



LETI Chooses Applied Materials' Silicon Etch DPS Centura for Sub-0.10 Micron Gate Development

December 16, 1998

SANTA CLARA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 16, 1998--

LETI and Applied Materials Enter Joint Development Program for Critical Gate Applications; System Order Demonstrates Superior Capability of DPS Technology

LETI (Laboratoire d'Electronique de Technologies et d'Instrumentation), the advanced French microelectronics research center based in Grenoble, France, purchased Applied Materials' Silicon Etch DPS Centura to develop sub-0.10 micron gate etch applications.

The system will be delivered to LETI in the fourth calendar quarter of 1998.

LETI chose the Silicon Etch DPS Centura because of its demonstrated ability to perform gate etching at deep sub-half micron geometries with superior critical dimension (CD) control, and to stop on gate oxides less than 30 angstroms thick. The system's capability to deliver superior CD performance, especially on nested and isolated gate structures, is key to achieving high yields on advanced logic devices.

Joel Hartmann, LETI Microelectronics Department Director, said, "Gate etching is one of the most critical steps in the fabrication of advanced semiconductor devices because it greatly influences device speed and size. Applied Materials' Silicon Etch DPS Centura offers a multiple-generation technology path that we expect will take us well below 0.10 micron technology, with the kind of productivity that will be necessary for high-volume manufacturing."

The Joint Development Program between LETI and Applied Materials will focus on process characterization and development, as well as implementation of in situ plasma and wafer surface diagnostic techniques. These techniques are expected to enable improved plasma control and provide the capability for real-time process control.

Applied Materials' Silicon Etch DPS Centura continues to gain market share and, through its partnership with LETI, expects to expand its penetration into the sub-0.15 micron silicon etch market.

"LETI's choice of DPS technology for its future gate etching applications demonstrates the extendibility of the system's design into the next several device generations," noted David Bergeron, president of Applied Materials' Etch Products Business Group. "The Silicon Etch DPS Centura continues to lead the way in the industry with its exceptional technology and system productivity. We are pleased to note that our Silicon and Metal DPS systems are now installed at the majority of top semiconductor manufacturers worldwide."

LETI, the CEA's (Commissariat a l'Energie Atomique) advanced electronics, technology and instrumentation laboratory, is one of the most important laboratories in Europe in the field of applied research in electronics. LETI has a 900-member permanent staff and an annual budget greater than \$130 million. The laboratory performs research in various electronic areas from optronics to flat panel displays, as well as Microtechnologies and Microelectronics. LETI is known for its SOI (silicon on insulator) technology and cooperation with GRESSI (Grenoble Submicron Silicon Initiative) and CNET (the Centre National d'Etudes et de Telecommunication) on advanced 0.12 micron CMOS technology. ST Microelectronics is the principal customer for LETI's microelectronics activities.

Applied Materials, Inc. is a Fortune 500 global growth company and the world's largest supplier of wafer fabrication systems and services to the global semiconductor industry. Applied Materials is traded on the Nasdaq National Market System under the symbol "AMAT." Applied Materials' web site is <http://www.AppliedMaterials.com>.