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**Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership Launches Next Generation
Manufacturing Study
Study Will Benchmark the State's Manufacturers on World-class Manufacturing
Practices and Strategies**

WORCESTER – Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MassMEP) announced today that it is launching a research study to assess the progress of state manufacturers in adopting strategies to win in the global economy. The Next Generation Manufacturing Study (NGM) is the first step in a long-term effort to help state manufacturers weather today's recession and improve manufacturing competitiveness over the next decade.

The survey results will provide a wealth of valuable data for manufacturers, business leaders and state and national policymakers. Manufacturers can see how they rank against world-class performance benchmarks and target improvements where needed.

The web-based survey, which starts February 10 and ends March 15, is confidential and takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. Starting February 10, the survey can be accessed at www.NGMStudy-NewEngland.com. Manufacturing participants will receive a customized benchmarking report comparing their progress to the overall results as well as to other respondents of similar revenue and number of employees.

The questionnaire asks manufacturers to rank their progress toward the world-class performance benchmarks of NGM, a framework of strategies that will drive manufacturing growth and profitability in the 21st century. The elements of NGM are customer-focused innovation, systemic continuous improvement, advanced talent management, global engagement, extended enterprise management and sustainable products and processes.

“The Commonwealth has a great tradition of manufacturing excellence, and is home to some of the world's best known manufacturing companies,” said Jack Healy, MassMEP Director of Operations. “But the world is changing, and to remain competitive in the 21st century, Massachusetts' manufacturers must make the transition to next generation manufacturing.”

The study is part of a coordinated multistate effort by the American Small Manufacturers Coalition (ASMC) that includes 15 other MEP Centers. “The adoption of NGM strategies represents an historic opportunity to strengthen and improve the nation's manufacturing base and achieve a long-term competitive advantage across all industries and sectors,” said Greg King, NGM project manager.

For more information on the Next Generation Manufacturing Study, contact Greg King at gregoryk@massmep.org or call at 508-831-7020.

The MassMEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension

centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness.

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