

Aloxe inaugurates its new recycled PET plastic manufacturing plant in Messein, France

“We founded Aloxe in 2021 with one strong belief”

On November 16, 2023, Aloxe inaugurated its new production facility for recycled PET plastic in Messein (Meurthe-et-Moselle) in the presence of an audience of 150 people made up of politicians, customers, employees and friends. Aloxe's €25 million investment in this new plant provides a practical, tried-and-tested technological solution that responds immediately to the major challenges of reusing and recycling single-use food grade plastic bottles and, more broadly to the environmental transition in France and Europe.



In a mere two years, Aloxe has consolidated and accelerated its industrial development in France by opening the largest recycled PET manufacturing plant in the country, increasing its production capacity from 12.5kt to 50kt. In 2024, Aloxe expects to be independent leader in recycled PET in Europe, with a 120kt capacity in France, Poland and Italy.

Built on an old brownfield land and designed to accommodate four lines, the new Messein site is gradually increasing its capacity with two new Erema Vacunite production lines in operation since September 2023. The old lines from its existing Vézelize facility will be moved to the Messein plant in December 2023. In practical terms, the Messein facility will focus on manufacturing recycled PET pellets through a thermomechanical process. This involves transforming washed mixed PET shreds “flakes”, initially received in “big bags” through sorting and extrusion to produce pellets. The recycling process uses flakes from post-consumer PET pack-

aging as a source of raw material. The PET containers collected have already been used in food packaging. In 2022, over 90% of the flakes purchased come from the European Union, with the majority coming from the Aloxe site in Gdynia, Poland.

The project required an investment of €25 million and the creation of 30 new full-time jobs, as of 2023. The entire workforce at the Vézelize plant (15 km from Messein) was offered the opportunity to transfer to the new factory. This is actively helping to boost employment in the Saintois region, and to re-industrialise the Grand Est region and France in the ecological transition growth industry.

Recycling PET, the only plastic enabling a circular economy for food packaging

Increasing Aloxe's production capacity in France is a major leap forward, given Europe's current production shortfall in recycled PET (rPET). It will help offset the fact that supply

is still insufficient to meet the growing demand from food and cosmetics packaging manufacturers. Currently, installed production capacity in Europe stands at 850kt of food-grade rPET, with demand expected to reach 1.3 million tonnes by 2025.

This increased production capacity will contribute to meeting ambitious French and European targets for a circular economy of single-use plastics used in packaging. Focusing on plastic food-grade bottles, the European Union's Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD) and the decrees implementing France's AGECL law stipulate that, from 2025, PET bottles must contain at least 25% rPET (and 30% from 2030 onwards).

Considering the urgent environmental situation, PET and its recycled version represent a sustainable food packaging solution. In its rigid form (trays, bottles, etc.), PET is currently the only plastic that can be near infinitely recycled, using controlled mechanical recycling processes that are economically viable and use little energy – the production of recycled PET emits 67% less CO₂-equivalent emissions than virgin PET. To date, only 17% of the tonnage of PET bottles on the European market goes back into manufacturing PET bottles.

“We founded Aloxe in 2021 with one strong belief. The real challenge lies in the industrialisation of our production capacity for high-quality recycled PET. We are backed by a supportive legislative framework. While we possess highly effective technical solutions, there is still considerable room for enhancement in terms of the circular economy for plastic bottles.

Only 17% of the tonnage of PET bottles placed on the market goes back into PET bottle production. With this in mind, we set up Aloxe in 2021 with one ambition: to become the leading independent producer of high-quality recycled PET plastic in Europe by 2024," explain Arnaud Piroëlle and Clément Lefebvre, co-founders of Aloxe.

Founded just two years ago, in 2021, Aloxe plans to have seven production sites in Europe by 2025, with 300 employees and a 220 million euros turnover.

Aloxe also has plants in Italy (Presenzano) and Poland (Gdynia and Wąbrzeźno) and aims to continue expanding its operations with state-of-the-art facilities to supply and decarbonise local markets as much as possible by delivering reliable, standardised high-quality plastics. Aloxe currently employs 180 people and has a turnover of €35 million.

"By establishing this fourth European facility, we move a step closer to realising our aspirations and actively contributing to a broader goal – that of a genuinely circular economy and the preservation of our environment," said the two founders.

www.aloxe.one



F.l.t.r.: Ernst Kirchmayer, Project Manager Erema; Sébastien Brunon, Chief Technology Officer Aloxe; Arnaud Piroëlle & Clément Lefebvre Co-Founders of Aloxe; Roland Koch, Application Sales Manager Bottle, Erema, and Christoph Wöss, Business Development Manager, Bottle Recycling at Erema

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