

Swiss Spinning Company Hermann Bühler AG with Gratifying Business Course

The Hermann Bühler AG (www.buhler yarn.com) in Winterthur-Sennhof/Kanton Zürich – biggest of the four spinning mills in Switzerland – shows successful business at the company location despite the slowed-up textile economy. Chief Executive Officer/CEO, Dipl. Ing. ETH Martin Kägi, told Textination, that their facility is running 7 times 24 hours per week. Only in the summer holidays the capacity is reduced by 50%.

For 2008 a sales result of more than 40 Mill CHF is expected. In Sennhof are on altogether 55,000 spindels (15,000 of them compact-spindels) around 4,000 t fine yarns with an intersection number of Nm 95/1 being manufactured. Converted into fulltime-job numbers 160 persons are employed there currently. The subsidiary in the USA – Buhler Quality Yarns Corp. in Jefferson/Georgia – produces with 143 workers on 32,000 ring spindels again the same amount p.a., however, with the coarser intersection number NM 68/1.

In the USA the demand is also very high. The company has been able to even profit from the subprime crisis. The uncertain development in the detail trade there has led to the buying decisions being postponed to the last minute. That much higher are therefore the demands on the flexibility of the suppliers – a big advantage for local offerors. And the currently weak US-Dollar is good for the textile industry in the US. Due to the rising share of special yarns strong in the margin they expect at the US-market a slightly rising sales result. For the US-subsiary they expect the sales for the current year to be around 28 Mill USD. Together with the US-subsiary Bühler takes in a leading position as provider of fine yarns

made from extralong staple cotton. Also for yarns from Micro Modal is the company, which was founded 1812, one of the worldwide leading suppliers.

In the beginning, textile machines and components were build, 1958 the spinning mill in Winterthur-Sennhof constructed, which later was extended. Hermann Bühler is owned by three family trees of Böhlers. The enterprise is represented since many years on the Expofil in Paris as exhibitors (twice a year). While the plant Sennhof mostly supplies the European market, the yarn from Jefferson is sold in USA and export markets in the Western hemisphere. Asia is supplied selectively from Sennhof or Jefferson.

Although the Swiss textile company has introduced several new products into the market, its customer structure has not changed much. In the weaving section and the circular knitting section each are around 50% of the Bühler production processed; only the marketing has changed. For the sale of new yarns it is often necessary to skip steps, to convince trade or manufacturer directly. On this path there can also new business be started for the direct yarn customers. Because of rising prices for raw materials Bühler has to raise the yarn-prices in general this year. However, the higher raw materials costs will be compensated in part by the weak US-Dollar, so that the price raise will be moderate.

The family enterprise strives to modernize the machine park constantly, conforming to the demands of the market. This year they invested into the winding department and Schlafhorst-machines of the newest genera-

tion were acquired. In Jefferson will in 2008 a part of the spinning capacity be exchanged for modern Rieter/Schlafhorst spin-winding-machines.

Bühler is processing only American Supima-cotton. This high-quality extralong staple-quality offers big advantages concerning quality and constancy. According to Kägi the markets for raw materials are at the moment in a structural upheaval. Since other agricultural products promise higher output the cotton cultivation is heavily declining, especially in the area of the extralongstaple-cotton (ELS-Baumwolle) Bühler is processing. In the dominating growing areas USA, Egypt and China 40% less are grown than in the year before. The prices for middlestaple-cotton have hardened heavily, and the extralongstaple-cotton will also see rising prices. Synthetic fibers became markedly more expensive, too, due to heavily increased oil prices. Cotton yarns from ELS are nowadays also available from different low-wage-countries.

Besides highest flexibility in delivery is the development and market introduction of new yarn developments for Bühler of crucial importance. With the Rainbow-yarns (www.rainbow-textiles.com) they have been successful to position themselves as innovative yarn suppliers. Further highly interesting innovations will be presented to the public even this year. Due to different coloring-traits of the Rainbow-yarns can designs, worked into the raw product, with garment dyeing be made visible in any desired

color. In garment dyeing color-weaves or melange effects can be attained in products made of 100% cotton, as it was possible so far only with mixtures with polyester. The advantage lies in an enormous flexibility increase. A product can lie in stock and be dyed and delivered just in time – according to demands of the market. The flexibility gain allows the easy manufacture of numerous color versions and a great shortening of delivery periods. When a multicoloredly dyed shirt can be dyed in a ready-made state, the delivery period for a color variant shortens from 3 to 4 months to 1 to 2 weeks. Different customers have taken up Rainbow-yarns into their product line which are available as unicolored- or melange-yarn, and use the new dyeing technology. Due to these successful utilization Bühler expects for the coming months and years a further enormous sales growth of the Rainbow-yarns.

Besides these is there also a big demand for the Organic-yarns. Because of the ELS-cotton used by them, which are biologically grown, they are capable of offering even the finest quality yarns made from Bio-cotton. Even 14 years ago Bühler already delivered the first ton of kbA-cotton yarn. Since then the enterprise has build great knowledge about the purchasing markets and the company has been able to secure a great part of the worldwide production of biologically grown ELS-cotton for their customers.

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