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Cargill-DSM JV starts commercial-scale production of EverSweet

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By **Sonali Wankhade** | November 15, 2019



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New fermentation facility to sustainably produce the zero-calorie sweetener

As consumers continue to watch their calorie intake and strive to live a healthier lifestyle, food and beverage manufacturers are in need of great-tasting, zero-calorie sweeteners to help them achieve these goals. To meet this demand, Avansya, the joint venture between Cargill and Royal DSM, has started production at the first commercial-scale fermentation facility for stevia sweeteners in the U.S. The facility is producing EverSweet™, a non-artificial, zero-calorie stevia sweetener.

The $50 million fermentation facility is located in Blair, Nebraska, and is operated by Cargill. It produces highly sought-after, sweet-tasting molecules, such as Reb M and Reb D used to make EverSweet, and gives food and beverage manufacturers an even more scalable, sustainable and low cost-in-use solution than if these molecules were extracted from the stevia leaf. The market for high-intensity sweeteners produced by fermentation is expected to exceed $3 billion by 2025.

Speaking at the opening, Cargill managing director and chairman of the Board of Avansya, Mike Wagner said: "Building this first-of-its-kind, stevia sweetener fermentation facility on the existing Cargill Blair campus reaffirms our pledge to helping food and beverage manufacturers meet the sharply rising consumer demand for great-tasting, zero-calorie products to meet their dietary needs and goals. It also reaffirms our commitment to strengthening the business community and Nebraska as a biotechnology mecca."

"The need for effective solutions for advanced sugar reduction on a global scale has never been clearer or more urgent. With today’s opening, we are showing that, as an industry, we can do more, and faster, to innovate and provide consumers around the world with reduced- and zero-calorie food and beverage products, with no compromise on taste, and so help support good health and well-being in our societies," said Patrick Niels, President of DSM Food Specialties and Avansya Board Member.

EverSweet’s clean taste profile is well-suited for use in products such as yogurt, chocolate milk, soft drinks, ice cream, cereal, bars and confections. Avansya has commercial volumes available and is already supplying EverSweet to various customers. Further consumer products will launch in the coming months across multiple market segments. Over 300 customer trials and

product development projects are currently in progress.

EverSweet is GRAS and FEMA GRAS approved for use in food and beverage products in the U.S. and Mexico and additional regulatory approvals for use in other countries are underway.

The 10,000 square-foot, stevia sweetener fermentation facility at the Blair Campus took approximately 225,000 hours to build and features 6 miles of new piping and 2,000 new instruments, in addition to the fermenters and evaporators that were installed.

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