

BENEO increasing global capacity for its prebiotic chicory root fibers

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Guillermo Fernandez, Head of Manufacturing at BENEO in Chile Said, "At BENEO, ensuring reliable and consistent delivery to our customers goes hand in hand with taking steps towards more sustainable and environmentally friendly production processes. This also means that for every investment the highest level of energy efficiency is applied. Therefore, the significant reduction of specific energy consumption at our chicory root fiber plant in Pemuco is an important milestone for us."

Chicory root fibers (inulin and oligofructose) are the only plant-based prebiotics. According to the International Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics (ISAPP), they belong to the very few proven prebiotics. The positive effects of chicory root fibers on bifidobacteria abundance in gut microbiota and on bowel function parameters have recently been demonstrated by a new systematic literature review with meta-analyses, considered the strongest methodology in the hierarchy of scientific evidence. BENEO's prebiotic fibers Orafit® Inulin and Oligofructose are natural, non-GMO and clean label, and can be used in a wide range of food and drink applications.

At its Pemuco plant in Chile, BENEO conducted an analysis of the whole production process to identify any areas where energy efficiency could be improved. Based on these findings, it has upgraded existing processing equipment and invested in new technology, such as new evaporation systems, which not only reduces the energy required, but also ensures energy is used in the most efficient way possible. This investment into new technology also allows for improved process continuation, as it means equipment can be cleaned without interruption of the overall process, which in turn results in further significant energy savings.

BENEO will open a new refinery line in Pemuco, Chile, by the end of this year, leading to a 15% increase of its total chicory root fibres capacity. This will be followed by an additional 15% increase due to be completed next spring, resulting in a total

increase of 30%. While ensuring a secure supply of chicory root fibres, sustainability is kept top of mind for BENEÓ as it aims to further reduce its overall CO₂ emissions.

To deliver a secure supply of chicory root fiber, while also keeping sustainability top of mind, BENEÓ's capacity increase is accompanied by steps that allow it to reduce specific energy consumption by 35%.