



Mühlenchemie Responds to Durum Shortage With Pilot Plant for Pasta

29 Jan 2015 --- According to forecasts, the international wheat market will move in two opposite directions in 2015. Whereas an excellent harvest is expected for bread wheat / soft wheat, the durum market faces massive losses. The industry analyst Jim Peterson from the North Dakota Wheat Commission predicts the smallest harvest of Triticum durum in 13 years. The crop will be unsatisfactory in respect of both quantity and quality.

This negative trend is to be seen in all the important producing countries. Italy, Greece, Spain and even Canada, the biggest exporter of durum, are expecting for serious losses. Bruce Burnett, the harvest expert of the Canadian Wheat Board, estimates that less than a quarter of the Western Canadian durum will achieve the top two quality categories.

Another severely affected area is North Dakota, where about half of all the US durum wheat is grown. Unusually high rainfalls in the spring and autumn have done serious damage to the harvest. This state is expecting a fall in quantity of over four percent. The estimated loss to the US market as a whole is eight percent.

In view of such bad news, insiders predict that financial pressure on the processing industry will increase massively in 2015. Many pasta manufacturers will have to make do with weaker durum qualities or resort to mixtures of pasta and bread flour. But such compromises generally result in loss of quality. Bite, colour, cooking properties – all these factors depend to a large extent on the quality of the flour.

Mühlenchemie, one of the world's best-known enterprises in the field of flour treatment, is familiar with these complex interactions; for years it has developed customized enzyme systems that ensure efficient performance in spite of inferior flour quality. "To complement our years of expertise in raw materials, we have now invested in a pasta laboratory of our own which will enable us to meet our customers' requirements even more specifically", says Managing Director Lennart Kutschinski of Mühlenchemie's latest service offer to pasta manufacturers.

"On our Pavan pilot plant we can simulate practically any industrial process. For example, at the customer's request we can test the effects of different enzyme systems and adjust the recipes accordingly. Is a compound from our Pastazym series the most suitable for treating this particular flour, or one from the EMCEdur series? How do they affect the taste, mouth feel and stability after cooking? On our pilot plant we find answers to all these questions on our customers' behalf", Kutschinski explains.

Mühlenchemie's Managing Director is convinced that the new all-round service meets a very real demand. "Our applications technology enables us to find practical solutions for the pasta industry that reconcile quality and economy even in difficult times. In recent projects, for example, we have replaced 75 percent of the durum with bread wheat and achieved the same quality and colour by using Pastazym. Support of this kind will become more and more significant in future."

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