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Addressing the Expansion in Global Demand Kuraray to Boost EVAL Production Capacity in Europe

February 6, 2015
Kuraray Co., Ltd.

Kuraray Co., Ltd. (Headquarters: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; President: Masaaki Ito; "Kuraray") today announces that it will boost the ethylene vinyl alcohol copolymer (EVOH resin; Kuraray trademark: EVAL) production capacity of EVAL Europe N.V., a wholly owned Kuraray subsidiary located in Antwerp, Belgium. Brief details are as follows.

Background of Capacity Enhancement

- EVAL boasts superior gas barrier properties. Thanks to this feature, EVAL demand is steadily expanding, particularly for food packaging applications that offer better food preservation and for automotive plastic fuel tanks that effectively prevent hydrocarbon emissions.
- Besides, EVAL applications have expanded to include stain proof wallpaper, under-floor heating and vacuum insulation panels for refrigerators.
- Previously, the increase in EVAL demand has been centered primarily in industrialized nations, such as Japan and the United States as well as those in Europe. However, demand is now rising in emerging nations too. To secure a stable supply structure, Kuraray has concluded that it is necessary to boost its EVAL production capacity.

Overview of Capacity Enhancement

Location	EVAL Europe N.V. (Antwerp, Belgium)
Capacity increase	11,000 tons/year
Schedule	Expanded facilities to start operations at the end of 2016
Capital investment	Approx. ¥8.0 billion

Kuraray Group's EVAL Production Capacity (Unit: tons/year)

	Current Capacity	Enhancement	Enhanced Capacity	Location
Kuraray America, Inc.	47,000		47,000	Texas, the United States
EVAL Europe N.V.	24,000	11,000	35,000	Antwerp, Belgium
Kuraray Co., Ltd.	10,000		10,000	Okayama, Japan
Total	81,000	11,000	92,000	

EVAL Europe, N.V.

Company name:	EVAL Europe N.V.
President:	Hiroyuki Shimo
Capital:	€29,747,000 (100% investment by Kuraray Group.)
Employees:	Approx. 120
Business:	Manufacture and sales of EVOH resin in Europe
Location:	Haven 1053, Nieuwe Weg 1 – Bus 10, B-2070 Zwijndrecht (Antwerpen), Belgium

EVAL is Kuraray's trademark for EVOH resin.

- Kuraray was the first to commercialize this high-performance resin, which it launched in 1972. EVAL boasts the highest level of gas barrier properties among all plastics. Kuraray commands an approximately 65% share of the global EVOH resin market.

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