

GEA's factory in Elsdorf sets new standards in pharmaceutical production

- Groundbreaking ceremony for GEA's second "Factory of the Future" covering an area of over 40,000 m² in Elsdorf, Germany
- Construction work meets the highest sustainability standards in line with the company's manufacturing strategy
- All 250 employees from the current location in Hürth to relocate to the new plant
- GEA is investing EUR 80 million to further its growth in the pharmaceutical freeze-drying market
- New factory scheduled to open in the second half of 2025

Düsseldorf, March 22, 2024 – Construction of GEA's new pharmaceutical technology center in Elsdorf, Germany, begins today – setting new industry benchmarks. The machinery and plant manufacturer is investing EUR 80 million in the new freeze-drying systems facility. These systems are used in the production of numerous injectable pharmaceuticals, including vaccines. The new facility is scheduled to open in the second half of 2025.

With people increasingly aware of the major role immunization plays in preventing disease, the market for vaccines is growing rapidly worldwide. In order to meet this rising demand, GEA opted to build a new plant, as capacities at the existing facility in Hürth were nearing their limits. All 250 employees are to relocate to the new plant.

"This investment will open the door to our onward growth as well as improved innovation opportunities in the pharmaceutical sector, which is strategically significant for us. The new plant will enable us to align even more closely with our customers' needs and expand our leading market position," says GEA CEO Stefan Klebert.

Construction starts on GEA's second "Factory of the Future" covering over 40,000 m²

Following the opening of the first factory in Poland in 2022, the second plant of its kind – covering an area of over 40,000 m² – is now being built in Germany.

At Elsdorf, state-of-the-art processes and working methods as well as the associated digitalization are the main focus alongside sustainable construction. Mobile devices coupled with the use of apps for production control and monitoring will help create an ergonomic and attractive workplace for employees. End-to-end document management and digital workflows will ensure efficient and targeted access to company-relevant information. Reliable material tracking will be made possible by the intelligent warehouse management system.

"With modular manufacturing structures and digital technologies that make our production more flexible and faster, we are setting new standards in the GEA network," says GEA COO Johannes Giloth.

New facility meets the highest sustainability standards

“We develop sustainable solutions for the food and pharmaceutical industries to help protect future generations. So we need to reflect this also in our own actions. Ultimately, only an industrial base with a firm focus on sustainability will remain competitive and strong on exports going forward,” adds CEO Stefan Klebert.

This is why the new pharmaceutical technology center is going to be built according to the highest sustainability standards. Power will be generated by the company’s own photovoltaic system. The electricity will be stored in batteries to keep it available for charging electric vehicles, for example. No natural gas will be used. Heat recovered in system test runs can be used to heat and cool the plant.

A green roof will provide protection against hot weather for the building and employees as well as create pleasant air quality. A water retention system and minimum soil sealing will ensure that annual rainfall is used and distributed to optimum effect. Biodiversity at the site will be promoted by the green roof and an ecological compensation area on the property.

A strong signal for Elsdorf as a business location

For the town of Elsdorf, about half an hour’s drive from Hürth in the Rhein-Erft district, the new plant is an important signal of its importance as a business location.

“We warmly welcome GEA to our town and are delighted that the company has chosen Elsdorf. This shows once again how attractive Elsdorf and our region are as a business location. With the construction of the new GEA plant, we are getting a further important boost for structural change, as future-proof and valuable jobs will be located in our town. Our hard work is now bearing further fruit,” says Mayor Andreas Heller.

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About GEA

GEA is one of the world's largest suppliers of systems and components to the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries. The international technology group, founded in 1881, focuses on machinery and plants, as well as advanced process technology, components and comprehensive services. With more than 18,000 employees, the group generated revenues of about EUR 5.4 billion in more than 150 countries in the 2023 fiscal year. GEA plants, processes, components and services enhance the efficiency and sustainability of customer's production. They contribute significantly to the reduction of CO₂ emissions, plastic usage and food waste. In doing so, GEA makes a key contribution toward a sustainable future, in line with the company's purpose: "Engineering for a better world".

GEA is listed on the German MDAX the European STOXX® Europe 600 Index and is among the companies comprising the DAX 50 ESG, MSCI Global Sustainability as well as Dow Jones Sustainability World and Dow Jones Sustainability Europe Indices.