

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of Fermas: Slovakian site plays key role in Evonik's fermentation processes

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Essen / Slovenská Ľupča (Slovakia). When it comes to industrial fermentation processes for new products, all roads at Evonik lead to the Group's Slovakian site in Slovenská Ľupča, which lies at the foot of the Low Tatras mountains. Fermas s.r.o., a company in which the former Degussa AG held a majority of shares, began the fermentative production of the amino acids lysine and threonine in 1993. This year, the site celebrates its 25th anniversary as Evonik Fermas GmbH.

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"It is rewarding to see how well Fermas has developed and how important it has become for our business," says Dr. Emmanuel Auer, the head of the Animal Nutrition Business Line of Evonik. All amino acids in Evonik's portfolio that are produced with fermentation methods – whether for animal nutrition or pharmaceutical applications – originally started out at the site.

The Evonik Group has since established large production capacities in other parts of the world for most of these amino acids, and Fermas has specialized in scaling up fermentation processes. All new biotechnological processes move from process development in the laboratory to industrial scale production in Slovenská Ľupča, where the experts for large-scale fermenters are based.

Thanks to the trend toward sustainability, whether in animal nutrition or in the cosmetics industry, Fermas has continued to see a steady stream of new projects and investments. Over the past years, investments in the double-digit million Euro range have been made into new products, improved technologies, and infrastructure at the site.

For instance, a pilot plant built in 2016, dedicated to the fermentative production of glycolipids. These substances, which are composed of sugar and fatty acids, stand out for their natural cleaning power. Evonik has high expectations for RHEANCE® One, the rhamnolipid launched in April for gentle yet effective cleansing of skin and hair. The product is made of sugars from a single

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carbohydrate source and does not use any additional tropical oils, which is precisely in line with the wishes of today's more sustainability conscious cosmetics consumers.

Fermas is also an important employer in the region around Slovenská Ľupča. "Our engagement in state-of-the-art industrial biotechnology offers interesting job opportunities for biotechnology experts, laboratory assistants, engineers and many other professions," says Dr. Karl-Ludwig Weber, the general manager of Fermas, who holds a doctorate in chemistry himself. Weber's goal is to maintain the company's leading position in microbial production and to provide continued support for Evonik in the development of sustainable processes and products.

About Evonik

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The focus on more specialty businesses, customer-orientated innovative prowess and a trustful and performance-oriented corporate culture form the heart of Evonik's corporate strategy. They are the lever for profitable growth and a sustained increase in the value of the company. Evonik benefits specifically from its customer proximity and leading market positions. Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world with more than 36,000 employees. In fiscal 2017, the enterprise generated sales of €14.4 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €2.36 billion.

About Nutrition & Care

The Nutrition & Care segment is led by Evonik Nutrition & Care GmbH and contributes to fulfilling basic human needs. That includes applications for everyday consumer goods as well as animal nutrition and health care. This segment employed about 8,250 employees, and generated sales of around €4.5 billion in 2017.

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