

Evonik manufactures first product from world's first industrial-scale rhamnolipid biosurfactant plant

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- New triple-digit million-euro facility in Slovakia completed ahead of schedule
- Meets high demand for biobased, biodegradable rhamnolipids for cleaning and personal care applications
- Latest milestone toward sustainability-driven biosolutions

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Essen, Germany. Evonik has manufactured the first product from its industrial-scale facility for sustainable biosurfactants that has been completed ahead of schedule at its site in Slovakia. The new plant is the first worldwide to produce sustainable rhamnolipid biosurfactants. Evonik's rhamnolipids are exceptionally high quality and provide the company with a unique market position due to the IP-protected, fermentation-based manufacturing process.

Rhamnolipids and other sustainable biosurfactants in Evonik's portfolio draw on the company's biotechnology platform in its life sciences division, Nutrition & Care. Driven by sustainability, the division is using innovative biosolutions to address the challenges of biocircular care through closed-loop carbon systems, while maintaining high functionality and preserving biodiversity.

"Our high-performance rhamnolipids are setting a precedent, not only at Evonik, but as part of a broader sustainable chemicals revolution. We are excited to be leading the way with our biosolutions," said Johann-Caspar Gammelin, president of Evonik's Nutrition & Care division.

"Completing this plant ahead of schedule is a milestone for our business and a testament to our technical expertise, but most importantly, it enables our customers to bring more sustainable cleaning and personal care products to market faster," said Yann d'Hervé, head of Evonik's Care Solutions business line.

Rhamnolipids are a class of biosurfactants that are sustainably manufactured via a fermentation process using European corn sugar as the main raw material. This biogenic, carbon-based

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process does not require petrochemical feedstocks or tropical oils. Rhamnolipids are fully biodegradable and offer a sustainable alternative to conventional surfactants due to their biobased raw materials, and low toxicological and ecotoxicological profile. Their exceptional foam-forming properties and mildness make them ideal for use in household cleaners and personal care products such as shampoos and micellar waters. They also offer superior performance for industrial applications such as coatings, mining and oil and gas.

Evonik Fermas, located in Slovenská Ľupča in Slovakia, was founded in 1992 as a joint venture between Degussa AG and Biotika a.s. The company initially produced amino acids for animal feed using biotechnology, but in 1998 became a 100 percent subsidiary of Evonik, expanding its expertise to include the production of fermentation-based products for animal nutrition, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and personal care. In 2016, Evonik Fermas ran the first pilot plant for the production of sustainable biosurfactants via fermentation.

Further information

Link to [press release and images](#)

Company information

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The company is active in more than 100 countries around the world and generated sales of €18.5 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €2.49 billion in 2022. Evonik goes far beyond chemistry to create innovative, profitable, and sustainable solutions for customers. About 34,000 employees work together for a common purpose: We want to improve life today and tomorrow.

About Nutrition & Care

The focus of the business of the Nutrition & Care division is on health and quality of life. It develops differentiated solutions for active pharmaceutical ingredients, medical devices, nutrition for humans and animals, personal care, cosmetics, and household cleaning. In these resilient end markets, the division generated sales of €4.24 billion in 2022 with about 5,700 employees.

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