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Vechta, July 2015

French Hospital Warms Up to Biogas Alliance

WELTEC Builds another Plant with Heat Concept in France

Alliances generate benefits for all involved – as in the case of the French heat alliance between an agricultural biogas plant and a psychiatric hospital. The „Méthavigne“ project merits a second glance, especially because society and the environment also benefit from this union of a public institution and a private company. Together with the partner Domaix Energie, the German manufacturer WELTEC BIOPOWER is setting up the heat source, a 255-kW biogas plant, in Mirecourt, Lorraine/France, a town of 6,000.

Besides the farmer and operator Nicolas Jacquot, especially the medical centre („Centre hospitalier Ravenel“) of the Département Vosges benefits from the union. Thus, the communal representatives of the clinic quickly warmed up to the pipeline construction and heat transfer project. „With the exhaust heat from the plant, our institution will be able to cover its entire hot water needs starting from the commissioning in October 2015“, says Hervé Buffe, technical manager of the hospital, expressing his approval. The suitability of the location and the short distance of only one kilometre from the biogas CHP plant convinced Buffe and his colleagues of the cooperation. Thanks to the uninterrupted procurement of green heat, the clinic can save costs and streamline its ecological profile.

When they contacted the medical centre’s representatives, biogas plant operator Nicolas Jacquot and Martin Nippé, Director of Domaix Energie, were aware of the clinic’s ecological orientation. Nowadays, the fulfilment of environmental requirements is a must, and the placement of public orders by the clinic is subject to strict sustainability standards. With their concept, WELTEC and Domaix Energie fulfil these standards. Accordingly, Hervé Buffe gave his OK: „We were immediately fascinated by the idea – simply everything was perfect.“

In addition to the continually reliable heat supply, the sufficient quantity generated by the biogas plant operation was decisive. The plant’s heat offer is so extensive that it covers the entire hot water supply of the medical centre plus the heat needs of the home of the operator’s family of five. Against this backdrop, the contract between the Jacquot family and the clinic was concluded for 10 years.

For the farmer, the business field „energy“ blends in nicely with the overall strategy. After all, the cultivated area of 375 hectares and 850 cattle allow the Jacquot family to produce all the raw materials they need for the energy generation. Starting in autumn, the 2,226-m³ stainless-steel digester will be fed with a feedstock mix of cattle manure, maize silage, crop dust, straw, grass, fruit pomace, flotation grease and food leftovers in the amount of 28 t/day.

The new 60-m³ BIG-Mix dosing feeder serves as input system. The advantage of this system is that it is able to process long-fibre substrates such as solid manure or grass in an energy-saving manner with its individually driven push strips. A vertical mixing screw then passes on the material to the second input level, the MULTIMix, mashes it with liquid manure and introduces it to the digester. After the fermentation process, a CHP plant transforms the biogas to power, which is fed into the public grid, and heat. Moreover, the digestate is stored in a 5,007-m³ stainless-steel tank and can be used on the farmer’s own fields as an effective low-odour fertiliser.



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These technical details were also relevant to hospital technician Hervé Buffe, as the continuous supply and economic reliability depends on these. „This partnership between a public hospital and a private farm is probably one of the first of this type in Lorraine or even in all of France. A key aspect for us is that this concept enables us to cut our total gas consumption by 7 percent“, he emphasises.

Picture/Caption



Starting in autumn, the 2,226-m³ stainless-steel digester will be fed with a feedstock mix of cattle manure, maize silage, crop dust, straw, grass, fruit pomace, flotation grease and food leftovers in the amount of 28 t/day.

[Next Page: Company Portraits](#)



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Company Portraits

In 2015, biogas pioneer **WELTEC BIOPOWER GmbH** celebrated its 14th anniversary. To date, the company has planned and established more than 300 plants. Based on the modern approach of experienced engineers and the expertise of its 80 employees, the company from Vechta, Lower Saxony, offers complete biogas plants from one source and has developed into one of the world's leading providers of biogas plants.

In view of the corroding impact of the hydrogen sulphide and ammonia compounds contained in biogas on un-protected parts, WELTEC builds the fermenters from stainless steel, thereby ensuring a long useful life of the plant. Additionally, the manufacturing depth guarantees a consistently high standard regardless of the location and ensures an export rate that is far above the industry average.

The plants have a modular structure. WELTEC BIOPOWER uses only tried-and-tested system components and develops most of the technologies along the entire value chain internally: fermenter technology, mixing technology, control technology, hygienisation systems and digestate processing solutions have been developed in the company.

With its comprehensive services, WELTEC makes sure that its biogas plants are technically and economically stable. The CHP service guarantees stable output, the biological supervision continually monitors relevant parameters, and systematic repowering makes sure that the biogas plant is always up to date. Operators can choose from a range of different service packages.

One of the main strengths of the medium-sized enterprise is its ability to deliver individual and flexible solutions – from compact plants to large computer-controlled plants in the megawatt range, waste recycling plants and biogas parks with gas processing technology.

Domaix Energie, headquartered in Gundershoffen, was established 2005. Since 2013, Domaix Energie has been run by Martin Nippé as an independent enterprise. As WELTEC sales partner, Martin Nippé has been responsible for the regions of Alsace, Lorraine and Champagne-Ardenne since 2006.

The expertise of the team in the field of biology, biochemistry and engineering makes the medium-sized enterprise a reliable partner in the biogas industry. Under consideration of the respective regional and structural circumstances, Domaix Energie supervises biogas projects from the planning stage to the rollout. The team is especially effective when it comes to questions concerning raw materials and smart heat utilisation concepts. The economic efficiency of the plant operation is always the main focus.

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