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Industry makes switch to hydrogen

Well-known brand-owners Pepsico, Heinz, Kelloggs, Essity and Novelis have been selected for funding by Government to review the feasibility of switching their North West plants to run on hydrogen.

As part of this process, each site will design projects to demonstrate how hydrogen can be used to fuel their processes. The next phase of the programme, run by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), will fund the physical hydrogen demonstrations – in which the sites are run on hydrogen.

The programme, named 'HyNet Industrial Fuel Switching', will provide evidence to enable major manufacturing sites to switch to low carbon hydrogen from HyNet, enabling decarbonisation of a range of industry sectors, making a critical contribution to the UK's journey to Net Zero.

HyNet is the UK's leading industrial decarbonisation project and has been fast-tracked by Government to begin operation in the mid-2020s. Low carbon hydrogen, generated by Vertex Hydrogen, will be supplied to the UK's first 100% hydrogen pipeline network, being developed by Cadent Gas, to distribute low carbon hydrogen to industry across the North West.

HyNet is supporting industry across the glass, food and drink, paper, chemicals, automotive and metals sectors to enable switching from fossil gases to low carbon hydrogen.

Adam Baddeley, Head of Industrial Hydrogen at Progressive Energy, said:

"These demonstrations will show how hydrogen can power the production of food, toilet roll and even the production of aluminum. We are very excited to see Walkers Crisps, Monster Munch, Coco Pops, Rice Krispies, Heinz Baked Beans, Spaghetti Hoops and Cushelle toilet paper manufactured using just hydrogen.

"HyNet is fully focused on providing a route for industry to decarbonise. And by starting to produce 'home-grown' low carbon hydrogen in the mid-2020s, this reality isn't far away. HyNet will not only substantially reduce the level of carbon dioxide emissions entering our atmosphere but will kick-start a low carbon hydrogen economy across the North West and North East Wales".

These new demonstrations will follow two recent successful associated HyNet projects in the last 12 months, which used hydrogen to displace fossil gas in a live production environment at Pilkington Glass and Unilever, both in the North West, to make sheet glass for windows and screens, as well as Tresemme shampoo and Persil.