



HEALING ASPIRIN FOR AN OLD PROBLEM REGION



20 years ago the Bayer Group decided to invest in Bitterfeld: today eight to nine billion tablets roll off the production lines each year.

The new Aspirin comes from Saxony-Anhalt. Bayer Bitterfeld GmbH received a very special gift for its **20th anniversary**. Advanced Aspirin has recently started being produced there. Developed at the location of another subsidiary company in the USA, it now rolls off the production lines in this part of the world. More effective than its predecessor, it is initially intended for the US American market but should also be available in German pharmacies after the corresponding licensing procedures, assured Dr. Christian Schleicher.

The company uses state-of-the-art technology developed by the Bayer scientists to produce this medication, the active agents of which are released particularly quickly. The so-called pro-release procedure is based on a dry granulation. The Aspirin Effect also belongs to the portfolio of the Bitterfeld pharmaceutical producers. Until then, the highly effective agent had come from another company. Two new production lines worth seven million Euros were developed this year to facilitate this expansion of the range. The agent acetylsalicylic acid achieved a healing effect on Saxony-Anhalt's former problem area of Bitterfeld.



In the South of Saxony-Anhalt, Bayer became a "household name" after an impressive decision was made in the group headquarters 20 years ago. At the time the executive board decided to invest in the chemistry location which was over 100 years old, reports Dr. Schleicher. Since then approx. **750 million Euros have been poured into Bitterfeld**. The initial plan was to invest 250 million Euros. Instead of 500 employees, a total of 800 men and women now work in the industrial park today. Since 2005, it has developed gradually. Bayer separated from its water treatment plant, the methyl cellulose production, and spun-off its own varnishing resin plant as a subsidiary of Bayer MaterialScience. All of these companies still work together, using the synergy effects on the large area of 53 hectares.

Bayer Bitterfeld GmbH dominates the scene of what was once one of the most important chemistry locations of the GDR. A part of the industrial sector of the old chemistry plant was turned upside down for the projects. 100,000 cubic metres of contaminated ground which reached a depth of seven metres had to be removed. In addition, freight trains brought 900,000 tons of gravel here, which was used to create the perfect subsoil.

Saxony-Anhalt's Minister of Science and Economic Prof Dr Birgitta Wolff praised the group's dedication in the federal state. It can be proud of the fact that it has made a significant contribution as an investor, location developer, driving force and responsible employer with its start-up, she said. "When Bayer AG decided to construct a new plant designed to the latest standards one year after the German reunification, this triggered the renewal of German chemistry industry. This investment had such a positive impact that many other companies also started up with us." This contributed to the fact that today the region is known to have the highest per capita income in Saxony-Anhalt. The politicians do not want to consider the Bayer company as an extended workbench. For them, innovation is not solely about developing new products but rather how the specialists optimise production and thus achieve high added value.

"The people of the region are our capital", states CEO Dr. Christian Schleicher. Chemistry was their life. He praised the support from authorities and the state government in all investment projects. In his opinion, this is what counts and is what makes the great commitment possible at all.

Since the start of the Aspirin production in Bitterfeld in 1995, the company has now developed into the key location for the manufacture of the pain-killer in Europe. 99 million tablets based on the acetylsalicylic acid in the first year have now become almost nine billion in 2011. The tablets are exported to 55 countries around the world.

Bayer AG is active in the areas of health, nutrition and high-quality materials all across the world. The sub-group Bayer HealthCare, which is based in Leverkusen, achieved a turnover of approx. 16.9 billion Euros in 2010. At the end of last year it had 55,700 employees in more than 100 countries.

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