

Press release

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Water Technologies

Salt Lake Potash trusts Veolia to pave the way for the soluble fertilizer revolution of Australia's sulfate of potash



Veolia Water Technologies will supply HPD® crystallization systems that will produce high-quality sulfate of potash (SOP) fertilizer in the depths of Western Australia's outback.

Perth-based Salt Lake Potash Ltd. is developing the Lake Way potash mining project to produce 245,000 tons per year of SOP (K_2SO_4) from dry salt lake deposits in the Northern Goldfields region of Western Australia. To recover low-cost high-grade SOP, the production uses solar evaporation to concentrate the hypersaline, potassium-rich brines for salt harvesting.

To further process these solids, Veolia will design and supply two HPD® crystallizers: one to grow 32 tons of high-purity potassium sulfate crystals every hour, the other to recycle 54 tons per hour of solids to yield the maximum potassium recovery.

More performance, less risk

As part of this contract, Veolia provided bench-scale testing at Veolia's Phillip J. Stewart Technology center in Plainfield, Illinois (USA). The results validated the feed chemistry, simulated the optimal flowsheet design, and confirmed process performance projections that helped to de-risk the project.

To accelerate this fast-track project and achieve the delivery schedule, Veolia staged the progress to advance the basic engineering and testing simultaneously. These actions not only optimized capital investments but also lowered operating costs through a system design that minimizes fouling and cleaning requirements.

“We are pleased to support Salt Lake Potash in delivering natural fertilizers to a market hungry for specialty potash nutrients. Based on test work which confirmed the process viability our reliable proven crystallizer technology will help the flagship Lake Way project set the industry benchmark in producing high-grade SOP” said Jim Brown, CEO of Veolia Water Technologies Americas.

With its HPD® technologies tailored to growing fully-soluble crystals, Veolia helps global fertilizer producers to optimize their recovery operations and the value of its product portfolio with a focus on enhancing environmental sustainability as well as energy and resource efficiencies.

Fresh produce on the rise

With the rapid growth of a global middle class come shifts in dietary patterns towards more varied fresh food and vegetable consumption. Most of these high-value crops are chloride-intolerant which drives the demand for specialty agricultural inputs such as chloride-free SOP fertilizer. Perhaps more important for fertilizer producers is that these trends, along with a stronger emphasis on sustainable agriculture and its benefits on human health and the environment, offer considerable growth opportunities. In the Asia Pacific region, the demand for premium fertilizers such as SOP is thriving thanks to the expansion of micro-irrigated, green-house grown horticulture, particularly in Australia and China that top the list of countries with the largest harvested area dedicated to certified organic farming.

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Veolia group is the global leader in optimized resource management. With over 171,000 employees worldwide, the Group designs and provides water, waste, and energy management solutions which contribute to the sustainable development of communities and industries. Through its three complementary business activities, Veolia helps to develop access to resources, preserve available resources, and to replenish them.

In 2018, the Veolia group supplied 95 million people with drinking water and 63 million people with wastewater service, produced nearly 56 million megawatt-hours of energy and converted 49 million metric tons of waste into new materials and energy. Veolia Environnement (*listed on Paris Euronext: VIE*) recorded consolidated revenue of USD 30.6 billion in 2018.

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