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AGRANA - Official opening of bioethanol plant in Pischelsdorf

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Wien (euro adhoc) - The AGRANA bioethanol plant in Pischelsdorf|Lower Austria has now been officially opened following a start-up phase spanning several weeks. This facility meets the admixture targets for bioethanol based on locally grown raw materials for the Austrian market. When calculated, taking the entire product life cycle into consideration, the bioethanol produced at the Pischelsdorf plant generates savings in CO2 emissions equivalent to 380,000 tonnes per year.

At the opening ceremony, Environment Minister Josef Pröll highlighted the important role played by the plant in improving Austria's climate balance given that every litre of bioethanol represents a saving of around 50% in terms of CO2 emissions when compared to petrol. In addition, the Pischelsdorf plant can also annually produce up to 190,000 tonnes of the premium quality, protein-rich, animal feed "ActiProt" with which imports of soya-based animal feed can be replaced. "Bioethanol from Austria therefore makes both perfect environmental and economic sense," remarked Pröll at the opening ceremony which was also attended by Ernst Karpfinger, President of the Austrian Beet Growers' Association, the co-owner of the plant, Christian Konrad, General Counsel of Raiffeisen and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of AGRANA, Erwin Hameseder, General Director of Raiffeisenlandesbank and a member of the Supervisory Board of AGRANA, Provincial Member of Parliament, Josef Plank, and the President of the Lower Austrian Chamber of Agriculture and a Member of Parliament, Hermann Schultes.

The Pischelsdorf facility was constructed following the investment of around EUR 125 million and currently employs 69 personnel. Up to 620,000 tonnes of raw materials, mainly wheat, corn and concentrated sugar beet juice, will be processed each year to produce up to 240,000 m³ of bioethanol. The maximum consumption of raw materials will be less than Austria's average export volume of cereals. The Pischelsdorf plant will also replace the import of around 100,000 tonnes of crude oil equivalents and approximately 130,000 tonnes of Austria's soya-based feed imports.

AGRANA's Chief Executive Officer, Johann Marihart: "Our plant in Pischelsdorf largely meets its raw material requirements from Austrian farming land, a proportion of which is former fallow land which, since 2008, can now be re-planted following the suspension of the EU Commission's 10% set-aside scheme. Given a forecast surplus of around 30 million tonnes of cereals in the EU, bioethanol is an important market."

This press release is available online in German and English at www.agrana.com.

end of announcement euro adhoc

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