

Press Release

Global tree planting campaign for Freudenberg Group's 170-year anniversary

Over 20,000 trees planted around the world

Weinheim, December 12, 2019 “170 Years of Freudenberg - 170 trees near every site”: The campaign celebrates the Freudenberg Group's 170-year anniversary. Not a reason for the company to celebrate its anniversary, but a good reason for it to give something back to the communities where it does business. And this has a long tradition at Freudenberg. One hundred and fifty trees were planted to mark the company's 150-year anniversary. At the start of 2019, the Freudenberg Group Board of Management invited all company sites to plant 170 trees in their region. Each tree stands for one year of company history. The campaign reforested devastated woodlands, made city parks greener and company sites more attractive.

Some 2,500 employees and their family members around the world took part in the tree-planting campaign and planted more than 20,000 trees. Up to now, 100 campaigns have been held. Several sites used their national Arbor Day celebrations as the occasion for the anniversary campaign. For example, 170 trees were planted at four sites on April 25, Arbor Day, in the USA.

Tree plantings were held in Europe and Asia, along with the USA. Employees from China, Vietnam, Thailand, India, Korea and Japan also actively took part in the campaign. “The 170 trees signify both the company's long history and are also a symbol of Freudenberg's corporate citizenship,” said Bettina Schön, Freudenberg Regional Representative in Asia.

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In addition, many of the campaigns have local benefits. In Japan, Freudenberg Chemical Specialities employees planted 170 trees, to lessen the impact of tsunamis, typhoons or heavy rains. EagleBurgmann employees in Wolfratshausen, Germany used their plantings to secure a slope that will help protect residents, walkers and adjacent buildings from earth slides. The goal will only be achieved after many years but underlines the idea behind the global initiative: The trees planted in 2019 fulfill a long-term purpose and will benefit future generations.

In keeping with this idea, campaigns are also planned as follow-up stories: In the Thai province of Chonburi, employees from Freudenberg Filtration Technologies, Freudenberg Chemical Specialities and Vibracoustic did more than just plant 170 mangrove trees in the Klongtamru Mangrove Forest Conservation and Learning Center, they also donated money to protect the local mangrove forest. And more: In the future, they will take responsibility in caring for the trees they have planted.

Over 600 trees were planted in Lerma, Mexico. “We will continue to look after the planted area to achieve real, long-term effects, says Dagoberto Sanchez Martinez, SEO in Lerma. “The campaign is intended to make a statement and show that a team can make a difference. On our own, things could be done a bit faster, but we can only progress together.”

Numerous seedlings were planted in Bethlehem, New Hampshire, USA, where they will help reforest a burnt down farm. In Kapakli, Turkey, employees from six Business Groups planted over 1400 trees together.

Tree planting campaign in Weinheim

At the Group headquarters in Weinheim, trees were planted in the Weinheim Industrial Park and in the fruit orchards surrounding the Freudenberg Winery in Muckensturm. Orchards are a typical part of the cultivated landscape throughout the Bergstraße Region. “Fall is the best time to plant fruit trees.

Recent rains were important to the winter moisture,” says Georg Bielig, head of the Winery. Under expert guidance from him and his team, the Freudenberg employees planted fruit trees that were up to two meters tall, including mirabelle plum, apple, pear and plum trees. “Once the trees bear fruit, they will then be used to expand the product range in our distillery,” says Bielig. This can be as soon as three years for the apple trees planted at the site.

Employees were filled with enthusiasm: “I am happy to help the environment. I am doing this for my grandchildren. The fruit trees we are planting today, will last for decades,” says Jürgen Brückman, who works for the Freudenberg Sealing Technologies Business Group. Marion Schiem, who works for the Carl Freudenberg support fund is also happy to help: “I have worked at Freudenberg for 35 years and feel a strong commitment to the company. Today, I feel like I am immortalizing a piece of me for the future. I also think it is a great team experience, picking up a shovel and getting down to work with all these other employees.”

About the Freudenberg Group

Freudenberg is a global technology group that strengthens its customers and society long-term through forward-looking innovations. Together with its partners, customers and research institutions, the Freudenberg Group develops leading-edge technologies and excellent products and services for more than 40 markets and for thousands of applications: seals, vibration control components, technical textiles, filters, specialty chemicals, medical products, and the most modern cleaning products.

Strength of innovation, strong customer orientation, diversity, and team spirit are the cornerstones of the Group. The 170-year-old company holds strong to its core values: a commitment to excellence, reliability and pro-active, responsible action.

In 2018, the Freudenberg Group employed approximately 49,000 people in some 60 countries worldwide and generated sales of more than €9.4 billion. For more information, please visit www.freudenberg.com