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RFMD(R) Achieves Milestone in Commercialization of High-Performance Photovoltaic Cells

GREENSBORO, N.C., Mar 15, 2010 (GlobeNewswire via COMTEX News Network) -- RF Micro Devices, Inc. (Nasdaq:RFMD), a global leader in the design and manufacture of high-performance radio frequency components and compound semiconductor technologies, today announced it has successfully manufactured the industry's first photovoltaic cell using high-volume six-inch gallium arsenide (GaAs) machinery. The photovoltaic (PV) cell was manufactured in RFMD's existing high-volume, six-inch GaAs wafer fabrication facilities in Greensboro, NC, with no fabrication equipment modifications. This achievement represents the first in a series of milestone achievements anticipated by RFMD related to the commercialization of high-performance multijunction PV cells.

RFMD is a pioneer in compound semiconductor manufacturing with a proven ability to commercialize new technologies. On July 1, 2009, RFMD announced it had entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to develop a commercially viable and high volume-capable compound semiconductor-based process for high-performance multijunction PV cells.

NREL Director Dan Arvizu said, "NREL's collaboration with RFMD demonstrates our commitment to developing the best technologies for renewable energy and aligning with the most capable partners to commercialize and deploy each technology. We applaud RFMD's successful achievement of this first technical performance milestone."

Bob Bruggeworth, president and CEO of RFMD, said, "By combining NREL's technology leadership and decades of research with RFMD's industry-leading cost structure and technical expertise in commercializing high-performance, reliability-proven compound semiconductors, we are accelerating the commercialization of a next-generation process technology that promises the solar industry's lowest cost, highest-performance PV cells."

Alfonso Velosa, Research Director, Semiconductors, Gartner, said, "The semiconductor industry continues to demonstrate its ability to innovate and produce lower cost products that enable nascent industries to emerge. Semiconductor firms have the potential to change the dynamics in the concentrated PV market, since they may be able to produce low cost, high efficiency solar cells on their existing, depreciated equipment and robust manufacturing processes. Within a few years the concentrated PV market may be able to deliver large volumes of renewable electricity, based in part on obtaining large volumes of high quality -- yet low cost -- solar cells, from 'bankable' manufacturers."

RFMD achieved this PV cell milestone in the Foundation Phase of the agreement, during which the capability to manufacture basic PV cells at RFMD's manufacturing facilities is being established. After the Foundation Phase, a Technology Demonstration Phase will begin, during which PV cells leveraging NREL's IP and technology will be fabricated at RFMD's manufacturing facilities. The final phase of the agreement is the Production Readiness Phase, during which RFMD's high-volume, six-inch fabs will demonstrate high-performance PV cells with high yields, high reliability, high reproducibility and low cost.

The successful execution of RFMD's multi-year agreement with NREL is expected to result in the high-volume production of PV cells in RFMD's fabs as early as calendar year 2012, using technology capable of best-in-class solar cell conversion efficiency. NREL's technology has demonstrated one of the world's highest reported solar cell conversion efficiencies, at 40.8 percent, and continued substantial improvements in efficiency are anticipated.

About NREL

NREL is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. NREL is operated for DOE by the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC.

About RFMD

RF Micro Devices, Inc. (Nasdaq:RFMD) is a global leader in the design and manufacture of high-performance radio frequency components and compound semiconductor technologies. RFMD's products enable worldwide mobility, provide enhanced connectivity and support advanced functionality in the cellular handset, wireless infrastructure, wireless local area network (WLAN), CATV/broadband and aerospace and defense markets. RFMD is recognized for its diverse portfolio of semiconductor technologies and RF systems expertise and is a preferred supplier to the world's leading mobile device, customer premises and communications equipment providers.

Headquartered in Greensboro, N.C., RFMD is an ISO 9001- and ISO 14001-certified manufacturer with worldwide engineering, design, sales and service facilities. RFMD is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol RFMD. For more information, please visit RFMD's web site at www.rfmd.com.

The RF Micro Devices, Inc. logo is available at http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=6436

This press release includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements about our plans, objectives, representations and contentions and are not historical facts and typically are identified by use of terms such as "may," "will," "should," "could," "expect," "plan," "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "predict," "potential," "continue" and similar words, although some forward-looking statements are expressed differently. You should be aware that the forward-looking statements included herein represent management's current judgment and expectations, but our actual results, events and performance could differ materially from those expressed or implied by forward-looking statements. We do not intend to update any of these forward-looking statements or publicly announce the results of any revisions to these forward-looking statements, other than as is required under the federal securities laws. RF Micro Devices' business is subject to numerous risks and uncertainties, including risks associated with the impact of global macroeconomic and credit conditions on our business and the business of our suppliers and customers, variability in operating results, the rate of growth and development of wireless markets, risks associated with the reduced investment in our wireless systems business, our ability to execute on our plans to consolidate or relocate manufacturing operations, our reliance on inclusion in third party reference designs for a portion of our revenue, our ability to manage channel partner and customer relationships, risks associated with the operation of our wafer fabrication facilities, molecular beam epitaxy facility, assembly facility and test and tape and reel facilities, our ability to complete acquisitions and integrate acquired companies, including the risk that we may not realize expected synergies from our business combinations, our ability to attract and retain skilled personnel and develop leaders, variability in production yields, raw material costs and availability, our ability to reduce costs and improve margins in response to declining average selling prices, our ability to bring new products to market, our ability to adjust production capacity in a timely fashion in response to changes in demand for our products, dependence on a limited number of customers, dependence on gallium arsenide (GaAs) for the majority of our products, and dependence on third parties. These and other risks and uncertainties, which are described in more detail in RF Micro Devices' most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and other reports and statements filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, could cause actual results and developments to be materially different from those expressed or implied by any of these forward-looking statements.

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