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Deal part of £50m plan

Grangemouth pellet plant Verdo sold to biomass firm

Terry Murden, Editor | August 31, 2017



Stuart Banks, left, with Julien Uhlig, right

Arensis, an international provider of off grid energy generation, has bought the Verdo pellet plant in Grangemouth.

The acquisition, part of a £50 million UK investment plan, gives Arensis a sustainable, carbon-neutral fuel supply for its biomass energy generation.

Arensis provides off-grid, sustainable, carbon neutral energy generation to customers around the world using biomass energy generators from German manufacturer and sister company, Entrade.

With 185 power systems in operation across the country, Arensis currently delivers 85% of all small-scale biomass generation in the UK.

These biomass generators rely on a reliable supply of clean, sustainable fuel. The Verdo pellet plant, purchased from Verdo Renewables, creates more than 60,000 tonnes of wood pellets per year, allowing Arensis to meet growing customer demand.

The pellets produced are high quality – producing up to 15% more energy than some imported pellets – and are entirely renewable, and sourced from local, sustainably grown virgin timber. It is one of the only UK pellet producers to source 100% local materials.

The acquisition is described as an important part of Arensis UK's growth plan, ensuring a reliable supply of renewable fuel.

Arensis will also install 30 Entrade biomass generators at the pellet plant site itself, to power manufacturing operations, reducing the carbon footprint further. It will maintain all jobs at the Verdo plant, and hopes to boost job numbers in the near future.

Stuart Banks, EVP of UK Operations and former Plant Director of the Grangemouth site, said: "By bringing the Verdo pellet plant into Arensis' portfolio, we can streamline the entire process of off-grid energy generation, integrating fuel production, technology deployment, logistics and project management into one sustainable, country level operation."

Julien Uhlig, CEO of Arensis and Entrade, said: "This development is really significant for our business growth in the UK, and for our ability to help UK companies cut their emissions. Verdo's pellets are by far the best we tested in the UK, offering about 20% more energy over imported pellets.

"There is a lot of biomass generation that relies on importing biomass from abroad, undermining sustainability, and compromising efficiency due to pellet deterioration in transit.

"We don't believe in shipping fuel around the world when local resources are available. We are committed to using local, sustainable sources for our biomass, reducing the transport carbon footprint and maintaining local jobs.

"This site meets our needs in terms of production, but also provides particularly reliable feedstocks. This is important because having a good baseline product allows us to carry out better comparative research on new feedstocks, especially waste products which we want to help customers turn into biomass fuel.

"The UK has now become our business and technology testing site."

Arensis also operates a sizeable biomass research institute at the Knowsley Industrial Park near Liverpool.

The company recently installed 32 Entrade biomass conversion units at two UK sites of frozen food company Greenyard, which are estimated to save 10,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year.

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