

Ball Aerospace-Built Kepler Spacecraft Launches From Cape Canaveral

PRNewswire-FirstCall

CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, Fla.

The Ball Aerospace-built Kepler spacecraft carrying the largest camera ever sent by NASA beyond Earth's orbit, successfully launched aboard a Delta II rocket from Cape Canaveral, Fla., at 10:49 pm EST, on Friday, March 6, 2009.

Ball Aerospace designed and built Kepler's photometer and spacecraft, employing expertise from its previous NASA missions including instruments for the Hubble and Spitzer Space Telescopes, and the Deep Impact mission. Kepler is the first NASA mission capable of finding Earth-size planets in the habitable zone.

The Kepler photometer has a wide field of view 0.95-meter aperture, Schmidt telescope, with a 1.4-meter primary mirror. The integration and test of the Kepler photometer, utilized Ball Aerospace's new 1.5-meter optical test capability for the first time. The photometer features a focal plane array of 42 charge-coupled devices (CCDs) at the center, with more than 95 million pixels. Kepler's CCD array is the most complex assembly ever undertaken by Ball Aerospace.

"The pioneering Kepler mission advanced Ball's large optics and focal plane technologies in support of NASA's space science missions," said David L. Taylor, president and CEO of Ball Aerospace. "The extraordinary interest in extrasolar planets will make this the 'mission to watch' for several years."

The Kepler planet-hunting mission will search for Earth-size planets in the habitable zone of solar-like stars to provide valuable insight about Earth's origin while also acting as a pathfinder mission for future missions such as the James Webb Space Telescope, scheduled to launch in 2013. Ball Aerospace is the principal subcontractor for the Webb telescope, contributing advanced optical technology and the lightweight mirror system.

More information about the Kepler mission is available at <http://kepler.nasa.gov/>. More information about extrasolar planets and NASA's planet finding program is at <http://planetquest.jpl.nasa.gov/>.

NASA's Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, Calif., is home to Kepler's science principal investigator, and is also responsible for the ground system development, mission operations and science data analysis. Kepler mission development is managed by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Operation of the spacecraft after launch will be performed by the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics at the University of Colorado, Boulder, with Ball providing system engineering and mission planning.

Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. supports critical missions of important national agencies such as the Department of Defense, NASA, NOAA and other U.S. government and commercial entities. The company develops and manufactures spacecraft, advanced instruments and sensors, components, data exploitation systems and RF solutions for strategic, tactical and scientific applications. Since 1956, Ball Aerospace has been responsible for numerous technological and scientific 'firsts' and is a technology innovator in aerospace.

Ball Corporation is a supplier of high-quality metal and plastic packaging products for beverage, food and household products customers, and of aerospace and other technologies and services, primarily for the U.S. government. Ball Corporation and its subsidiaries employ more than 14,500 people worldwide and reported 2008 sales of more than \$7.5 billion.

Forward-Looking Statements This release contains "forward-looking" statements concerning future events and financial performance. Words such as "expects," "anticipates," "estimates" and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. Such statements are subject to risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied. The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Key risks and uncertainties are summarized in filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including Exhibit 99.2 in our Form 10-K, which are available at our Web site and at www.sec.gov. Factors that might affect our packaging segments include fluctuation in product demand and preferences; availability and cost of raw materials; competitive packaging availability, pricing and substitution; changes in climate and weather; crop yields; competitive activity; failure to achieve anticipated productivity improvements or production cost reductions, including our beverage can end project; mandatory deposit or other restrictive packaging laws; changes in major customer or supplier contracts or loss of a major customer or supplier; and changes in foreign exchange rates, tax rates and activities of foreign subsidiaries. Factors that might affect our aerospace segment include: funding, authorization, availability and returns of government and commercial contracts; and delays, extensions and technical uncertainties affecting segment contracts. Factors that might affect the company as a whole include those listed plus: accounting changes; changes in senior management; the current global credit squeeze and its effects on liquidity, credit risk, asset values and the economy; successful or unsuccessful acquisitions, joint ventures or divestitures; integration of recently acquired businesses; regulatory action or laws including tax, environmental, health and workplace safety, including in respect of chemicals or substances used in raw materials or in the manufacturing process; governmental investigations; technological developments and innovations; goodwill impairment; antitrust, patent and other litigation; strikes; labor cost changes; rates of return projected and earned on assets of the company's defined benefit retirement plans; pension changes; reduced cash flow; interest rates affecting our debt;

and changes to unaudited results due to statutory audits or other effects.

First Call Analyst:

FCMN Contact: rbrown@ball.com

SOURCE: Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp.

CONTACT: Roz Brown of Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp.,
+1-303-533-6059, rbrown@ball.com

Web Site: <http://www.ballaerospace.com/>

<https://ball.mediaroom.com/2009-03-07-Ball-Aerospace-Built-Kepler-Spacecraft-Launches-From-Cape-Canaveral>