

Indian compounder Welset expands in PVC, masterbatches

By Steve Toloken

PLASTICS NEWS STAFF

Indian compounder Welset Plast Extrusions Ltd. (Booth S20059) is spending 60 crore rupees (\$975,000) to expand capacity in PVC materials for the medical market and general masterbatch compounds, to keep up with market growth.

The company, which has three manufacturing facilities in the city of Silvassa, 125 miles north of Mumbai, will double its vinyl compounding capacity to 37 million pounds per year, according to Arvind Mehta, chairman of Mumbai-based Welset. The expansion is expected to be completed in the next few months.

It's also expanding capacity for its polyethylene masterbatch compounds from 7.9 million pounds per year to 13.2 million pounds, also in Silvassa.

"The market is growing in India as well as outside and our products are approved and well accepted, though it takes quite a long time for evaluation and approval," Mehta said.

At NPE, the company is focusing on PE masterbatches, including color, white, black and additives in the Americas, and will

explore calcium carbonate masterbatches, which it said are accepted in the Indian market.

One hurdle in the U.S., Mehta said, is a 6.5 percent custom duty that the U.S. government places on masterbatch materials "to protect local manufacturers.

"We feel there is very good potential and our products are getting approved at many places," he said. "Our quality and the price are quite competitive."

Mehta said the medical market for PVC continues to grow, defying warnings that it will get smaller because of pressure from environmental and health groups to find other materials for medical applications.

"People say the market will go away, it will go, but it still grows," he said. "The market is expanding. We have good export also, to the Middle East, Africa and the USA."

Some U.S. customers have approved their PVC medical compounds but shipping costs make Welset less competitive, Mehta said.

The company claims to be one of India's largest compounders of medical grade PVC. It has Class 100,000 clean room capacity, and operates a U.S. office, Welset Americas Inc., in Leominster, Mass.



Welset Plast Extrusions Ltd. photo

Welset Plast Extrusions Ltd. is spending 60 crore rupees (\$975,000) to expand capacity in PVC materials for the medical market and general masterbatch compounds.

'The market is growing in India as well as outside and our products are approved and well accepted, though it takes quite a long time for evaluation and approval.'

Arvind Mehta
Welset Plast Extrusions Ltd.

In addition to medical grade tubing and sheet materials, the company also makes grades of thermoplastic elastomer, thermoplastic rubber and thermoplastic olefin compounds, in addition to calcium carbonate, talc

and other fillers.

In February, Welset won a silver medal in the Plastindia Foundation's Plastics awards, for development of medical grade PVC compounds for blood bags, in the category of health care and per-

sonal care.

Mehta is also chairman of the governing council of the Mumbai-based All India Plastics Manufacturers Association and a delegate to the Council of International Plastic Association Directors.