

Colombes, March 8th 2010

Arkema to lead research project on « biobased acrylics » in Lorraine region of France

The Lorraine Regional Council has joined forces with Arkema and two university laboratories to back a research program into « biobased acrylics », the challenge of the project being to offer new « green » acrylic acid derivatives and develop a biosourced chemical activity in the Lorraine region.

Christian Collette, Arkema Research & Development Vice President, and Jean-Pierre Masseret, President of the Lorraine Regional Council, today signed a research agreement on « bio-based acrylics » at Arkema's CRDE (*Centre de Recherche et de Développement de l'Est*) R&D Center in Carling.

This joint research program will aim to develop an industrial process for the synthesis of glycerol – a byproduct of the processing of rapeseed into bio-diesel – into acrylic acid*, hitherto produced from propylene, a fossil resource. The eventual objective will be to establish in the Lorraine region an expertise hub in biobased chemistry and in particular glycerol, available in large quantities in the region. The program will represent some €11M expenditure over three years.

« Arkema boasts in Carling unique know-how in France in acrylic processes. On the strength of our long-standing experience in the processing of vegetable raw materials, we therefore had a genuine scientific legitimacy to initiate this program and this « green chemistry » scheme in Lorraine. With this structuring project, we hope to offer to the Carling platform – and the Lorraine region beyond – new prospects, added value and know-how at the service of the chemistry of the future » stated Christian Collette.

Arkema, the program's leader, runs a *Centre de Développement des Procédés* (CDP) within the CRDE which SMEs looking to develop new biobased chemical processes will be able to use as a resource centre without the need for heavy investment. This research project will also capitalize on the expertise in chemical and process engineering and in analysis techniques of two academic laboratories, namely LRGP (*Laboratoire Réactions et Génie des procédés*) at ENSIC chemical engineering school in Nancy, and MOPS (*Laboratoire Matériaux Optiques, Photonique et Système*) at Paul Verlaine university in Metz.

**Acrylic acid is found in very many applications, including paints and coatings, superabsorbents, water treatment, paper, and adhesives.*

A global chemical company, Arkema consists of three businesses: Vinyl Products, Industrial Chemicals, and Performance Products. Arkema reports sales of 4.4 billion euros. Arkema has 13,800 employees in over 40 countries and six research centers located in France, the United States and Japan. With internationally recognized brands, Arkema holds leadership positions in its principal markets.

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