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Danone factory given Lighthouse Award by World Economic Forum for digital transformation

- Factory in Poland has been designated as an Advanced Fourth Industrial Revolution Lighthouse by the World Economic Forum for adopting advanced technologies at scale
- More than 20 new technologies from pioneering site rolled out Europe-wide

Danone today announces that its factory in Poland has been designated as an Advanced Fourth Industrial Revolution Lighthouse by the World Economic Forum for its digital transformation. The factory is among 11 others from across the world to join the Global Lighthouse Network today.

The World Economic Forum judges praised the factory, which manufactures baby food and baby formula, for adopting Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies, such as robotics and artificial intelligence, at scale.

The factory in Opole, a town in the south of Poland, has been central to Danone's Digital Manufacturing Acceleration (DMA) programme, which aims to test and implement new use cases for digital technology. Opole is Danone's lighthouse factory for the programme, where the company pilots and tests new technology, incorporating learnings from other Danone plants, before rolling it out to manufacturing sites across the world.

So far, the programme has introduced more than 20 digital solutions to 39 Danone factories across Europe to increase productivity and efficiency across all categories that the company manufactures. Opole itself has seen a 19% reduction in manufacturing costs between 2019 and 2021, and efficiency gains of 12%.

Alongside this, the factory has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 50% and cut its energy consumption by 23%, by combining energy and production data to improve energy efficiency. Other sustainability initiatives include reducing water usage by 25%.

To implement the transformation, a comprehensive digital training programme has seen 100% of Opole's workforce being trained in new processes and ways of working, including 20 employees who can now code their own Robotic Process Automation robots. It has helped create more skilled jobs for the local community, with the introduction of a dedicated digital team.

Vikram Agarwal, Chief Operations Officer at Danone, commented: “Our operations team is full of talented people who have great passion for what they do. They are experts in ensuring that our brands and products are delivered from fields and factories into the hands of consumers around the world. Danone’s pioneering Digital Manufacturing Programme aims to drive flexibility for our customers, deliver high-quality products to the market, reduce wastage in our supply chain and drive efficiencies in our factories, with sustainability at its heart. In line with our plan, Renew Danone, to create sustainable and competitive growth, we have even more ambitious plans for digitalizing the operations network.”

Giovanni Pacini, Global Manufacturing Excellence & Digital Operations Transformation Director, said: “Since its launch in January 2021, the Digital Manufacturing Acceleration programme has helped us to constantly innovate to find better ways to do things, helping us become more efficient and sustainable. The technologies that we have identified and implemented have had a real impact at Opole and to our operations across Europe.”

Some of the exciting new technologies tested and implemented at Opole include:

- The introduction of AI in the factory’s drum dryer, which is used to prepare the raw materials for cereals-based weaning food.
- Using machine learning, the equipment can optimise the settings based on real-time data. This has helped ensure process stability, reduce wastage, and reduce energy consumption by 40%.
- The utilisation of connected operators’ applications, to receive real time information on the efficiency of the production lines and instruction and open calls for help to the peer community and the factory management.
- The total automation of the Quality Lab, which, ensures more accurate results, guarantees high food safety and quality standards and increases the lab’s capacity.

About Danone (www.danone.com)

Danone is a leading global food and beverage company operating in three health-focused, fast-growing and on-trend categories: Essential Dairy & Plant-Based products, Waters and Specialized Nutrition. With a long-standing mission of bringing health through food to as many people as possible, Danone aims to inspire healthier and more sustainable eating and drinking practices while committing to achieve measurable nutritional, social, societal and environment impact. Danone has defined its Renew strategy to restore growth, competitiveness, and value creation for the long-term. With 100,000 employees, and products sold in over 120 markets, Danone generated €24.2 billion in sales in 2021. Danone’s portfolio includes leading international brands (Actimel, Activia, Alpro, Aptamil, Danette, Danio, Danonino, evian, Nutricia, Nutrilon, Volvic, among others) as well as strong local and regional brands (including Aqua, Blédina, Bonafont, Cow & Gate, Mizone, Oikos and Silk). Listed on Euronext Paris and present on the OTCQX market via an ADR (American Depositary Receipt) program, Danone is a component stock of leading sustainability indexes including the ones managed by Vigeo Eiris and Sustainalytics, as well as the Ethibel Sustainability Index, the MSCI ESG Indexes, the FTSE4Good Index Series, Bloomberg Gender Equality Index, and the Access to Nutrition Index. By 2025, Danone aims to become one of the first multinational companies to obtain global B Corp™ certification.