



**ONTARIO MANUFACTURERS SHOW PROVINCE IS A HOTBED FOR INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS**  
***Twenty exciting products launched at The Home Depot after Innovation for Sustainability's first "Meet the Buyer" event***

**TORONTO, ON (June 7, 2011)** – An indoor living wall, lightweight concrete deck block and fire starter made from recycled cooking oil are just a sampling of the 20 innovative products from 13 Ontario manufacturers now available at The Home Depot® in select stores. This pilot store project is the result of The Home Depot Canada's partnership program with the Ontario Ministry of Economic Trade and Development (MEDT) – *Innovation for Sustainability*. The goal of this first of its kind, two-year project is to open new retail channels for small and medium Ontario-based businesses and bring products to market that will drive innovation, sustainability and economic opportunity.

Introduced in October 2010, *Innovation for Sustainability* invited any small or medium-sized Ontario manufacturer to submit information about its innovative home improvement product or technology. The Home Depot Canada's merchandising team reviewed entries and invited prospects to the first of four "Meet the Buyer" events on December 13, 2010 in London, Ontario. Coming out of the event, The Home Depot selected 20 products from 13 Ontario manufacturers and has been working with them in an *incubator* model to get their products to retail in select stores in London and Ottawa, as well as some availability online at [www.homedepot.ca](http://www.homedepot.ca). Each will be assessed for expanded distribution in the Canadian market.

"Ontario's businesses know that innovation is key to competitiveness and success," said Sandra Pupatello, Ontario Minister of Economic Development and Trade. "This great collaboration between Ontario and The Home Depot is helping our very innovative manufacturers seize opportunities in the home improvement market which is continually increasing efforts to search for products that are sustainable and innovative."

The impressive list of products identified at *Innovation for Sustainability's* first "Meet the Buyer" event include:

- Bio-Lite Liquid Fire Starter, Bio-Lite Environmental Technologies (Kemptville, ON)
- BTE Utility Bin, BTE (Listowel, ON)
- Compostgenie® Seeds, Cooter Muck Probiotics (Vankleek Hill, ON)
- Easy Coat™ Paint and Stain Applicators, Custom Foam Systems (Kitchener, ON) (three items)
- Dig It® Handwear, Dig It® (Toronto, ON) (four items)
- COOLFLEX, DuROCK Alfacing International Ltd. (Woodbridge, ON)
- ELT Living Wall Vertical Garden Kit, ELT EasyGreen®, Brantford, ON
- EnviroSAND and EnviroSTONE, Envirobond Products Corp. (Cambridge, ON)
- Handi-Block®, Fiber Reinforced Cellular Concrete Canada (Georgetown, ON)
- NaturoPure™ HF 380 Air Purifier, Heaven Fresh® (Toronto, ON)
- EconoGreen Plastics™ Kitchen Catchers and EconoGreen Plastics™ Garbage Bags, Jig-A-Loo Canada Inc. (Orillia, ON)
- Bio-Desolve® Natural Septic & Wastewater Treatment, MTS Environmental Inc. (Centralia, ON)
- Rollux® Paint Tray, Nuway® Painters Supply Inc. (Dundas, ON)

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“We were very impressed with the number and calibre of product submissions,” said Jeff Kinnaird, vp of merchandising, The Home Depot Canada. “The 20 products selected meet important criteria of The Home Depot and our consumer – helping them save time, money and reduce their environmental impact. And we’re committed to nurturing and assisting the 13 manufacturers as they build the capacity to do business with a large-scale retailer.”

Even if a manufacturer was not selected for The Home Depot pilot, they were provided with valuable insight into the market, technology and customer knowledge requirement to succeed in retail. They were also given the option to work with MEDT Business Advisory Services to identify obstacles, gaps, and opportunities for growth. Business Advisory Services has 26 advisors across the province, working with small and medium sized manufacturers to help drive their businesses forward.

“This initiative showcases that through innovation and evolution, Ontario’s manufacturing sector remains resilient and continues to be a primary economic engine within the province,” said Minister Papatello. *Innovation for Sustainability* is aligned with the Ontario Government’s economic revitalization strategy which has seen the introduction of policies such as The Green Energy Act to stimulate innovation, job creation and economic growth in the manufacturing service and related sectors.

***How to apply:***

Submissions for the next “Meet the Buyer” event to be held in fall 2011 are now being accepted. Qualified small and medium-sized Ontario manufacturers with an innovative home improvement product can submit information for consideration at [www.homedepot.ca/innovationforsustainability](http://www.homedepot.ca/innovationforsustainability). The Home Depot is looking for the following types of innovative home improvement products: indoor/outdoor building materials/supplies/tools (siding, cement, lumber), lawn and garden, shelving, storage and organization, plumbing, paint, electrical, power equipment, hardware, outdoor furniture, lawn mowers, kitchen and bath, appliances, window treatments (blinds, shutters), flooring (tile, carpet, hardwood), sheds, décor, heating and cooling, safety and security, lighting, fans, cleaning and janitorial products.

**About The Home Depot**

The Home Depot is the world's largest home improvement specialty retailer, with 2,244 retail stores in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, 10 Canadian provinces, Mexico and China. In fiscal 2010, The Home Depot had sales of \$68.0 billion and earnings from continuing operations of \$3.3 billion. The Company employs more than 300,000 associates. The Home Depot's stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: HD) and is included in the Dow Jones industrial average and Standard & Poor's 500 index.

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