The 'Ene Pocket' toy car runs on sugar (w/ Video)

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Takara Tomy, the Japanese toy makers have unveiled their "Ene Pocket", a radio-controlled toy car with a Sony bio-battery that is fuelled by sugars like those in fruit drinks and sodas.

The bio-battery is still in development and is not commercially available. Its efficiency (and hence the speed and/or running time of the toy) depends on the liquid chosen, with grape juice being the best, but it can run on any left over sugary drinks, such as Sprite, 7 Up and Coke. Sony says the bio-battery's performance is improving, with a doubling in power generation per unit of volume achieved in the last 18 months.

The bio-battery generates electricity from sugars by using enzymes to

break down carbohydrates (sugars) and release the energy, in the same way that the body breaks down sugars.

The toy car is in the prototype stage and it is not known when, or if, it will be available for sale. The “Ene” part of its name stands for Entertainment New Energy, and the toy is only one of several “green” toys being developed by the company. The bio-batteries are not only an alternative to ordinary electric batteries, but the toys they run can also be used as educational tools to demonstrate alternative energy sources.

Takara Tomy are not the only company working on gadgets to be fuelled by sweet drinks, since Nokia has also shown off a concept “green phone” that runs on Coke.

Working models of the Ene Pocket and other toys using the Sony bio-battery were demonstrated last week at the TOY Forum 2010. Takara Tomy also demonstrated a propeller driven by a bio-battery, and showed that 3 ml (less than a teaspoon) of Coke could run the propeller for around an hour.

The TOY Forum 2010, a trade show for toy makers and dealers, was held in Tokyo on January 18 and 19.

Drink Cube

More information: via Gigazine