

Mossel Bay factory goes drought-friendly by extracting water from cow's milk

Nestlé South Africa has transformed its Mossel Bay dairy factory into a "zero water" manufacturing site. Over the past six years, the company has installed new water recovery, treatment and recycling technology at the factory which will enable it to re-use and recycle water from its dairy operations.



Water and Sanitation Minister Gugile Nkwinti (right) on a tour of the Mossel Bay factory.

Between 2008 and 2010, the Mossel Bay Municipality and surrounding areas experienced one of its worst droughts in recorded history. The region was subsequently declared a disaster area and municipal water-use restrictions had to be put in place. In supporting the town's efforts to manage this crisis and ensure efficient water usage, Nestlé introduced a water saving initiative at its Mossel Bay factory.

Through this initiative, Nestlé says it will be able to reduce the factory's water consumption by more than 50% during the first year of implementation, by simply re-using the water recovered from the milk evaporation process. Nestlé's vision for this initiative, which is known as Project ZerEau, is to become a zero water intake facility by means of reusing milk water.

The factory processes fresh cow's milk, normally containing around 88% water, through an evaporation process. The evaporated water is captured and treated and used to various applications within the facility eliminating the need for municipal water intake for these processes.

The Mossel Bay factory produces milk products such as Nespray, Nido, Klim, condensed and culinary milks.

Remy Ejél, Nestlé South Africa's chairman and managing director, comments: "Project ZerEau is a perfect example of our commitment to enhancing quality of life and contributing to a healthier future of individuals, communities and the planet. This project will have a positive impact on the treatment, recycling, conservation and water use efficiencies in our Mossel Bay factory. It will also link our business directly with local dairy farmers, suppliers, local government and the broader Mossel Bay community."

The manufacturing site was inaugurated by Minister of Water and Sanitation Gugile Nkwinti earlier this month.

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