

Bühler invests in Jakarta cocoa lab



The Bühler group has invested in its new cocoa application lab in Jakarta, Indonesia, to offer customers process trials from cocoa bean to chocolate bar.

As the company explained, after its opening in March, customers are preparing to run the first trials.

Bühler aims to be the preferred local partner for the complete cocoa process chain in Southeast Asia. With the new cocoa application lab Bühler completes its existing chocolate lab. It is now hoped that Bühler Indonesia can offer complete customer trials for cocoa processing, ranging from cocoa beans to cocoa liquor and to the end product, chocolate bars.

"We have shown our customers what we are capable of in terms of research and development right here," said Joachim Essig, head of market segment cocoa.

Tobias Lohmüller, head of business development CF processes, added: "So for our customers there is no need to travel to Europe for trials anymore. The investment raised the interest of top chocolate producers operating in the region. Some customers already placed orders for trials here.

"That clearly shows that we satisfy a customer need with our lab."

According to Bühler, with two service engineers and a consumer food technologist the facility offers not only state-of-the-art machinery, but in-depth expert knowledge. It serves as the regional hub for the complete chocolate process chain from bean to bar.

Bühler introduced the new cocoa lab to key people of the Southeast Asia cocoa industry in mid-March. The cocoa lab grand opening and seminar in Jakarta hosted 55 participants from 20 companies, all of them household names in the industry.

"Facing varying quality of the incoming raw materials, we definitely need to refine our processes as well. We are definitely looking forward to this help from Bühler," commented Ajay Nair, head of manufacturing at Olam Cocoa Asia Pacific.

With a whole cocoa processing line customers can go through all their processes, such as alkalinising, roasting, grinding and pressing of the cocoa liqueur, as well as how to further process the chocolate product for the best indulging experience. Analytical studies then help them to improve their ingredients and recipes.

Furthermore, Bühler uses the lab as a training facility. Local process engineers will support Bühler customers with their expertise and offer various courses for cocoa and chocolate customers.

With the opening of this new application centre, Bühler and GSR strengthened the partnership established in 2015: the GSR hydraulic cocoa press 1/1400 was installed inside the laboratory, in the department dedicated to the cocoa processing process and it completes the small-scale production line offered by Bühler.