

Hultsfred extension – let's get started!

Hultsfred is heading towards home stretch with its extension project (see also OnBoard September): Within a first step – called Project P 600, phase 1 – the wood processing and machinery equipment will be replaced – start is December 9th. In a second step, phase 2, the set-up of the energy system will be changed during 2011. Both activities will lead to an increase in production capacity by 50% up to 600.000 m³ per year.

“The majority of the new equipment has been delivered and is now waiting for installation – we are ready to start with Project P 600”, said Inger Nordänger, Managing Director of Swedspan Sweden. The following work will be done:

- New glue blender for core material
- Upgrade of two forming stations to increase the light-weight production
- Extension of the press by 4.50 metres, which represents 13% of the entire press length
- Installation of two new cooling wheels, which will give the Hultsfred plant 5 cooling wheels to ensure accurate board temperature
- Extension of the Lukki storage up to a capacity 2,000 m³ of particle boards.

The installation work last from December 9th until January 5th and requires a full production stop. Approximately 100 mechanics and 20 electricians will work 24/7 (exceptions Christmas and New Year) to make sure that the project time schedule is kept.

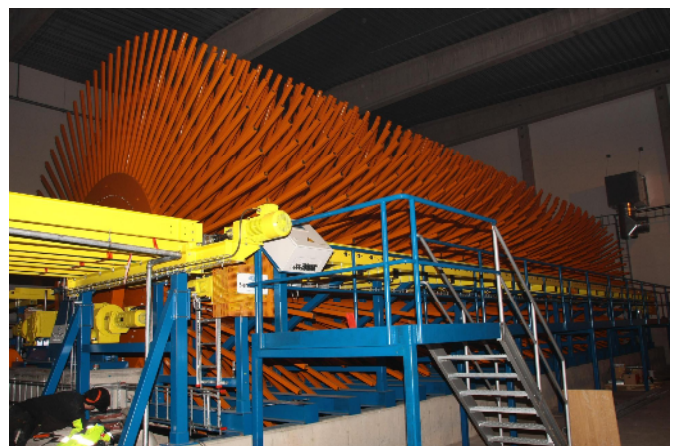
The two new cooling wheels are installed but not started. A 25 meter extension of the already huge press hall was necessary to house them.

Furthermore, the Cut to Size (CTS) and packing lines needs to be upgraded on a larger scale as it is the bottleneck of the entire production scheme at the moment. The new lines are already ordered and will be installed in April 2011. The completion of Project P 600, phase 1, will be done by May 2011.

Phase 2 – Energy Update

In a second phase (overall timing is not finally fixed yet but planned to be finished by winter 2011) a new dryer will be installed as well as several updates regarding the overall energy concept.

Phases 1 and 2 will make the Hultsfred plant “greener” and more efficient as well as providing a significant capacity rise.



A view on the cooling wheels already installed.

The Hultsfred plant updates will be finalized in a second phase during 2011, which will focus on the energy system of the plant as the current dryer in Hultsfred does not provide the needed capacity. Therefore Swedspan Sweden will install a second dryer with an energy plant.

Swedspan Sweden and its extension project

Swedspan Sweden is located in Hultsfred, Småland, and some 300 km south west of the Swedish capital Stockholm. The former Swedwood plant was built in 1972 and renovated in 2003; since 2009 it is part of the Swedspan Group. Today, some 120 co-workers produce approximately 400,000 m³ of particle boards that are delivered mainly to the IKEA flatline producers in Scandinavia. The extension to an annual production capacity of 600,000 m³ will strengthen the position of Swedspan as the supplier for the Scandinavian flat line furniture producers.

The energy plant will provide hot gas needed for the dryer, but also thermal oil for the press, steam, warm water and comfort heating for the entire plant. The plant will be fuelled with bio fuel making any fossil fuel obsolete. Furthermore, Swedspan Sweden will install a new WESP for cleaning the hot gases after the dryer.

“Having completed the Hultsfred extension, our Swedish plant should be one of the most efficient plants of all Swedspan operations”, summarizes Christian Schwarz, CEO of the Swedspan Group: “The new technologies and upgrades will not only ensure an efficient and high-performing production process, they will also support the steady improvement of our board properties and the reduction of the ecological footprint.”

A new generation of light-weight particle boards

Creating innovative light-weight boards is one of the main pillars of Swedspan’s product strategy. This also covers new approaches for the well established product group of particle boards: Currently Swedspan is making huge efforts to realize a new concept called COLIGHT board – this covers research and development efforts for the new board itself as well as efforts in optimizing the production equipment.

The new board will provide weight reductions of round about 30%. “A standardized particle board has a density of 640 kg/ m³, Swedspan is striving for creating an innovative board that offers a density between 420 and 450 kg/ m³”, describes Janis Lencevics, Project Leader and Matthias Gruchot, R&D Responsible for the COLIGHT, at Swedspan International. “When achieving this product specifics, Swedspan will reduce the consumption of wood and glue by approximately 30 % – these are the most relevant cost drivers when producing particle boards. Taking an average plant with an annual production capacity of 300,000 m³ into account, COLIGHT boards would result in savings of more than 50,000 tons of wood per year.” Furthermore, the reduced glue will provide an additional positive effect to the costs-savings in energy.

When creating a new innovative board such COLIGHT, a redesign of the production equipment and processes needs to be done – starting with the chipping and looking at the front-end system including the mat forming line as well as at the press. For Swedspan it is crucial to have the best possible technological set-up in

order to produce light-weight boards of high quality at competitive prices for their customers.

Innovative light-weight boards from Swedspan combine less weight with competitive prices and quality. This offers Swedwood and other IKEA suppliers the opportunity to create light weight furniture applications – the benefits are:

- Easy to handle products, causing less efforts in transport and storing
- Cost efficiency regarding raw material and energy consumption
- A reduced ecological footprint
- Lower prices for the consumers