

PRESS RELEASE

Number 17

WACKER Opens mRNA Competence Center in Halle an der Saale, Germany

Munich/Halle, June 3, 2024 – WACKER has reached a milestone today by opening an mRNA competence center at its biotech site in Halle (Saale), Germany. The new facility enables the large-scale production of active ingredients based on messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA), such as anti-Covid mRNA vaccines. WACKER invested more than 100 million euros in this construction project. More than 100 highly qualified jobs have already been created in Halle. Some of the new capacity will be made available to the German government as part of its pandemic-preparedness plan in order to rapidly supply Germany with vaccines as and when required.

With 300 guests from politics and business, as well as employees in attendance, WACKER today celebrated the opening of its new mRNA competence center, a key project for the Group's future. During the Covid pandemic, mRNA-based actives saved millions of lives – an experience that has underlined the importance of being prepared for these kinds of future challenges. Expansion of WACKER's Halle site into an mRNA competence center enables the company to produce mRNA actives on a large scale going forward. Four new production lines have more than trebled the site's capacity, some of which will be available to the German government as part of its pandemic-preparedness program. The remaining production capacity is for

other customers. The first contracts in this regard have already been signed.

“The opening of our mRNA competence center in Halle is a milestone for WACKER. This is where we will be producing active ingredients for the medicines of tomorrow – not only for the German government, but for other customers too,” said WACKER CEO Christian Hartel during the opening ceremony. “Our expertise in making mRNA vaccines will contribute to the fight against future pandemics,” he added. What’s more, the CEO was impressed by the speed at which the competence center was built. “It has taken us just two years to build a high-tech production facility with an annual capacity of more than 200 million vaccine doses – an unrivaled achievement in this field, which demonstrates true German efficiency.”

“Medicine is making great strides thanks to mRNA technology, which isn’t just confined to vaccines. For instance, this technology gives us an opportunity to offer cancer patients targeted support going forward,” explained Melanie Käsmarker, managing director of Wacker Biotech. Wacker Biotech bundles the WACKER Group’s biopharmaceutical activities and manufactures active ingredients in Halle and at other sites for market and clinical trials conducted by pharmaceutical companies. “Based in Halle, we’ll be able to meet the globally rising demand for mRNA actives,” she added.

Among the guests invited to attend the opening of the mRNA competence center were Sven Schulze, Saxony-Anhalt’s Economic Affairs Minister, Armin Willingmann, Saxony-Anhalt’s Science

Minister, and Carsten Schneider, member of the federal parliament and, in his capacity as minister of state, the German government's official representative for eastern Germany.

Sven Schulze said: "By expanding the site into a competence center for mRNA actives, WACKER brings both a future-oriented technology and highly qualified jobs to Saxony-Anhalt. This investment underscores the site's appeal and has the potential to strengthen our region's economic power."

"The importance of medical biotechnology is on the rise. More than half of the new active ingredients approved in Germany are now biopharmaceuticals and the percentage of mRNA therapeutic agents will continue to grow. That's why I am delighted that we have an efficient biotechnology hub at the Halle research site, with Wacker Biotech as a driver of innovation," explained Armin Willingmann.

Given the initial vaccine shortage during the coronavirus pandemic, the German government has secured the production and supply of vaccines for the future. Companies were able to apply for pandemic-preparedness contracts with the German government. As joint bidders for the production readiness of mRNA-based vaccines, WACKER and CordenPharma were among those companies awarded a contract. In the event of a new pandemic, WACKER and CordenPharma intend to produce 80 million vaccine doses a year within an extremely short time. The two companies will receive an annual stand-by fee for keeping production capacity and expertise available. The stand-by phase will last for at least five years.

Should the need arise, the German government will contact the developer of the specific mRNA vaccine that is required. WACKER and CordenPharma will then jointly produce this mRNA vaccine in line with the highest pharmaceutical quality standards. Most of the production steps will take place in Germany.

Biotechnology is a strategic growth field for WACKER. 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. The next milestone is expected to be reached this year when a new Biotechnology Center goes on stream in Munich.

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, 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 Wacker Chemie AG.

www.wacker.com/biologics



(from left to right) Guido Seidel, co-managing director of Wacker Biotech GmbH, Susanne Leonhartsberger, president of WACKER BIOSOLUTIONS, Armin Willingmann, the State of Saxony-Anhalt's Minister of Science, Energy, Climate Protection and the Environment, Sven Schulze, the State of Saxony-Anhalt's Minister of Economic Affairs, Tourism, Agriculture and Forests, Christian Hartel, president & CEO of Wacker Chemie AG, Melanie Käsmarker, co-managing director of Wacker Biotech GmbH, Egbert Geier, mayor of the city of Halle, Wolfgang Büchele, CEO of Exyte. (Photo: WACKER)



More than 100 highly qualified jobs have already been created for the mRNA competence center at WACKER's site in Halle. (Photo: WACKER).



Production takes place behind glass in cleanroom conditions at the mRNA competence center in Halle (photo: WACKER).





Lipids that are used to formulate mRNA active ingredients are stored in large steel tanks. (Photo: WACKER)

These photos of the mRNA competence center are available at:

<http://www.wacker.com/pressreleases>

For further information, please contact:

Wacker Chemie AG
Media Relations & Information
Dr. Karsten Werth
Tel. +49 89 6279-1573
karsten.werth@wacker.com
www.wacker.com
Follow us on:  

The Company in Brief:

WACKER is a global company with state-of-the-art specialty chemical products found in countless everyday items, ranging from tile adhesives to computer chips. The company has a global network of 27 production sites, 22 technical competence centers and 48 sales offices. With around 16,400 employees, WACKER generated annual sales of around €6.4 billion in fiscal 2023.

WACKER operates through four business divisions. The chemical divisions WACKER SILICONES and WACKER POLYMERS supply products (silicones, polymeric binders) for the automotive, construction, chemical, consumer goods and medical technology industries. WACKER BIOSOLUTIONS, the life sciences division, specializes in bioengineered products such as biopharmaceuticals and food additives. WACKER POLYSILICON produces hyperpure polysilicon for the semiconductor and photovoltaic industries.