

News release

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AkzoNobel and partners looking to turn sugar beet into raw materials

AkzoNobel has joined forces with SuikerUnie, Rabobank, Deloitte, Investment and Development Agency for the Northern Netherlands (NOM), Groningen Seaports, and the Province of Groningen, to investigate the possibility of producing chemicals from beet-derived sugar feedstock.

The parties have asked Deloitte to perform a feasibility study to provide an independent critical review and economic assessment on the viability of several business cases for commercial production in the Delfzijl chemical cluster in the Netherlands.

Part of ongoing industry efforts to replace increasingly scarce non-renewable raw materials, the partnership could potentially lead to the synthesis of a range of chemicals in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.

It follows the recent publication of a report by Deloitte, which singles out the Netherlands as a cost leader in the production of sugar. The production of sugar beet is also expected to grow significantly due to impending de-regulation.

“We know that the Netherlands can produce ample volumes of sugar beet,” explained Knut Schwalenberg, Managing Director of AkzoNobel Industrial Chemicals, who is also responsible for the company’s Delfzijl activities. “We will now study how this can be used to create additional production and jobs in the Delfzijl area.”

Added Marco Waas, Director of RD&I and Technology at AkzoNobel Industrial Chemicals: “We are always looking to use innovation to drive sustainable growth. The beauty of this project is that it’s also a perfect fit with our own Planet Possible approach to developing new technologies that are less fossil-based and reduce our environmental footprint across the value chain.”

Commenting on the partnership, Albert Markusse, CEO of SuikerUnie, said: “The really interesting aspect of this approach is the collaboration that will take place between different sectors – agriculture, chemicals and logistics. The results will be interesting for us all.”

Siem Jansen, President of the Investment and Development Agency for the Northern Netherlands (NOM), also hopes for a positive outcome: “Sugar beets are a major crop, not only in the northern part of the Netherlands, but also across the border in Niedersachsen. New high value products based on this crop will impact the whole value chain and could provide an important boost to the regional economy.”

The study will take around three months to complete and the partners expect to identify one or more successful business cases for commercial production in Delfzijl.

Not for publication – for more information

About AkzoNobel:

AkzoNobel is a leading global paints and coatings company and a major producer of specialty chemicals. We supply industries and consumers worldwide with innovative products and are passionate about developing sustainable answers for our customers. Our portfolio includes well-known brands such as Dulux, Sikkens, International and Eka. Headquartered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we are consistently ranked as one of the leaders in the area of sustainability. With operations in more than 80 countries, our 50,000 people around the world are committed to delivering leading products and technologies to meet the growing demands of our fast-changing world.

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