

## Press release

### **Progroup manufactures the future Successful first year for high-tech corrugated sheetfeeder plant PW13**

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Progroup's corrugated sheetfeeder plant PW13 in Eisfeld started trial operation back in November 2019. Official production began at the end of February 2020. The state-of-the-art plant has since been producing corrugated sheetboard with a capacity of approx. 175,000 tonnes a year in a total space of around 87,000 square metres. The newest of Progroup's eleven corrugated sheetfeeder plants forms an important part of the company's growth strategy and has managed to successfully deal with the challenges that the coronavirus pandemic has presented in its first year of operation.

#### **Reliability of supply guaranteed with continuing market growth even in the midst of coronavirus**

"Growth has always been an important part of Progroup's success story. We are in the fortunate situation that, despite the challenging circumstances which the coronavirus pandemic presents, we continue to grow consistently. Expanding our capacities by adding PW13 was a vital step in allowing us to keep pace with the continuing growth in the market. It means we can reliably cater for our customers' demands for reliable deliveries and excellent quality even in this coronavirus period," says Jürgen Heindl, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Progroup.

Coronavirus has had a significant impact on the level of growth in the paper and packaging industries because of changes in end consumer behaviour. "People are increasingly retreating to their own homes. This has led to an unprecedented boom in the online trade. That is hugely increasing the demand for corrugated board," says Heindl.

He views the fact that production has advanced without any shutdowns despite the corona restrictions this year as a resounding team success: "This year has demonstrated in an impressive way how responsibly and flexibly all the parties involved know how to handle any challenge. Workers observe the strictest hygiene measures. This allows us to live up to our promise to our employees, customers, suppliers and service providers to be a reliable and strong partner for them in any situation."

Ever since Progroup was founded, it has attached great importance to thinking and acting sustainably and with a long-term view. This includes using environmentally friendly and innovative production technologies.

### **Green Hightech and Industry 4.0 for sustainable production and efficient processes**

The Green Hightech strategy that Progroup consistently follows means less use of energy and raw materials as well as lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions coupled with enhanced performance. Integrated in PW13, for example, is a combined heat and power plant which supplies the plant with power, heat and cold. It utilises natural gas particularly effectively as a fuel, thus achieving a high level of efficiency. The advantage: The decentralised supply of heat and power produces power directly on site without any heat losses in transport. This is efficient and reduces energy consumption.

In addition, Progroup is utilising the opportunities presented by digitisation and Industry 4.0: The innovations at the PW13 plant include one of the most state-of-the-art high-bay warehouses with 11,000 storage spaces and three automatic storage and retrieval machines. There is also an IT-controlled flow of goods using electric stacker trucks.

Progroup is also continuing to work to actively shape and champion the future of manufacturing: The production at PW13 is set to have the highest level of automation in the industry. The company relies on production lines which largely run themselves in automatic mode.

### **The PM3 plant is an important part of Progroup's growth strategy**

With PW13 Progroup operates one of the most modern plants anywhere in the industry for manufacturing sustainable and high-quality corrugated sheetboard.

It forms an important part of the "Two Twentyfive" growth strategy: The aim is to double the size of the company by 2025 compared to 2015. As well as PW13, seven more corrugated sheetfeeder plants are set to be constructed and more than 500 new employees recruited.

### **About Progroup**

*Progroup AG, located in Landau in the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, is one of the leading manufacturers of containerboard and corrugated board in Europe. Since it was founded in 1991 in Offenbach/Queich, the company has been pursuing a consistent growth strategy which, in addition to technological leadership, is also based on the use of innovative and environmentally friendly production technologies. Progroup operates production sites in six countries in Central Europe. These currently include three paper factories, eleven corrugated sheetfeeder plants, a logistics company and an RDF power station. With 1,293 employees, the company generated sales of around 887 million euros in 2019.*

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