

Press release

CropEnergies AG unveils plans to produce renewable ethyl acetate using Johnson Matthey technology Sustainable alternative made in Europe to replace fossil-based product

Mannheim, 12 January 2022 – CropEnergies AG, Mannheim, and Johnson Matthey, London, a leader in sustainable technologies, have entered into an engineering, license and technical services agreement for a plant to allow CropEnergies AG to produce renewable ethyl acetate from sustainable ethanol near its production site in Zeitz, Germany. Using Johnson Matthey technology, the renewable ethyl acetate produced by CropEnergies will reduce the fossil carbon footprint of a wide range of everyday products and offers an excellent opportunity for its' customers to grow with the sustainability trend. Building it would require an investment of approximately EUR 80 to EUR 100 million and would lay CropEnergies' first foundation stone of Biobased Chemicals as a new business line.

Johnson Matthey will prepare the process design package scheduled for completion mid-2022 after which CropEnergies will make the final investment decision. The plant will be designed to produce 50,000 tonnes per year of renewable ethyl acetate from renewable ethanol feedstock and renewable energy to drive the process. The plant will also generate renewable hydrogen as a co-product that together with biogenic CO₂ from the CropEnergies fermentation process, will be the basis for further conversion of renewable energy into PtX (power-to-X) downstream routes, to produce e.g. e-fuels.

Johnson Matthey offers an award-winning commercial ethyl acetate technology, with a proven track record for process improvement, engineering expertise and licensee support. Johnson Matthey's green technology minimizes carbon emissions and produces ethyl acetate widely regarded as having the highest product quality on the market.

Dr Stephan Meeder, CEO of CropEnergies AG: "If we want to live in a climate friendly world, we have to change the materials we use. Our goal is to provide to our customers innovative, sustainable products made out of biomass. As a sustainable alternative to fossil products, renewable ethyl acetate significantly saves greenhouse gas emissions." Ethyl acetate is widely used in the production of cosmetics, flexible packaging and coatings, paints and adhesives, as well as in food, beverage and pharmaceutical applications. In addition to lowering our customers' fossil carbon footprint, renewable ethyl acetate produced near Zeitz would also offer customers the opportunity to source locally in Europe, providing greater security of supply. Meeder continues: "We are convinced that the results of the project evaluation will be favourable and are excited to start this project with our partner Johnson Matthey."

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"JM's vision is for a world that's cleaner and healthier today and for future generations and we are proud that CropEnergies has chosen our DAVY™ ethyl acetate process technology for their innovative renewable chemicals plant in Zeitz, Germany," said Alberto Gionvanzana, Managing Director for Johnson Matthey. "Our process is ideally suited for use with bio-based ethanol feeds and offers an ethyl acetate route that is almost 100% carbon neutral while providing a valuable hydrogen co-product stream. We are committed to helping the chemical industries manage the transitions needed to decarbonise and are looking forward to supporting CropEnergies through the engineering and beyond for this ground breaking project."

CropEnergies AG

Sustainable, renewable products made from biomass – that is what CropEnergies stands for. Our products contribute to a climate-friendly world and ensure that fossil carbons remain in the ground permanently and do not continue to drive climate change.

Founded in Mannheim in 2006, the member of the Südzucker Group is the leading European producer of renewable ethanol. With a production capacity of 1.3 million m³ of ethanol per year, CropEnergies produces neutral alcohol as well as technical alcohol (ethanol) for a wide range of applications at locations in Germany, Belgium, the UK, and France: Sustainably produced ethanol as a petrol substitute is an answer to the future challenges of climate-friendly energy supply in the transport sector. Thanks to highly efficient production plants, our ethanol reduces CO₂ emissions by an average of more than 70% across the entire value chain compared to fossil fuel. Our high-quality alcohol is also used in beverage production, cosmetics, pharmaceutical applications, for example as a basis for disinfectants, or as a raw material for innovative biochemicals.

Equally important are the resulting protein food and animal feed products as a sustainable regional alternative to emission-intensive protein imports from overseas, as well as biogenic carbon dioxide. It is used in beverage production, among other things, and will be a valuable raw material for a wide range of applications in transport and industry in the future. Thus, all raw material components are utilised in our circular economy.

CropEnergies AG (ISIN DE000A0LAUP1) is listed on the regulated market (Prime Standard) of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange.

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Johnson Matthey

Johnson Matthey is a global leader in sustainable technologies that enable a cleaner and healthier world. With over 200 years of sustained commitment to innovation and technological breakthroughs, we improve the performance, function and safety of our customers' products. Our science has a global impact in areas such as low emission transport, pharmaceuticals, chemical processing and making the most efficient use of the planet's natural resources. Today about 15,000 Johnson Matthey professionals collaborate with our network of customers and partners to make a real difference to the world around us. For more information, visit www.matthey.com.

Inspiring science, enhancing life

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