

Press release

externe betrekkingen

TenCate Grass North America expands

TenCate Grass North America, formerly TC Thiolon, formerly Polyloom, announced a \$12-million expansion last week that will create 25 to 30 new jobs in Dayton. TenCate completed a \$10-million expansion less than two years ago that increased the size of its production facility to 175,000 square feet. Now it plans to finish filling the plant with production lines.

Ian Petrie, manager director of TenCate Grass North America, announced the expansion last week and said three new production lines should be in operation by the end of February in space formerly used for warehousing.

TenCate Grass is the leading manufacturer of polyethylene fiber for synthetic grass in the world, and professional and college football, soccer, baseball, field hockey and rugby teams around the world play on synthetic grass manufactured in Dayton. Petrie said TenCate is already beginning the hiring process. He added that the first production machines should be installed in December, and all three lines should be in full production by April.

The introduction of rounded monofilament grass fibers and the growth of the use of artificial grass in landscaping applications is driving the expansion. "The market for synthetic grass has a very good growth rate," Petrie said. "While we still see very good growth potential in the sports field market, we are seeing much faster growth in landscaping."

Artificial grass is being used in dry states for roadway medians, in commercial landscaping and even for residential lawns.

Petrie estimated the artificial grass industry is growing about 10-15 percent a year, and TenCate has the lion's share of the business.

While about half of TenCate Grass North America's current production capacity is of the older-technology, flat polyethylene fiber, all of the new production lines, and the future of artificial grass, will move more and more to the new, rounded monofilament fiber.

TenCate has invested almost \$40 million in the local plant since it purchased it in 2001. "TenCate believes in the business here," Petrie said.

The NFL's Dallas Cowboys and Baltimore Ravens both play football on TenCate grass manufactured in Dayton, as does the University of Maryland Terrapins' baseball team. The Louisiana Superdome, the Florida State University football practice field and Legion Field in Birmingham, Ala., are just a few of fields sporting new TenCate grass.

TenCate has more than 50 percent of the market for synthetic yarn and more than 60 percent of the market for turf backing. Worldwide, synthetic grass is a \$2-billion a year business, and it's growing rapidly.

TenCate is the oldest textile manufacturer in Holland—more than 300 years old. The corporation posted sales of \$1.1 billion in 2006 through its eight divisions, which manufacture synthetic grass, geosynthetics, industrial fabrics, protective fabrics, outdoor fabrics, aerospace composites and armor composites. T.C. Thiolon began manufacturing synthetic grass in 1968 and now does business in nineteen countries around the world.