researchers also work to improve homebuilding technologies and materials. Information is available at FPL's Web site: [www.fpl.fs.fed.us](http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us).

The Forest Products Society is an international not-for-profit technical association founded in 1947 to provide an information network for all segments of the forest products industry — from standing tree to finished product. The Society fosters innovation and research in the environmentally sound processing and use of wood and fiber resources by disseminating information and providing forums for networking and the exchange of knowledge.

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