

Toyota Increases Its Presence at 2011 Chicago Auto Show

January 31, 2011

CHICAGO, Ill., January 31, 2011 – With the start of the Chicago Auto Show a little more than one week away, Toyota is close to completing the largest exhibit the automaker has ever built for an auto show in the United States. The record-breaking 45,070-square-foot exhibit will highlight new and existing vehicles, as well as the technologies and safety systems that have enabled Toyota to become one of the most revered companies in the auto industry.

At the heart of the exhibit will be the “Prius Zone,” an area that demonstrates the iconic hybrid’s rise as one of the most fuel-efficient vehicles in history. This area will feature the growing Prius “family,” including: the contemporary, third-generation Prius; a Prius Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle (PHV), which will go on sale in 2012; and the recently-unveiled Prius v mid-sized vehicle and diminutive Prius c concept car.

The Prius v is slightly larger than the current Prius, with nearly 60 percent more cargo space. The versatile vehicle goes on sale this summer in the U.S. The Prius c concept has urban appeal for young singles and couples who want an eco-sensitive, high-mileage, fun-to-drive Prius. The concept vehicle is the inspiration for a future Prius family member that will come to market in the first half of 2012, as the most value-oriented hybrid with the highest mileage of any “cordless” hybrid.

Among the 51 cars, trucks and SUVs on display in the exhibit will be the RAV4 EV demonstration vehicle, an all-electric SUV with a range of approximately 100 miles. The vehicle is a collaborative project of Toyota and Tesla, with a production version scheduled to go on sale in 2012.

The exhibit will also include a “Safety Zone,” which features the elements of Toyota’s Star Safety System. Toyota’s standard safety equipment can be experienced interactively via a contestant-focused Safety Game Show.

Racing fans will enjoy Toyota’s NASCAR area that will feature a Kyle Busch No. 18 M&M’s Toyota Camry race car, along with a NASCAR Edition Camry modified by RK Motors of Charlotte, N.C. Toyota will also be televising the Daytona 500 on its large video wall on Sunday, February 20, so show goers can keep up with the race.

Other notable attractions include a Tundra Fire & Safety vehicle and a Highlander Hybrid wrapped in graphics of Chicago’s historic Shedd Aquarium. Toyota serves as the presenting sponsor for all of the Shedd Aquarium’s world-class aquatic shows. For aftermarket enthusiasts, Toyota will be bringing the ultimate “Swagger Wagon,” a Sienna minivan modified specifically for the 2010 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show. The 2011 Sienna has been stretched an additional four feet for additional length and its interior customized with all the comforts of home.

Guests during Public Days can also star in their own Toyota TV commercial, with CDs provided after filming is completed. Chicagoans will also have an opportunity to cast votes in the ongoing “Prius Goes Plural” campaign, which will help Toyota determine the true plural for Prius, in light of the growing Prius family. The plural nomenclature, as determined by popular vote, will be announced on February 20, the last day of the Chicago Auto Show.

Tech-savvy visitors will also find they can get Toyota vehicle information with just the click of a smart phone camera. The automaker has teamed with SpyderLink whose SnapTag technology allows consumers with smart phones to snap and send a picture of a car logo in order to gain vehicle information, a cost quote and specifics about the Toyota Care program.

In conjunction with its exhibit, Toyota will also be operating the “Toyota Drive Center,” a 50,000-square-foot experiential ride course located in McCormick Center’s South Hall. The course will feature an array of Toyota trucks and SUVs navigating a series of rugged outdoors-like conditions.

“This year’s exhibit has elements geared toward the entire family,” said Ruslan Polinovsky, Auto Show Engagement Manager at Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. “With a larger exhibit, we have additional space for interactive elements such as simulators, kiosks, and cutaway vehicles. Our aim is to not only showcase our world-class vehicles but offer a fun, memorable experience.”