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Spartan Motors Begins Production of Isuzu N-Series Gasoline Trucks

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CHARLOTTE, Mich., May 3, 2011 (GlobeNewswire via COMTEX) --

Spartan Motors, Inc. (Nasdaq:SPAR), a leading manufacturer of specialty chassis and vehicles, today announced that 2012 gasoline-powered Isuzu N-Series trucks are now rolling off the production line at its Charlotte, Mich. manufacturing facility. Units are expected to arrive at Isuzu dealerships beginning this month.

"We are very proud of the team here in Charlotte," said John Szykiel, President and Chief Executive Officer of Spartan Motors. "Since the Isuzu agreement was signed 11 months ago, we have achieved the extraordinary. We leveraged our speed and agility, as well as our engineering and manufacturing expertise in order to assist Isuzu in offering the broadest range of low-cab-forward solutions in the industry."

Spartan Motors is honored to collaborate with Isuzu to launch this program and provide their dealer network with an expanded product portfolio. Isuzu Motors Ltd. is a world-class manufacturer of commercial trucks, is the largest manufacturer of diesel engines in the world and Isuzu Manufacturing Services of America produces America's #1 selling low-cab-forward truck.

Spartan is expected to achieve a production rate of approximately 18 units per day and reach an annualized volume of approximately 4,000 units per year, effectively utilizing plant capacity previously devoted to the production of defense units.

Spartan Motors recently celebrated the start of production with its employees and special guests, including representatives from Isuzu Commercial Truck of America (ICTA) and Isuzu Motors Ltd. Attendees of the event were invited to tour the manufacturing facility and commemorate the start of production with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"While the program timeline was severely compressed, we were able to draw on the complementary skills of the Spartan and Isuzu teams to produce the N-Series on time with the required quality levels," said Edward DeVito, Plant Manager, Spartan Motors. "In less than one year, we designed the new plant layout, planned and managed construction in the plant, defined lean workflow/cells, managed pilot production builds, and successfully launched the program," said DeVito.

The gasoline-powered N-Series trucks had previously been assembled by General Motors (GM) at its plant in Janesville, Wisc., until the plant ceased operations in 2009. In March 2010, ICTA announced that an agreement had been reached with GM for the supply of transmissions and gasoline engines to be used for gas-powered Isuzu NPR and NPR-HD trucks in both single and crew cab models, to be reintroduced for the 2012 model year. The company announced that Spartan Motors had been selected to assemble the trucks in April 2010.

About Spartan Motors

Spartan Motors, Inc. designs, engineers and manufactures specialty chassis, specialty vehicles, truck bodies and aftermarket parts for the recreational vehicle (RV), emergency response, government services, defense, and service and delivery markets. The Company's brand names -- Spartan(TM), Crimson Fire(TM), Crimson Fire Aerials(TM), and Utilimaster(R) -- are known for quality, value, service and first-to-market innovation. The Company employs approximately 1,600 at facilities in Michigan, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Indiana, Florida and Texas. Spartan reported sales of \$481 million in 2010 and is focused on becoming a global leader in the design, engineering and manufacture of specialty vehicles and chassis. Visit Spartan Motors at theshyftgroup.com.

About Isuzu

Isuzu Motors Limited (Isuzu) is one of the world's largest manufacturers of medium- and heavy-duty trucks. Since building its first truck in 1918, Isuzu has sold over 26 million trucks worldwide. Among its innovations are the first air-cooled diesel engine in 1936, the first two-ton low-cab-forward truck in 1959, and the first direct-injection diesel engine.

Headquartered in Anaheim, California, Isuzu Commercial Truck of America, Inc. (ICTA) is the distributor of Isuzu commercial vehicles in the United States. Isuzu commercial trucks have been the best-selling low-cab-forward trucks in America every year since 1986. For more information, call (866) 441-9638 or visit www.isuzucv.com.

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