

275 years of Lichtenheldt - system-relevant contract manufacturer not only in the corona pandemic

When the process plants at Lichtenheldt GmbH in Wahlstedt are running at full speed, not only the company itself but also the community benefits. Because what is produced here in the heart of Schleswig-Holstein serves a good cause. Lichtenheldt is in a position to deliver what was frighteningly scarce during the current corona pandemic: alcohol-based disinfectant, e.g. for hand disinfection. In public health, it is one of the most important measures to keep the novel coronavirus from spreading. The production of alcoholic disinfectants demands special expertise of the contract manufacturer: production under explosion-protected conditions.

Key role in the corona pandemic

Owing to its key role in the corona crisis, the company was classified as 'system relevant' by the federal state government of Schleswig-Holstein in April 2020. We are proud to be able to make an important contribution to the fight against corona, says Managing Director Andrea Schulz-Ayecke (Fig. 1).

Although the term 'system relevance' may only have been familiar to many since the start of the corona era, the production of products relevant to public health is a thread running through Lichtenheldt's company history. Precisely 275 years ago the company was documented for the first time. It owes its origin to Johann Nicolao, a so-called *Buckelapotheker* or 'humpback pharmacist'. Following the decline of the monasteries, the creator of potions preserved the knowledge of natural healing powers, of resins for example, from which a profession emerged. This was followed by turbulent times and relocation from Thuringia to Wahlstedt, where Lichtenheldt GmbH was launched in November 1948.

The fact that Lichtenheldt can today be regarded as the epitome of a strong SME is thanks to Hans-Joachim Eisele, the father of the current Managing Director. In 1984, although unfamiliar with the industry, but full of entrepreneurial spirit, the businessman recognized the great potential in the somewhat outdated company. Eisele consistently shaped Lichtenheldt into a modern pharmaceutical manufacturer.

The entrepreneur also recognized the importance of high-quality production of medicinal products. Lichtenheldt is rightly proud to be one of the first pharmaceutical manufacturers in the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein to receive GMP certification back in the 1980s.

Wise investment for the future

Currently, Lichtenheldt produces about half of all its products under explosion-protected conditions. Production capacities are at their limits at present. Nevertheless, Lichtenheldt does not want to rest on its laurels with its order books now filled: The company is currently investing five million euros in state-of-the-art infrastructure, including a 5,000-liter Becomix process plant. This also includes a 450 m² major expansion of production - with commissioning planned for the first quarter of 2021. The Becomix plant is the largest at Lichtenheldt to date and is suitable for liquid and semi-solid products even under explosion-protected conditions, explains Managing Director Dr. Torsten Ziegler (Fig. 1), who has been working on Lichtenheldt's future together with Andrea Schulz-Ayecke since 2016.

As of the beginning of July, Lichtenheldt has been making a name for itself in yet another challenging field: The company offers pharmaceutical companies complete serialization and aggregation of medicinal products for the Russian market - another service highly relevant for public health.

Further information:

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**Figure 1: Securing the future as an ongoing task:
Andrea Schulz-Ayecke and Dr. Torsten Ziegler.**