

ExxonMobil begins export of Mont Belvieu, Texas produced polyethylene

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Linear low density polyethylene produced at ExxonMobil's Mont Belvieu, Texas, plant has been heard heading into the European market, according to multiple industry sources.

"[An] Exxon ship is on way [to Europe] with [butene] linear low density polyethylene" said a source Wednesday.

ExxonMobil was not immediately available for comment.

Earlier this month Exxon announced the startup of the first of two 650,000 mt/year polyethylene units at its Mont Belvieu plastics plant.

The announcement came off the back of the planned expansion of the site which included increasing the plant's polyethylene capacity by 1.3 million mt/year to 2.5 million mt/year making it one of the largest polyethylene plants in the world.

"A significant portion of Mont Belvieu polyethylene will be exported from the port of Houston. At peak, the site will ship more than 200 containers a day," the company said in a statement.

"Exxon are marketing [LLDPE] product and we are trialing [the material] for next year," said a European buyer Wednesday.

European Union imports of linear low density polyethylene in January-August rose 9% on the year to 753,987 mt, according to Eurostat data released earlier this month.

LLDPE imports averaged 94,248 mt/month in the first eight months of 2017 compared with 86,570 mt/month a year earlier.

European linear low density polyethylene spot prices were assessed Tuesday at Eur1,220/mt FD NWE.