

Pigging system ensures efficient processing of ointments

URESH, Biel-Benken, Switzerland, has supplied a bespoke double pigging system to the factory near Rotterdam of Dutch manufacturing pharmacist Tiofarma BV which produces ointments, among other products, for various pharmaceutical companies. The pigging system installed at Tiofarma's filling plant sets new standards, cleaning the pipework in a highly efficient manner. The plant was planned and constructed by URESH together with its partners. The pipes are double-walled and can be heated to provide an optimum processing temperature for the ointment. The system is validated and has been in operation since 2016. Around 350 different batches have been processed to date.

Filling of medical ointments presents significant production challenges. The product must be transported through pipes and filled with zero risk of contamination. Traditionally the lines in a complex process need to be removed, cleaned, sterilised and re-installed before they can be used for the next production batch. The high viscosity of ointments makes the process more difficult. Thorough flushing cannot wash out the residual product mass

from the pipes but the material must be cut out and disposed of as special waste. This is not only very expensive owing to the work involved but also on account of the value of the ointment ingredients.

The new intelligent pigging system provides an enormous improvement for this filling and cleaning process. The double pig runs in a closed system which can also be cleaned with hydrogen peroxide. The URESH pigs are pushed with water through pipes with a diameter of 6.6cm and a total length of 30m to eject the residual ointment from the pipes. Two parallel filling systems are connected. The pig allows the use of most of the 90 litres of ointment mass be left in the pipes. This becomes a significant revenue factor when processing a product costing up to 100,000 Swiss francs per 4m of pipe. The fully automatic system allows Tiofarma to convert its production line for different products in a significantly shorter time. This enables the company to easily produce multiple small batches.

www.uresh.ch



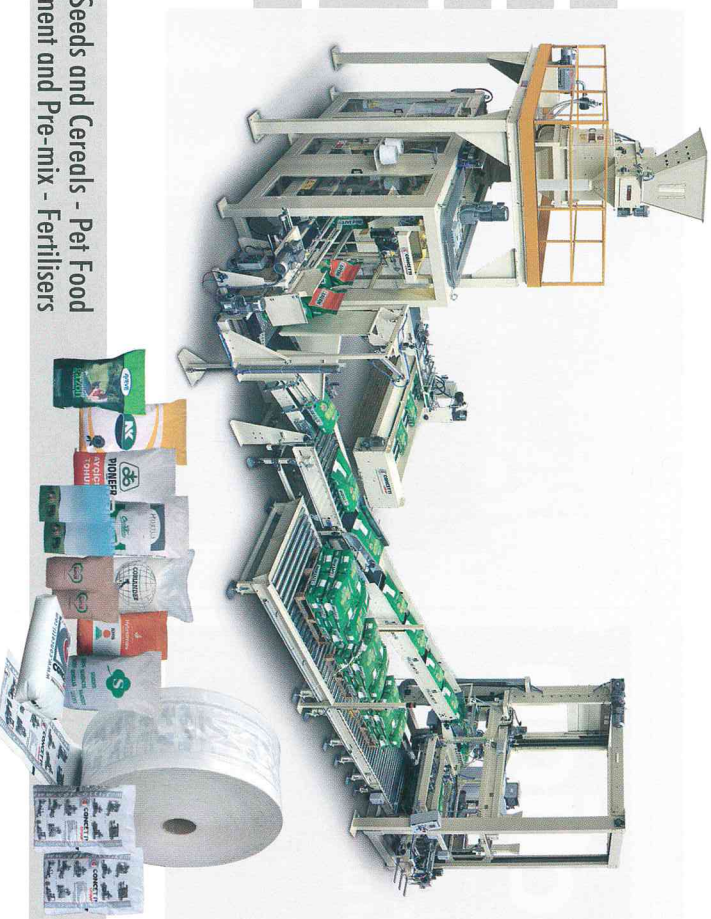
Sending station of the URESH pigging system at Tiofarma.



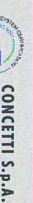
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Germany leads Europe in PET bottle recycling

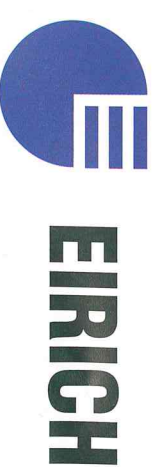
Germany's firmly established recycling system from manufacturing to recycling PET bottles has played a decisive role, placing the German PET market ahead of the EU plastic strategy published earlier in the year. This eliminates the issue of export restrictions applicable to plastic waste via China in PET bottle disposal.

Almost 99% of mandatory PET deposit bottles are collected for recycling in Germany according to a recent study published in 2016 by the German Society for Packaging Market Research (GVM): 93.5% of disposable and reusable bottles collected are recycled – and up to 98% for disposable deposit bottles.

"The disposal bottle deposit in Germany has secured these high quotas," according to Dr. Isabell Schmidt, consultant for environment and sustainability at the IK Industrievereinigung Kunststoffverpackungen based in Bad Homburg.

Recycling takes priority with PET – 34% of the recycled material is processed into new PET bottles according to the GVM study. Other users include the film industry (27%), textile fibre manufacturers (23%) and other applications such as tape and cleaning agent container production (16%). Eighty per cent is recycled within Germany, and the rest is mostly exported to destinations near Germany's borders. PET material exports to China have seen a steady decrease, so restrictions on plastic waste exports from Germany to China only apply to a limited extent in the German PET industry.

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