
News release

Barry Callebaut AG proposes plant closure in Bussum, Netherlands

Zurich, Switzerland, April 11, 2002 – Barry Callebaut AG is currently in discussions with the Works Council, the Dutch unions and the European Works Council about the proposed closure of its cocoa processing factory in Bussum, Netherlands. The proposed closure would affect approx. 100 employees. The company is striving to limit the consequences of the necessary lay-offs by drawing up a Social Plan in close cooperation with the Unions and the Works Council.

The proposed closure is in line with Barry Callebaut's strategy of reducing its semi-finished business for third-party customers, due to shrinking prices, which requires adjustments in production capacities. Furthermore, to meet the environmental requirements necessary to keep the factory open, high investments would be required. However, such investments cannot be justified given the envisaged capacity reduction of semi-finished products.

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About Barry Callebaut AG:

Annual sales of CHF 2.5 billion in fiscal year 2000/01 make Barry Callebaut the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality cocoa and chocolate products. The company processes 14% of the global cocoa harvest, operates 24 production facilities in 17 countries and employs about 5,000 people. The company is divided into the four strategic business areas Risk Management, Sourcing & Semi-Finished Products (Cocoa & Sourcing), Food Manufacturers (Chocolate for Industrial Clients), Food Service (Gourmet & Specialties) and Consumer Products in select niches and distribution channels.

Its clients range from industrial processors, such as the world famous branded consumer goods manufacturers who produce chocolate, confectionery, biscuits, dairy products, ice cream and breakfast cereals incorporating its products, to artisanal users, including hotels, gastronomy, chocolate makers, pastry chefs and bakers. Barry Callebaut also provides a comprehensive range of services in the fields of product development, processing, training and marketing.

The cocoa processing factory of Bussum has been part of the Barry Callebaut Group since 1996.

The holding company, Barry Callebaut AG, has been listed on the SWX Swiss Exchange since June 1998 (ticker symbol BARN).