News

Efico's seabridge logistics green coffee facility opened

September 2010

On September 10, 2010 Efico's new Seabridge Logistics facility in the port of Zeebrugge was inaugurated. Mr Patrick F. Installé, chairman Efico nv – managing director Seabridge nv, welcomed a.o. the representatives of 15 coffee producing countries, collectively responsible for 62.50% of the green coffee production worldwide.

A number of warehousing and logistics organisations are investing in environmentally friendly technology in order to reduce their energy consumptions, and reduce their 'carbon footprint', and, Belgium, is perhaps the most advanced example. The facility recently won an award in the European Green Building Awards. Efico has invested more than €20 million in Seabridge Logistics, which is part of its concept for a 'CO2 compensated green coffee supply chain."

Providing storage capacity for 450,000 coffee bags, the 20,000 sqm warehouse at the heart of the Seabridge concept is an advanced logistics service centre and distribution platform for green coffee that is designed to be as environmentally friendly as possible. The new facility is groundbreaking in many respects, being powered by green energy produced by photovoltaic panels on the roof of the building, and having a range of new technology for automatic reception, sampling, calibration, grading, colour sorting, drying, mixing, debagging/rebagging and storage of green coffee.

A state-of-the-art storage facility with constant regulation of air temperature and humidity, built-in ventilation, air-filtering and sterilization facilities, the new warehouse will also use a unique coding system that tracks and traces coffee at every moment in the coffee supply chain, whilst the strategic position of the facility in Zeebrugge will enable green coffee to be quickly and easily distributed throughout Europe by rail, road and sea.

Such is the effectiveness of the Seabridge concept that the primary energy demand of the building is some 73 per cent lower than the Belgian (Flemish) building code requires. All of the building's energy requirements are met using green energy, and when operating at peak capacity the solar panels are capable of providing 1MW of power, enabling the facility to provide excess electricity to the national grid when it is not required on site.

Efico has also used energy efficient building materials in construction of the new facility, and will use an Energy Measurement System (EMS) to control energy use throughout. Using a unique waste management system, the company will sort and recycle waste to be used as raw materials in other products. A state-of-the-art Warehouse Management System (WMS) will control all of the operations within the facility, increasing inventory accuracy, reducing receiving times, and ensuring product availability.

The WMS will direct and track every stock movement into, out of, and within the warehouse, with all inbound, internal and outbound handling monitored using online stock management with barcode scanners. Using wireless handheld devices, mobile devices or devices installed in forklifts, all barcodes will be scanned quickly and efficiently, enabling full tracking through the warehouse to pallet level.