

PRESS RELEASE

Number 32

WACKER to Start Construction of Competence Center for mRNA Actives at Halle Site

Halle, July 5, 2022 – The excavators are set to roll onto the WACKER site in Halle. As announced by the company today, the development of the Biotech site into an mRNA competence center has already begun. In the future, actives based on messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA), such as mRNA coronavirus vaccines, will be manufactured here. The production capacity in Halle will be more than tripled as part of the expansion, with the number of employees more than doubling. WACKER is investing more than €100 million in the expansion of the Halle site.

The start of the Weinberg campus expansion was marked with a symbolic groundbreaking ceremony. WACKER's site in Halle will be expanded in the coming months into a competence center for actives based on messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA). Four new production lines are to be built, which, among other things, will produce mRNA vaccines for customers. As already announced by WACKER in April, part of the new capacity will be available to the German federal government as and when required as part of its pandemic preparedness contracts.

“We are happy that our expertise in making mRNA vaccines will contribute to the fight against future pandemics. The expansion of our Halle site will create capacity to prepare for pandemics and beyond,” said WACKER CEO Christian Hartel. Saxony-Anhalt's Minister for Economic Affairs Sven Schulze, and Prof. Armin

Willingmann, Saxony-Anhalt's Minister for Science, Energy, Climate Protection and Environment, were also present at the official start of construction.

“With this expansion into a competence center for mRNA actives, WACKER is bringing a technology of the future to Halle,” added Melanie Käsmarker, managing director of Wacker Biotech GmbH in Halle. “mRNA actives are not only used as vaccines, for example to protect against coronavirus, but the mRNA technology also allows completely new treatment options, such as in cancer therapy. We see a lot of potential here and going forward want to serve the increasing demand for mRNA actives from Halle,” she said.

The expansion will more than triple WACKER's production capacity at the Halle site. There are plans for a new building with four floors, which is to be connected to the existing building. Alongside the four mRNA production lines, the new building will contain storage areas and quality control laboratories, as well as office space and recreation rooms. WACKER intends to hire around 200 new employees as part of the expansion. Recruitments are being sought in all departments, particularly laboratory assistants and pharmaceutical technicians, as well as employees in production, supply chain management and quality control, who will be trained in the coming months to be ready for the start of production in 2024.

The new building is planned to be ready and the production lines operational in less than 24 months. The high-tech plant constructor Exyte has been hired as general contractor for the construction and validation of the new facilities. Exyte specializes in the delivery of semiconductor and pharma plants and is considered a pioneer in cleanroom technology. “Biotechnology is a strategic growth area for Exyte. We want to continue to expand our market position with, for

example, our engineering expertise and innovative solutions. We are pleased to support WACKER as general contractor in the construction and validation of the new facilities,” said Exyte CEO Dr. Wolfgang Büchele. “The manufacture of pharmaceutical actives is subject to the highest standards. As such, the requirements for plant construction are just as high,” said Wacker Biotech Managing Director Käsmarker. “In Exyte, we have the perfect partner for this project.”

The WACKER Group concentrates its biopharmaceuticals activities within Wacker Biotech. As a contract manufacturer, the company produces drug substances for pharmaceutical companies, both for clinical trials and the open market. In doing so, Wacker Biotech works in accordance with pharmaceutical GMP (good manufacturing practice) in order to ensure compliance with the high quality required for clinical trials or market approval by the relevant authorities.

During a Capital Market Day at the end of March, WACKER announced that it would significantly increase its investments in the further growth of its biotechnology business. WACKER wants to invest more than €80 million per year in this area in the next few years. By 2030, WACKER BIOSOLUTIONS plans to contribute around €1 billion to Group sales. The development of the Halle site into a competence center for mRNA will aid this strategy.

About Wacker Biotech

Wacker Biotech GmbH, Wacker Biotech B.V. and Wacker Biotech US Inc. are full-service contract manufacturers of therapeutic proteins, live microbial products (LMPs), plasmid DNA (pDNA), messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) and vaccines based on microbial

systems. Wacker Biotech's portfolio extends from strain/process development and analytical testing through to production for clinical and commercial applications. Wacker Biotech operates three GMP-compliant (Good Manufacturing Practice), FDA- and EMA-certified production plants at its Jena and Halle sites in Germany and in Amsterdam in the Netherlands. In addition, Wacker Biotech has had a plant in San Diego (Wacker Biotech US Inc.) since February 2021. Wacker Biotech GmbH, Wacker Biotech B.V. and Wacker Biotech US Inc. are wholly owned subsidiaries of Munich-based Wacker Chemie AG. For more information, visit: wacker.com/biologics



Groundbreaking ceremony in Halle with (from left to right) Michael Zorn from the Saxony-Anhalt State Administration Office; Egbert Geier, mayor of Halle; Melanie Käsmarker, managing director of Wacker Biotech GmbH; Saxony-Anhalt's Minister for Economic Affairs Sven Schulze; WACKER CEO Christian Hartel; Armin Willingmann, Saxony-Anhalt's Minister for Science, Energy, Climate Protection and Environment; Wolfgang Büchele, CEO of Exyte; Guido Seidel, managing director of Wacker Biotech GmbH; Ulf-Marten Schmieder, CEO of Technologiepark Weinberg Campus and Joachim Bug, deputy director of the Center for Pandemic Vaccines and Therapeutics (ZEPAI). (Photo: WACKER)



The construction of the mRNA competence center will more than triple WACKER's production capacity at the Halle site. There are plans for a new building with four floors, which is to be connected to the existing building. (rendering/draft: Exyte)

Note:

These photos are available for download at:
<http://www.wacker.com/pressreleases>

For further information, please contact:

Wacker Chemie AG
Media Relations & Information
Manuela Dollinger
Tel. +49 89 6279-1629
manuela.dollinger@wacker.com
www.wacker.com
follow us on:   

The Company in Brief:

WACKER is a global chemical company with some 14,400 employees and annual sales of around € 6.21 billion (2021).
WACKER has a global network of 26 production sites, 23 technical competence centers and 52 sales offices.

WACKER SILICONES

Silicone fluids, emulsions, rubber grades and resins; silanes; pyrogenic silicas; thermoplastic silicone elastomers

WACKER POLYMERS

Polyvinyl acetates and vinyl acetate copolymers and terpolymers in the form of dispersible polymer powders, dispersions, solid resins and solutions

WACKER BIOSOLUTIONS

Biotech products such as cyclodextrins, cysteine and biologics, as well as fine chemicals and PVAc solid resins

WACKER POLYSILICON

Polysilicon for the semiconductor and photovoltaic industries