



BELGIAN CHIPS BRIMMING WITH GREEN ENERGY !

Lutosa inaugurates its 2nd cogeneration unit supplied with bio-gas and introduces its avant-garde sustainable development policy.

ST-ELOOIS-VIJVE, 16 November 2005 | *“Achieving our long-term policy aims whilst protecting the environment forms an integral part of how we manage our company”* declares Guy Van den Broeke, the Managing Director. Since it began processing potatoes in 1977, and more specifically in the last 15 years, Lutosa has in fact invested very significantly in this area.

Under the direction of an environmental co-ordinator, the company has made it a point of honour to make rational use of energy and has been using, amongst other things, frequency deviators, has purchased high performance machinery and has bought environmentally-friendly equipment. It has made every effort to reduce waste and to separate out wood, card, film, metal.... Finally, it disposes of its sub-products in a variety of ways; the potato peelings are used as cattle feed and the waste oil is recycled in the maintenance products industry or as bio fuel.

In addition, as chip production requires huge quantities of water, each production site has its own wastewater treatment works. Recycling is the rule here too: starch is recovered for use as a raw material for the paper industry and once the wastewater has been treated, it is used for washing the unpeeled potatoes.

In 2002, Lutosa went one step further and decided to use its biogas in the best possible manner yet again by producing green energy from its fine golden chips! Thanks to an effective collaboration contract with Electrabel, the first and at that time the largest cogeneration plant fed by biogas was built at the company's Walloon site at Leuze-en-Hainaut.

Cogeneration is a technology based on the principle of the joint production and consumption of heat and electricity. In Lutosa's case, use is made of all the biogas produced from the fermentation of waste from the wastewater treatment plant. Both the heat and electricity produced are entirely re-injected into the manufacturing process.

The new plant at St-Eloois-Vijve represents an annual saving on electricity bills of 3 GWh, which covers 10% of the needs of the production units at this site. In concrete terms, 3 GWh are the equivalent of the electricity consumption of 1,000 families. For its part, the heat produced is used to heat bleaching water and to dry the chips. It represents an annual saving on gas bills of the order of 3.2 GWh (at Leuze-en-Hainaut, 6.5 GWh heat and 5 GWh electricity are produced, which cover 8% of the company's needs).

This cogeneration is clear evidence that it is possible to reconcile both economic and environmental objectives. In fact, the new unit has also reduced CO₂ emissions by around 1,800 metric tons a year (11,420 for the Leuze plant).

Lutosa and Electrabel have invested € 1,220,000 in this project.

Lutosa's Guy Van den Broeke concluded *"Through this new partnership with Electrabel we have managed to find a solution which is ecologically and economically balanced. This investment, like all the others we make, is contributing to positioning our company as a "sustainable" supplier of the best chips and potato-based products"*.

Van den Broeke - Lutosa is a Belgian family company with expertise in the potato sector going back over four generations. In Belgium it is unquestionably the market leader. Ranked Number 5 in Europe, it is among the top 10 in the world in the potato processing industry.

The group has two production sites in Belgium. In 2004, 516,000 tonnes of potatoes were processed there, one in five of all Belgian production. Lutosa has 610 staff (440 at Leuze-en-Hainaut, 145 at St-Eloois-Vijve and 25 in its offices and subsidiaries abroad) and in 2004 had a turnover of €167,664,104. 91 % of its production is exported to more than 65 different countries.

Lutosa has state of the art production equipment and its offer is characterised by superior quality and the wide variety of its product range. As well as refrigerated pre-fried chips and its frozen pre-fried chips, Lutosa makes potato flakes and a very wide range of frozen potato products such as Pom'Pin, Croquettes, Hash Browns, Mashed Potato and Tartiflette... These products are sold through both supermarkets and medium-sized retailers, to trade professionals and even to industry.

Electrabel is a member of the leading group of European energy suppliers and is the market leader in the Benelux countries. It took advantage of the opening up of the market in electricity and natural gas to ensure sustainable growth in Europe by observing strict profitability criteria. The company develops its energy products and services offer by taking advantage of the synergy between electricity and natural gas. It gives each of its clients a local quality product, with the support of its commercial subsidiaries and partnerships with local operators.

Electrabel manages diversified production activities of more than 29,000 MW and trades in all the energy markets. In Belgium, it operates electricity and natural gas networks, meeting the demands of distribution network managers.

Electrabel is part of SUEZ, an international industrial and services group which is active in energy and the environment.

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