

# Open mindset on both sides characterises our partnership with Indaver



BASF Agricultural Solutions in Zwijnaarde on the outskirts of Ghent is BASF's innovation centre which specialises in plant biotechnology. Researchers develop solutions in the fields of crop protection, crop productivity and improving agricultural crop quality. Specific waste flows are released in the course of the various research and development phases in the laboratories and glasshouses, requiring safe treatment in specialist facilities. The total for the innovation centre and associated sites comes to 240 tonnes per annum.



Delphine Beeckman and Jeroen Auwaerts

It is an absolute necessity for BASF that the entire process, from collection to final treatment, should take place safely and lawfully. Indaver's Total Waste Management (TWM) approach with in-house treatment and full traceability, provides the most comprehensive solution, claim Delphine Beeckman, EMEA Biosafety Manager and Jeroen Auwaerts, Environmental Coordinator.

## Biosafety at the forefront, in our waste management too

"Waste originating from Research & Development and Breeding operations is not commodity waste", explains Mr Auwaerts. "In my environmental coordinator role, I work with my colleagues from the Facility Management team. They are mainly responsible for the operational aspect of waste management; I look after the legislation, inspection, testing and environmental measurements part". Colleague Delphine Beeckman endorses this: "Biosafety is a priority for BASF. New substances are tested in our innovation centre, a process which has an impact on the complexity of the waste. Together with Indaver, we review all characteristics in order to guarantee biosafety at each stage of the chain, from collection to final treatment. In my governance role, I exercise surveillance over all aspects of biosafety and in my operational role, together with the environmental coordinator, I look into how we can inactivate and dispose of our bio-waste as safely as possible. My expertise as a former chair of Belgian Biosafety Professionals (BBP) and membership of EBSA, the European BioSafety Association, are certainly relevant here. I share my knowledge and best practices with colleagues to make sure that we manage our waste as well as possible".

## Our waste in expert hands

"Our waste flows are characterised by their complexity and diversity. In some cases it consists of familiar

substances, in others less commonly-occurring ones. This requires a partner with the expertise to support us with advice and solutions", says Mr Auwaerts. "We want to concentrate on our own core business and want complete outsourcing and a guarantee that we operate in full compliance with all legal requirements". Ms Beeckman backs up Mr Auwaerts: "At BASF, we inactivate a large part of our bio-material such as plants, plant stems, bacteria and moulds ourselves. The remaining biowaste undergoes thermal treatment at high temperature and is converted into energy. Chemicals from our lab equipment and solvents are also processed safely. In order to prevent any potential impact on people and the environment, we want an expert partner who can take responsibility for proper and safe disposal and complete management of our waste. Exchanging information and good cooperation are crucial in achieving this".

to achieve this. Besides, this applies not only to the Indaver project manager who manages our account but also to Indaver's drivers. Within their role, they also contribute ideas as to how we can best approach a number of transport-related issues, which inspires trust" stresses Mr Auwaerts.



## Open communication and solution-oriented

"The partnership with Indaver is characterised by an open mindset on both sides. Everything is open for discussion and we can see that comprehensive records are kept. There is a clear will to find solutions, even in demanding situations" explains Ms Beeckman. "Flexibility and short lines of communication help

## Continuous improvement at the forefront

"Even though we are outsourcing waste management in its entirety, we are still striving jointly with Indaver for improvement" says Mr Auwaerts. "In doing so, we look beyond purely economic optimisation. Accordingly, we evaluate what the best packaging options are for waste; weight, handles and ease of use for our employees also play a part in this". Ms Beeckman adds: Identifying potential issues proactively avoids a great many problems in the longer term. Recent investments by Indaver in the circular economy, such as the Ecluse project in which 6 companies are supplied with steam from the Indaver treatment facilities in the Antwerp port area, illustrate the fact that we are working with a partner who puts sustainability into practice. This is something we benefit from as well".