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BENEEO moves further towards carbon neutrality at Oreye chicory root fibre plant

- 40% reduction in specific carbon emissions achieved in Belgium production facility -

BENEEO, one of the leading manufacturers of functional ingredients, has announced a 40% reduction in specific carbon emissions at its Oreye facility in Belgium. This achievement is a result of a 10-year program of energy saving, which closed with an €11 million investment into increased energy efficiency measures. The reductions at Oreye show the company's continued commitment to prioritising sustainable practices in all of its facilities. This latest development marks an important step for BENEEO as it aims for carbon neutrality by 2050.

As part of the recent investment, a new gas turbine and heat recovery boiler was installed at the Oreye facility. As well as providing for BENEEO's own electricity production needs, the new system also enables the company to export an additional five megawatts to the public electric grid network each year.

Project planning for the system began in 2017. As well as the installation of new equipment, significant civil works had to be undertaken, including the dismantling of old sections of the building and the erection of a new steel structure in the heart of the factory, to house the system. The gas turbine went into pilot operation in August 2019 and is now running at full capacity.

Philippe Dumont, Operations Managing Director at BENEEO's Oreye facility, comments: "Sustainable development is a cornerstone of our business strategy and BENEEO is committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. The production plant in Oreye continues to contribute to this target with a combination of solutions, including the increased use of renewable energy in future. The integration of the new gas turbine system into our existing steam and electricity production is an important part of the energy efficiency program that we began 10 years ago. Our aim was to cut specific carbon emissions on site and to date we have achieved a total reduction of 40%, thanks to significant fuel efficiencies and yield gains."

BENEEO has been producing prebiotic natural chicory root fibres at Oreye since 1992, by using a gentle hot water extraction method. The resulting dietary fibres inulin and oligofructose can be

used in bakery, cereals, dairy, confectionery and baby food products. The plant has been supported by Oreya's local agriculture for more than 130 years. Today 700 farmers in the region have a chicory contract with BENEEO, and the Oreya facility currently employs 300 people.

BENEEO's sustainability initiative at Oreya comes as part of an overall €61 million investment in Belgium in the past 12 months. The company also recently announced a €50 million investment in BENEEO's rice starch facility in Wijgmaal.

- Ends -

BENEEO's Oreya plant, formerly known as Orafti (part of Raffinerie Tienen), is a success story in the Walloon region (Belgium). The plant was founded in 1889 and functioned as a sugar beet refinery for more than 100 years. Beginning in the 90's a complete re-engineering programme was implemented to turn the factory into a chicory based facility, supported by important research on technological applications and the nutritional benefits of chicory fibres. Since then, growth has been continuous. Today BENEEO is the global market leader in fructans ingredients and a second factory has been running since 2006 in South America (Chile). Part of German-headquartered Südzucker since 1989, the Oreya plant was integrated into the newly formed BENEEO Group in 2007, when Südzucker founded a new three-pronged ingredients business unit, together with the legacy Remy (Wijgmaal, Belgium) and Palatinit (Mannheim, Germany) businesses.

BENEEO offers functional ingredients derived from chicory roots, beet sugar, rice and wheat. BENEEO is the ideal partner to help improve a product in its nutritional and technological characteristics. Key nutritional benefits are 'less fat', 'less sugar', 'less calories', 'added fibre', 'gluten-free' and dairy alternatives as well as energy management, digestive, bone and dental health. Key technological benefits focus on taste and texture improvements. Through a unique chain of expertise, including the BENEEO-Institute that provides decisive insights into nutrition science and legislation, and the BENEEO-Technology Center that consults in application technology, BENEEO actively supports customers in the development of more balanced and healthy food products.

BENEEO is a division of the Südzucker Group that employs more than 1000 people and has production units in Belgium, Chile, Germany and Italy.

For further information on BENEEO and its ingredients, please visit: www.beneo.com and www.beneoneews.com or follow BENEEO on Twitter: @_BENEEO or LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/beneo

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