BASF's Ecoflex Plant Starts Operations

BASF has started operations at its expanded plant for the production of the biodegradable plastic Ecoflex. Expansion of the existing plant in Ludwigshafen will increase production capacity for Ecoflex from 14,000 to 74,000 metric tons per year. At the same time, BASF will ramp up compounding capacity for Ecovio, a derivative of Ecoflex.

"We are already successful in the market with our biodegradable polyester Ecoflex and the related innovation, Ecovio. The larger production capacities will enhance our position significantly," said Dr. Wolfgang Hapke, president of BASF's Performance Polymers division. "The capacity expansion will also enable us to respond even more effectively to our customers' wishes."

Ecoflex is a plastic that has the properties of conventional polyethylene but is fully biodegradable under industrial composting conditions in accordance with DIN EN 13432. Ecovio is a derivative of Ecoflex that is also biodegradable and that contains up to 75% renewable raw materials. Typical applications are shopping bags, organic waste bags, mulch films for agricultural applications, and food packaging.

One of the latest innovations is Ecovio FS Paper, which is used to provide a biodegradable waterproof coating on the interior surfaces of paper cups and cardboard containers.

With Ecovio and Ecoflex, BASF is already one of the world's leading suppliers of biobased and biodegradable plastics. Both of these properties are increasingly in demand, and the market for biodegradable and biobased plastics is currently growing by more than 20% per year.

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