

Far Eastern projects for Spanish technology supplier

While Europe, with the UK and Benelux in particular, being the current destination for most large industrial pellet producers, South East Asia is emerging, not only as a market but also as producer.

One technology supplier that has gained a foothold in the region is the Spanish company Prodesa Medioambiente, a specialist in supplying turn key pellet plants with the option of biomass cogeneration using Organic Rankine Cycle (ORC).

– We have two projects that I can share some details about, said José Ignacio Pedrajas, Business Development Manager, Prodesa North America when asked to give an update into project progress during the recent USIPA conference in Miami, USA.

– We have taken on ambitious challenges in order to meet the demands of the key Asian biomass key markets, particularly in East-

ern Siberia and in Malaysia. It is competitive and we are a long way from home, he said.

Both projects are for pellets that are primarily destined for utility markets emerging in South Korea and Japan.

– There is a trend towards pellet production on a larger scale than before. Not the same scale as here in the US South but nonetheless past the 100 000 tonne annual capacity model of pellet production, commented José.

In Russia the project is a joint effort between Prodesa and Asia Les, a company located in Khabarovsk in the Russian Far East. Asia Les is building an integrated sawmill, biomass combined heat and power (CHP) plant and a 70 000 tonne-per-year pellet plant based on the sawmill residues. Work began late 2013 and the pellet plant is to begin production in spring 2015.

The Malaysian pellet project, “Green Pellet Sarawak” is on Borneo and is a collaboration with



View of the log-yard for the Asia-Les integrated sawmill and pellet plant under construction in Khabarovsk, Russian Far East (photo courtesy Prodesa).

CellMark in Malaysia with assistance from the Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corp. The 120 000 tonne-per-annum capacity plant will use residues from neighbouring wood industries.

– In both cases Prodesa is responsible for developing and executing the projects from engineering to commissioning. All the design of the process engineering and the detailed engineering, manufacturing

and supply of turnkey biomass drying and pelletising facilities from the reception of product in the plant to the electric power generation on one side and the pellets store before its delivery on the other, is being fulfilled by this, ended José Ignacio Pedrajas.

*Text: Alan Sherrard
B175/4619/AS*

Coffee grounds brewing a biofuels stir-up

Home to the global coffee exchange, London, UK is also where two start-up companies are staking a claim on Londoner's spent coffee grounds to convert it to a biofuel instead. Although a tea drinking nation, both Bio-bean Ltd and Beanergi Ltd have identified that over 200 000 tonnes of spent coffee grounds per year arise from London's cafés and instant coffee processing plants.

Different approaches

Bio-Bean is undoubtedly the one that has caught the most media attention. The company says it has patented a closed-loop process to extract the oil content from the grounds, which is then used to produce biodiesel. Once the oil has been extracted the remaining residue is made into pellets. Feedstock supply agreements are reportedly in place from some of the coffee processing plants and a site in North London for a proposed 30 000 tonne per year plant. The company recently landed a EUR



Coffee grounds to biofuels and/or pellets (photo courtesy Bio-Bean).

500 000 cash prize in the Dutch Postcode Lottery Green Challenge during which plans to expand the concept to other regions were revealed.

Beanergi on the otherhand is aiming to produce pellets for a local branded market and busy securing supply contracts with London coffee cafés. The company has already a small pellet production facility in central London, which is currently being upgraded with a larger press line.

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Canfor to build two pellet plants

The Canadian forest industry major, Canfor Corp. has revealed plans to build a pellet plant at two of its British Columbia (BC) sawmill sites, Chetwynd and Fort St. John. Both are to be built and operated in partnership with Pacific Bioenergy Corp.

The combined annual production capacity for the two plants is about 175 000 tonnes of wood pellets, the sale of which is tied to a long term agreement with an undisclosed power utility. The pellet plants are scheduled to commence production in the third and fourth quarters of 2015. The total investment of CA\$58 million will include electrical self-generation capacity of 3MW supported through BC Hydro's Power Smart Load Displacement Program.

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Highland to build first pellet plant

Highland Pellets, a privately held US based development group constructing industrial wood pellet plants in the US Southeast and Upper Midwest regions, has announced that it will build its first facility in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The US\$130 million plant will have a annual production capacity of 500 000 tonnes and is destined for targeting the European utility markets. The company is working with industry partners including a leading forestry company to provide sustainable fiber feedstock and Cooper/Consolidated for the management of the logistics supply chain for export. Groundbreaking is expected to start during the autumn and deliveries from the plant to begin March 2016.

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