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EANS-News: Lenzing AG / Lenzing Group and smartfiber AG Intensify Their Cooperation

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Joint Ventures/Cooperation/Collaboration

Lenzing (euro adhoc) - Lenzing AG, world market leader for man-made cellulose fibers and the German company smartfiber AG/Rudolstadt are expanding their cooperation. In the future Lenzing will exclusively produce the lyocell specialty fibers smartcel and SeaCell® developed by smartfiber at the Lenzing site in Upper Austria.

In 2007, Lenzing already granted smartfiber a license for the pilot production of new types of lyocell specialty fibers. Moreover, smartfiber and Lenzing have been cooperating for several years to develop fabrics and on various research projects.

For reasons of profitability, the pilot plant of smartfiber is being relocated from Rudolstadt to Lenzing in order to be able to rapidly move ahead with the commercial exploitation of smartcel and SeaCell® fibers in spite of rising energy and raw material prices. The integration of the facility in Lenzing, the world's largest cellulose fiber production site, will enable a significantly better cost structure. Moreover, the smartfiber pilot plant had recently reached its capacity limits due to the continually increasing order volume, which no longer made it possible to optimally coordinate incoming orders and accept large orders. smartfiber will continue to be responsible for the sales and marketing of smartcel and SeaCell®.

The smartcel and SeaCell® fibers are primarily used in home textiles as well as in the fashion and medicine segments. The SeaCell® fibers contain valuable active substances from seaweed which promotes health, nurtures the skin and protects against free radicals. smartcel sensitive is the first antibacterial, natural fiber available on the market to which the essential trace element zinc is added, thus enabling regenerative skin care and hygiene in textiles.

The management of smartfiber considers the intensified cooperation with Lenzing to be an important and future-oriented step for the benefit of customers which comprises a win-win situation for the two companies involved. Thus the high level of competence on the part of Lenzing with respect to the production and processing of lyocell fibers under the brand TENCEL® will be combined with the original and innovative patented technology of the function-oriented fiber products developed by smartfiber. The objective of smartfiber is to be able to offer the best possible quality, service-oriented order processing and intensified sales-driven marketing support to customers in the future.

For Lenzing the launch of pilot production for smartfiber at the Lenzing site is a consistent continuation of the research and development partnership which smartfiber and Lenzing have pursued for years.

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