

Five years of reverse osmosis membrane elements from LANXESS in Bitterfeld

- **With quality and innovation, “Made in Germany” is on the road to success**
- **Production capacity to double in 2017**
- **40 million euros invested in the site in the past five years**
- **Commitment to the Bitterfeld site continues**

Cologne/Bitterfeld – “Our foray into the reverse osmosis (RO) membrane business five years ago has truly been a success story. We have almost reached the limit of our current capacity so we are going to double production capacity in the coming year,” said Jean-Marc Vesselle, head of the LANXESS Liquid Purification Technologies (LPT) business unit, on the occasion of a celebration of the five-year anniversary of the Lewabrane plant operated by IAB Ionenaustauscher GmbH, a wholly owned subsidiary of the LANXESS specialty chemicals company. “The Lewabrane brand has established a firm place for itself in the market, not least on account of its high quality and performance properties, which both we and our customers expect from ‘Made in Germany’ products,” he added.

The specialty chemicals company has invested a total of 40 million euros in the site in the last five years alone. In addition to the membrane elements plant, LANXESS also operates the world’s largest ion exchange resin plant in Bitterfeld.

“Here in Bitterfeld-Wolfen, LANXESS is truly writing history, something we are really proud of. As a company with a long tradition in water treatment, LANXESS has grown steadily and now occupies a leading position in the market,” said Petra Wust, Mayor of Bitterfeld-Wolfen, continuing: “Part of the company’s philosophy has always been its regional commitment and special bond with Bitterfeld-Wolfen, and I am extremely grateful for that. I wish the company a great deal of continued success!”

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Vesselle emphasized the company's association with the site and the region. "In 2011 – before the membrane plant – we had about 100 employees in Bitterfeld. That number has now grown to about 160 and will continue to increase. We value the skills, commitment and reliability of the workers here, which is a key element in our success."

Expansion of capacity to meet increasing demand

The market for RO membrane elements is currently projected to grow at an above-average rate of 10 percent annually in coming years (CAGR 2015-2020). Because the plant is already operating at almost the limit of its capacity, LANXESS has decided to double the corresponding capacity at the Bitterfeld site. The additional capacity is scheduled to come on line in the second half of 2017. The expansion will create up to 10 new jobs.

Commitment to research, training and development

LANXESS is demonstrating its commitment to the Bitterfeld site in a number of different ways, including in Research & Development. In this regard, Vesselle said: "We are continuously conducting research in all areas of modern water treatment so that we can continue to provide our customers with the requisite expertise from a single source." For that purpose LANXESS is cooperating with technical universities and other research facilities in the region such as the Fraunhofer Institutes for Factory Operation and Automation (IFF) in Magdeburg and for Microstructure of Materials and Systems (IMWS) in Halle.

A total of 18 apprentices have started their careers with IAB Ionenaustauscher GmbH since the site was expanded, with eight currently in training. After completion of their training, these chemical production technicians, chemical laboratory assistants, industrial mechanical engineers and electrical engineers for automation technology can look forward to promising careers, not least with the

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company itself. Of the 10 apprentices who have already completed their training seven were taken on.

Comprehensive water treatment expertise

LANXESS is one of only two companies in the world that offer know-how and products both in membrane elements and ion exchange resins. "With this comprehensive water treatment capability we can meet the requirements of customers all over the world," Vesselle remarked. The membrane element plant is the logical continuation of a tradition dating back almost 80 years in Bitterfeld-Wolfen. The industrial production of ion exchange resins began there in 1938, and after the Second World War the Lewatit brand became famous worldwide. LANXESS operates additional production facilities for ion exchange resins in Leverkusen, Germany, and Jhagadia, India.

Because membrane and ion exchange technology frequently go hand in hand, the development and introduction of the LewaPlus integrated design software was a major contribution to optimally linking the strengths of both technologies. The software, which is continuously being expanded and refined, reflects LANXESS's comprehensive know-how in the field of water treatment.

Membrane elements for a wide range of applications

LANXESS has continuously expanded its line of membrane products since production began in September 2011 and the products were introduced to the market in early 2012. Numerous types of elements are available in different sizes and can be optimized to be particularly fouling-resistant or energy-efficient or for high performance.

That opens up a wide range of applications for the company and its customers in the treatment of process water and wastewater in many different industries. An additional important area of application is the recovery of potable water from brackish or seawater. LANXESS and

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its products make important contributions in this field, facilitating access to clean drinking water for an ever-growing world population.

“In addition to the quality and performance of our products, the innovative spirit and creativity of our employees have been particularly responsible for our membrane elements establishing a firm place in the market in just a few years,” Vesselle said. One example of this innovation is a new type of multi-function spacer inside the membrane elements. This “feedspacer” consists of filaments of different thicknesses, which explains the designation “Alternating Strand Design” (ASD). It was brought to market in record time and is now helping to increase the energy efficiency of the corresponding membrane elements and simultaneously optimize fouling resistance.

The LANXESS Liquid Purification Technologies business unit

The LANXESS Liquid Purification Technologies (LPT) business unit currently employs 500 people worldwide, more than 300 of which work in Germany. LPT is part of LANXESS’s Performance Chemicals segment, which recorded sales of EUR 2.0 billion in 2015.

Detailed information about products from the LANXESS LPT business unit can be obtained online at <http://lpt.lanxess.com/en/home/>. Brochures and the LewaPlus software can also be downloaded from this website free of charge.

LANXESS is a leading specialty chemicals company with sales of EUR 7.9 billion in 2015 and about 16,600 employees in 29 countries. The company is currently represented at 52 production sites worldwide. The core business of LANXESS is the development, manufacturing and marketing of chemical intermediates, specialty chemicals and plastics. Through ARLANXEO, the joint venture with Saudi Aramco, LANXESS is also a leading supplier of synthetic rubber. LANXESS is listed in the leading sustainability indices Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI World) and FTSE4Good.

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Information for editors:

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