

Press Release



For immediate release

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£15 million investment announcement at Futamura

Futamura UK, the leading global manufacturer of sustainable cellulose films, commits to further investment in its UK site.

Following significant investment in recent years, in both machinery and site facilities, Futamura announces today a further £15 million project in its Wigton-based site to drive step changes in its sustainability and performance. This noteworthy investment will lead to emission reductions, energy efficiency improvements and a decrease in their product's environmental footprint.

The manufacturer, who employs 270 people and has been based in Wigton for over 90 years, manufactures renewable flexible packaging films that are derived from wood-pulp. Futamura fosters a culture for sustainability and innovation, their NatureFlex™ packaging films being certified for both home and industrial composting at end-of-life to support a reduction in packaging waste.

The new investment will enable a significant step change in the company's drive towards net zero and notably reduce their emissions. The project, internally called WSA will divert waste gasses from the production process to generate a valuable raw material via an oxidation process. Heat generated as a byproduct of the chemical reaction will then be used to generate steam, the main energy utilised in the production process. Once operational, this asset will generate 15% of the total energy requirement of the Futamura site. As a result, the packaging manufacturer will also be able to reduce the amount of natural gas bought from the grid, reducing carbon emissions and improving the footprint of its products.

This project will be the largest investment the Wigton site has undertaken since their Japanese owners purchased the cellulose plant in 2016. Futamura is delighted to confirm that the company has also been awarded a UK government grant of up to £4.5 million through the Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (IETF) to support this project. The grant

from the UK Government showcases the confidence in the site and the benefits this new venture will generate.

The company's managing director Adrian Cave commented: "I don't think in my career, there has been a project that I have been more excited about. At Futamura we are passionate about our NatureFlex™ and Cellophane™ products, and we believe that this also means that we have to continually evolve and utilise greener manufacturing processes, to further reduce our environmental footprint. We are delighted that the IETF energy efficiency grant has resulted in this project coming to fruition. Transformational projects such as this WSA installation invariably are expensive and have a medium to long term payback. We are very grateful for this support."

Markus Campbell-Savours, Member of Parliament for Penrith & Solway, welcomed the news. He said: "I congratulate Futamura on securing this investment, one of the largest grants to be issued in this round of IETF funding. This government is committed to helping industry reduce its energy consumption and this project will enhance the sustainability and future of this 90-year-old business. This is a huge boost to Wigton, and the hundreds of workers employed at the site."



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Note to Editor

Background

Note to Editor: Futamura Chemicals Company Limited is a major producer of plastic and cellulose (NatureFlex™ & Cellophane™) films. Following the acquisition of Innovia Films cellulose business, Futamura has a global footprint with production sites in the UK, USA and Japan. It holds a leading global position in the markets for renewable and compostable packaging films and cellulose casings. Worldwide Futamura employs some 1500 people, with a focus on safety, high quality speciality products, R&D, customer service and ethical, sustainable partnerships.

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