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Mühlenchemie Launches New Pilot Plant for Pasta

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24 Jan 2014 --- With its new pilot plant, Mühlenchemie GmbH & Co. KG offers pasta manufacturers an additional service. At the pasta laboratory in Ahrensburg, customers can now verify the possible effects of enzymes and other additives on noodle products before the start of commercial production. The pilot plant simulates the industrial production process.

The market for pasta and noodle products is expanding rapidly worldwide. The quality of the raw materials and the equipment used in production are as various as the shapes and colours of the resulting noodles.

In order to enhance the quality of pasta made from hard or soft wheat, or mixtures of the two, manufacturers have to take numerous parameters into account. For example, the specific use of enzyme systems, ingredients or additives can improve the bite of the products, reduce their stickiness, cooking losses and breakage, or adjust the colour of the pasta. In Mühlenchemie's new pilot plant, pasta manufacturers can now optimize their products under realistic conditions and test their individual enzyme systems together with the company's applications experts. The economic advantages for the manufacturer are considerable, since the regular production process does not have to be interrupted for testing.

The pilot plant installed in Ahrensburg is one of the most flexible models on the market and makes it possible to demonstrate most production processes. "We shall be able to simulate practically any process anywhere in the world and use the results to make individual recommendations for each application", Mühlenchemie's managing director Lennart Kutschinski explains. Besides computer-controlled mixing and extrusion under vacuum, the equipment permits temperature adjustment and measurement and documentation of pressures. In the automated climatic chamber, temperature profiles, moisture content and the direction of the air flow can be simulated according to the customer's instructions.

With a continuous output of 70 kg of pasta per hour and a minimum quantity of 10 – 15 kg of the end product in each test, Mühlenchemie closes the gap between laboratory-scale testing and commercial production. The equipment makes it possible to formulate targets together with the customer and minimize the risk involved in transfer to the production plant. "We use our expertise in flour and enzymes to enhance the quality of our customers' products and increase their profitability, and also to push ahead with the development of new functional systems", Kutschinski continues.