

Praj-Aker JV bags UK biofuel project

Bureau

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British Petroleum (BP), Associated British Foods Plc (ABF) and DuPont are coming together to set up a greenfield bio-ethanol plant in the UK. To execute the front-end engineering and design, the group has selected Aker Kvaerner. Aker Kvaerner's JV partner, Praj Industries, will provide the technology and process packages.

BP and ABF subsidiary, British Sugar Plc, will each own 45% while DuPont will hold 10% in the new facility planned at BP's site at Saltend, near Hull. The world-scale wheat-ethanol plant will produce some 420 million litre of fuel ethanol annually. Using bio-ethanol technology provided by Praj Industries, the plant will seek to utilise locally grown wheat as feedstock to

produce ethanol. This contract follows the successful completion of a feasibility study for the complex by Aker Kvaerner and Praj in December 2006.

Aker Kvaerner and Praj, have set up a JV, BioEnergy Europa BV, to offer European customers access to customised solutions for biofuel projects. Praj holds 60%, while Aker Kvaerner holds 40% in BioEnergy.

"This is a very good start for the Aker Kvaerner and Praj JV in Europe and this is a very distinguished opportunity for Praj to supply technology to one of the largest plants to be set up in the UK," said Pramod Chaudhari, chairman Praj Industries.

Work on the preparatory phase of the project begins immediately and should be completed by the end of 2007. Construction of the plant is to commence in 2008, with com-

missioning and start-up scheduled for late 2009. "BP is already a leading and very committed firm in the biofuel market, and we see this new facility as a very important milestone, as we move towards the 2010 Renewable Fuel Obligation," Phil New, head, BP Biofuels, said.

"Aker Kvaerner's engineering capability combined with the technology expertise of Praj, offers an integrated and customised solution to our requirements," New added.

Aker Kvaerner has for long been BP's engineering partner at the Hull site — which is the largest producer of acetic acid