

New technology allows more efficient production of specialty copolyesters for the food packaging industry.

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Last December Evonik started up a new plant for production of specialty copolyesters at its Witten site. The plant, in which Evonik has invested a sum in the mid-double-digit million-euro range, represents an expansion of the production of DYNAPOL® polyesters that has been established at the site for many years. Serving primarily as binders for coatings, these polyesters are increasingly being used in internal coatings for cans with food contact and for flexible packaging as well as in coatings for large-format metal coils.

**Press Contact**

**Isabel Ramor**

Telefon +49 2365 494843

isabel.ramor@evonik.com

The new technology ensures that specialty copolyesters can now be produced even more efficiently. To realize this project, Evonik relied on the experience and expertise of AQUAFIL Engineering, headquartered in Berlin. The engineering company has been active for many years in the area of polyester production plants; it already markets its technology worldwide, and the current facility serves as the first reference plant in Germany. Dr. Dirk Karasiak, managing director of AQUAFIL Engineering, says of the successful start-up: "Adapting the AQUAFIL Engineering technology, which had already proven itself for other products, to the particular requirements of the Evonik process and integrating it into existing structures proved to be an enormous challenge. The project and the start-up were carried out successfully thanks to the close collaboration between the teams and the capability of each to think beyond its own boundaries. We're very happy and satisfied that we've been able to contribute toward fulfilling Evonik's ambitious goals in such an important project."

Dr. Wilhelm Otten, head of the Process Technology & Engineering business line, commented on the consolidation of Evonik's position as an innovative supplier of materials for high-grade metal coatings for flexible packaging with food contact: "We normally develop our production processes ourselves and procure packaged units in the area of infrastructure or the periphery. In this case, however, we decided to integrate the tried and tested technology of AQUAFIL Engineering into our core production

**Evonik Resource Efficiency GmbH**

Rellinghauser Straße 1-11

45128 Essen

Telefon +49 201 177-01

Telefax +49 201 177-3475

www.evonik.de

**Aufsichtsrat**

Dr. Harald Schwager, Vorsitzender

**Geschäftsführung**

Dr. Claus Rettig, Vorsitzender

Andreas Fischer,

Simone Hildmann,

Alexandra Schwarz

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Amtsgericht Essen

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process. So we had to learn to deal with the increased complexity of the interfaces.”

To support the trend toward polyester-based coatings, and the resulting system change that producers of food packaging are currently experiencing, both the partners agreed on continuing collaboration in the development and construction of plants for production of specialty copolyesters.

“The expansion of the plant is an important component of our strategy. The technology of AQUAFIL Engineering represents a significant element of the sophisticated production process,” says Roberto Vila-Keller, head of the Coating & Adhesive Resins business line in the Resource Efficiency segment. “For our customers, this collaboration means increased supply security and the further development of high-grade polyesters.”

#### **About Evonik**

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The focus on more specialty businesses, customer-oriented 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 2018, the enterprise generated sales of €15 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €2.6 billion.

#### **About Resource Efficiency**

The Resource Efficiency segment is led by Evonik Resource Efficiency GmbH and produces high performance materials and specialty additives for environmentally friendly as well as energy-efficient systems to the automotive, paints & coatings, adhesives, construction, and many other industries. This segment employed about 10,000 employees, and generated sales of around €5.7 billion in 2018.

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