



## **Kureha's Polyglycolic Acid Wins METI Minister's Prize at the 5<sup>th</sup> Monodzukuri Nippon Grand Award**

TOKYO, September 17, 2013-- Kureha Corporation ("Kureha") has received the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry's Prize in the Product and Technology Development Category of the 5<sup>th</sup> Monodzukuri Nippon Grand Award for developing an environmental load-reducing, high performance biodegradable polymer, polyglycolic acid (PGA).

### About the Monodzukuri Nippon Grand Award

The Monodzukuri Nippon Grand Award is an awards program recognized by the Prime Minister of Japan, which was established in 2005 with an aim to acknowledge and motivate individuals or groups of people who excel in various manufacturing (monodzukuri) fields. Award nominees include those who play key roles in today's manufacturing and production, who have been supporting the tradition and culture of superior manufacturing skills and also who are expected to forge the future of manufacturing industries. The program has been jointly organized by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and held every two years since 2005, and took place for the fifth time this year.

### Summary of Awarded Technology Development

Kureha has developed the world's first technology to successfully mass-produce a high-performance biodegradable polymer, polyglycolic acid (PGA), which exhibits excellent mechanical strength, gas barrier properties as well as heat resistant properties. Kureha, the sole company who can steadily supply this high-molecular biodegradable polymer at an affordable price, has been actively collaborating with end users to develop applications, which led to the market development for PGA as a material used for shale gas extraction tools, medical devices and packaging.

In the award program, Kureha's achievement was highly evaluated for the following points:

- Kureha established, with longtime prodigious efforts, the mass production technology for a new material based on innovative polymerization technology that includes ingenious use of solvents.
- Kureha PGA has been commercially adopted in the shale gas fields, leveraging its seemingly conflicting properties, high strength and biodegradability.

- Development of additional applications and lower cost production for PGA is further expected in future. Moreover, it is hoped that Kureha builds the strategic value chain for PGA, possibly including the construction of its production facility in Japan.

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