BASF in North America

HELPING MAKE PRODUCTS BETTER™

BASF
Helping make products better... it defines our business, guides our research, draws on our manufacturing, and strengthens our ties to communities and customers in North America.

BASF is known for “Helping make the products you buy better.” That’s because many of the goods you purchase – and which we outline in this brochure – derive their unique qualities and features from our products based on chemistry. In fact, without chemistry, many important products, such as computers and medical equipment, wouldn’t even exist.

At BASF, however, “helping make products better” is a commitment we take a step further. How? By searching for innovative materials and processes, so that we continually make the products and services we offer you better. For example, in automobiles, we go beyond producing the coatings that make cars more colorful, and team up with automotive makers to develop innovative coatings that are more durable and environmentally friendly.

Developing innovative products involves challenges, especially in chemistry, a complex science. Handling the complexities of chemical manufacturing is key to helping make your products better. At BASF, we do this by bundling our production in elaborate networks we call “Verbund,” a German word meaning integrated. At our large Verbund sites in North America, BASF strives to get the most out of the raw materials and energy we use to deliver consistently high-quality products to our customers in North America.

As a major chemical manufacturer in North America, our commitment extends beyond our customers to the communities we operate in. That’s why helping make products better means making products safe, which we do by carrying out rigorous environmental audits and reviewing the environmental impacts of our products. As part of that commitment, we also help our employees help make their communities better, by supporting their volunteer and charitable activities.

Helping make products better... it defines our business, guides our research, draws on our manufacturing, and strengthens our ties to communities and customers in North America. I am one of thousands of BASF Corporation employees who come to work every day with one overriding thought driving my actions – how can I help make it better? Read on to see how we do it.

Klaus Peter Löbbe
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
BASF Corporation
We help make day-to-day life healthier, more convenient, and more enjoyable

It’s nice when you get a hand with the grocery shopping. BASF is also there to help out in your kitchen. Our vitamins make the food you buy healthier, while our plastics and insulation in your refrigerator help that food stay fresher, longer. Throughout your kitchen and in the rest of your home, BASF’s products help make everything – from the paint on the wall to the hardwood floor – better.

Many foods are fortified with BASF vitamins, such as vitamins A and D in milk and margarine, vitamin C in orange juice, and the B vitamins found in energy drinks, breakfast cereals and baked goods. BASF’s animal nutrition products, such as enzymes and amino acids, also improve the quality of meat and eggs. And to prevent that food from spoiling or being damaged, packaging made of BASF polystyrene and polyurethane foam provide protection.

BASF’s plastics and coatings help refrigerators and other appliances perform and look better. Terturan® MABS, a transparent styrenic copolymer, is ideal for vegetable drawers, while our Terturan® ABS is designed for injection molded components such as shelf edges and butter dish compartments. Our polyurethane insulation helps keep refrigerators cool, while our high-impact polystyrene in refrigerator walls, floors, ceilings and doors makes household appliances sturdier. The finishing touch – our industrial coatings, which give appliances their extra appeal and durability.

BASF’s performance chemicals make countertops strong by tightly binding layers together and making surfaces tougher. We even supply the surfactants in the cleansers that help keep countertops spotless. In cupboards, our performance chemicals help our coatings wet better, which reduces surface imperfections in wood. Our coatings and pigments also help bring out a wood’s rich tone, making it scratch and stain resistant, while our dyes and UV stabilizers help prevent wood from fading in the sun.

BASF’s clear coat wood stains give hardwood floors their high gloss, making the floor space in your kitchen more functional and inviting. Whether it’s the adhesives under your floor tiling, your wall-to-wall carpeting, the performance chemicals in your interior paint, or the pigments on your roof shingles, BASF helps you build a better home.
We help make cars cleaner, more colorful, and more comfortable

Finding the right antique requires an eye for detail – for the quality of the wood, for the consistency of the finish, for the superior craftsmanship reflected in the design. When it comes to cars, it’s the same. People expect their cars to look beautiful, feel luxurious and run smoothly. In hundreds of automobile makes and models, from bumper to bumper, under the hood, inside and out, BASF helps make cars better.

As one of the largest suppliers of automotive coatings worldwide, BASF continually works on making its coatings more vivid, weatherproof and environmentally friendly. BASF electrocoats, primers, basecoats and clearcoats lend vehicles their brilliant color. Together they form an extremely thin skin – no thicker than a human hair – which protects sensitive sheet metal and other composites from the elements. BASF offers paints with built-in environmental protection, such as its water-based coatings and its Glasurit® and R-M® brands for refinishing vehicles.

Under the hood, electrical connectors made of dimensionally stable Ultradur® plastic retain their shape and are more resistant to heat aging. BASF Ultradur® nylon makes engine covers and air intake manifolds not only better performing, but also more chemical and heat resistant. As for the engines, they can burn cleaner fuel thanks to BASF’s fuel additives.

Step inside, and BASF polyurethanes can be found everywhere from the steering wheel, instrument panels, and dashboards to the seat cushions. These specialty plastics are used to produce a wide spectrum of rigid, flexible, foamed and compact automotive components, which lend each model its distinctive look and feel. Sitting back, you may look up at a headliner or rest your feet on a comfortable carpet, both made of BASF nylon fibers.

From the radiator grill to the back bumper, BASF plastics are being used in more and more body parts to reduce a vehicle’s weight, helping make vehicles more fuel-efficient. BASF’s Tecolen® ABS plastic has the strength to help vehicles withstand impacts better, while the Luran® S plastic, found throughout vehicles from mirror and headlight housings to spoilers, has excellent UV resistance so parts don’t fade in the sun.

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We help find new ways to feed a growing world

Children need a balanced diet and enough to eat for a strong and healthy start in life. Through its crop protection products, seed production systems and specialty products, BASF helps produce nutritious food while working to conserve natural resources. In North America, this means improving the quality of staple crops such as corn, soybeans and wheat, as well as a wide range of fruits, vegetables and other cereals.

Soybean farmers know the most effective way to control weeds is by combining agricultural products that work together. BASF has developed such crop protection systems for both herbicide tolerant and traditional soybeans. BASF’s Provi® herbicide followed by Extreme® herbicide controls weeds in herbicide tolerant soybeans, while Prowl followed by either the Raptor® herbicide or Pursuit® herbicide controls a wide spectrum of weeds in traditional soybean varieties.

The pinecone fungus Strobilurus tenacellus emits a substance called strobilurin A to fight off other fungi that compete for its food, the pinecone. By modifying this natural substance, BASF achieved a breakthrough innovation, creating a new class of fungicides to help growers combat a wide variety of diseases. The latest in this class, F 500™, is active in all major classes of fungal diseases affecting the leaves of plants. Our products Headline® and Cabrio® EG are just the first in a series of new fungicides BASF plans to introduce over the next few years.

Corn is a key crop in North America. BASF is helping make it easier for farmers to grow this staple with its CLEARFIELD® Production System, which protects corn for the entire growing season. The CLEARFIELD Production System combines seeds, which, through traditional breeding methods, are herbicide-tolerant, with custom-designed herbicides. With the CLEARFIELD Production System, a single application prevents weeds from germinating again, which saves farmers time and money. Currently, BASF is also developing the CLEARFIELD Production System for wheat, rice, canola and sunflowers.

Besides helping growers, BASF helps outdoor enthusiasts such as golfers, foresters and landscapers. Our specialty agricultural products help keep lawns, golf courses and other public spaces healthy and free of weeds. They also help manage forests as a renewable source of pulp for paper and lumber for construction. And our specialty products continue to help, by preserving that lumber from termites once it is used in the home.
Whether you run, rollerblade, bike or swim, what’s important is exercising regularly and dressing right. Active wear made with BASF’s nylon fibers provides comfort and stretch, while our performance plastics and polyurethanes in sports equipment let you play hard and stay safe. What your athletic gear doesn’t cover, BASF does, with its UV absorbers for skin care products.

BASF, Zefspor® nylon, which is a favorite nylon yarn for tricot spandex fabrics in active wear and swimwear, helps apparel fit snuggly, feel comfortable and retain its colors. Whether it is stretch or seamless fabrics for everything from socks to intimate apparel, BASF specializes in high filament and microdenier nylon yarns for all types of knitting applications.

For most sports, choosing the right footwear is crucial. Our Elastopan®, Elastasan®, and Elasturan® lines of polyurethanes specifically designed to handle extreme wear and abrasion, making it well suited for the wheels on in-line skates.

It’s important to protect yourself from the sun’s harmful rays. BASF’s Z-COTE®, an innovative form of microfine zinc oxide used in leading sun care products, skin moisturizers, and makeup products, protects skin from the complete spectrum of UVA and UVB rays. Many skin care products also contain BASF vitamins such as Retinol, which helps reduce the effects of aging. A leader in cosmetics ingredients, BASF also makes polymers that give hair sprays and mousses their hold and conditioners their silky feel, and supplies aroma chemicals for fragrances.

BASF helps make helmets more protective and visible. In the lining of bicycle and rollerblade helmets, our styrenic polymers, such as Styropor® expandable polystyrene, and our expandable polypropylene, which is sold as Neopolen® P, protect you by absorbing impacts. Low in weight and resistant to moisture, Styropor® provides comfort and safety, while Neopolen P, which is resilient to multiple impacts, offers extra protection. For extra visibility, our Variocrom® pigments gleam from purple to gold depending on the angle, making sports equipment stand out.

For most sports, choosing the right footwear is crucial. Our Elastopan® polyurethane system in shoe soles offers the greater comfort and support needed for high impact sports such as jogging. In in-line skates, BASF’s compact polyurethanes help make boots sturdier, while our Elasturan® line of polyurethanes is specifically designed to handle extreme wear and abrasion, making it well suited for the wheels on in-line skates.
We help make chemistry efficient through integrated production

Representing BASF’s largest single investment in North America, the steam cracker is the heart of an integrated network of production facilities that BASF calls “Verbund,” a German word meaning integrated. Situated between our Verbund sites on the Gulf of Mexico in Freeport, Texas, and Geismar, Louisiana, and operated as a 60:40 joint venture with ATOFINA Petrochemicals, Inc., the steam cracker supplies ethylene and propylene to these two sites. At each of these sites, more than a dozen plants are interconnected to make effective use of energy and raw materials. By-products from the manufacturing processes in one plant are transferred to other plants for further use.

This manufacturing facility in Freeport, Texas, is one of many that receive feedstock from the steam cracker in Port Arthur. The plant takes propylene from the steam cracker and manufactures acrylic acid, which itself is a starting material for such products as adhesives, coatings and paints.

One of the important end uses for acrylic acid is superabsorbents, a white, powdery substance, which is also manufactured in Freeport. As the name implies, superabsorbents absorb many times their weight in fluids and are used in personal hygiene products such as diapers. From the propylene in the steam cracker down to the superabsorbents in the items you buy, BASF’s integrated Verbund production helps make products better.

BASF’s manufacturing hub on the Gulf of Mexico continues to grow, with the expansion of an emerging Verbund site located in Altamira, Mexico. Here BASF manufactures products ranging from dispersions to colorants and plastics at several interconnected plants. Complete with its own port and modern road and rail infrastructure, Altamira is ideally positioned to serve Mexico and the rest of the North American market.

Here’s where the chemistry begins, at our steam cracker in Port Arthur, Texas. Karl Heimbach, Manager of Engineering, Maintenance and Services, is part of a 150-strong team of BASF employees who run the world’s largest single train liquids steam cracker. In it, furnaces “crack” naphtha, a liquid hydrocarbon derived from oil, into ethylene and propylene. These serve as the feedstock for hundreds of basic and intermediate chemicals, which are used in the thousands of products in North America that BASF helps make better.
BASF’s high-impact polystyrene and general-purpose polystyrene, known as HIPS and GPPS, are ideal for use in appliance parts, food packaging, cups, plates and lids. We’ve not only designed these products to meet specific customer requirements, we manufacture them at two strategic locations in North America – Altamira, Mexico, and Joliet, Illinois – to help serve our customers better. BASF has more than 40 manufacturing sites across North America, and that helps us consistently deliver the high-quality products customers want in the time they expect.

Customers value environmentally friendly products, such as our SAVANT™ carpet fiber. The basic ingredient, nylon 6, scored better against leading fiber materials in an innovative BASF tool known as “eco-efficiency analysis.” Eco-efficiency compares similar product applications to determine which one delivers the optimum combination of ecology and economy. To date, BASF has carried out eco-efficiency analyses on more than 100 of its products in an effort to make customers’ products more economical and environmentally friendly.

The first website of its kind in the collision repair industry, bodyshopmall.com lets body shops order paint and associated automotive refinish supplies. Transactions can be conducted on-line by customers of BASF’s Automotive Refinish Technologies distributor chain. In addition to product ordering, bodyshopmall.com offers global color information, technical and regulatory data, BASF training schedules and industry links. By selling on-line, BASF is helping customers streamline their ordering process, reduce inventories and lower costs.

Once an order has been placed, customers can access BASF’s Track & Trace system on-line to view the status of their shipment in real time. While en route, drivers regularly input information on the location of shipments. This allows customers to obtain up-to-the-minute information directly from carriers, without having to contact BASF Customer Service first. The system can even send out advance E-mail notices, making Track & Trace an ideal tool for customers who count on just-in-time delivery.
We help make tomorrow’s products better through innovative research

At BASF, the pursuit of innovation shapes our strategy, imbues our culture, and points the way to new solutions for helping make products better. For example, at BASF Plant Science in Raleigh, North Carolina, researchers are using rye grass to study genes that help plants endure periods of drought. By identifying these genes, it may be possible to transfer these traits to other crops, such as corn, to improve their tolerance to dry spells and potentially help farmers improve their yields. In the 21st century, plant biotechnology is expected to play a crucial role in meeting the world’s growing demand for food.

The innovative “car of the future”? It may be an environmentally friendly, methanol-driven fuel cell car with a direct link to BASF. Such cars will have significant advantages over the best gasoline or diesel engines—they’ll be more efficient, quiet, and have reduced emissions. And they may be powered by a high-performance catalyst that BASF has developed in exclusive cooperation with XCELLIS, a joint venture of DaimlerChrysler, Ballard Power Systems, Inc., and the Ford Motor Company.

As hairstyling trends change, so do demands on hair spray. BASF has introduced Luviset® P.U.R., an innovative polymer that is fully compatible with water. Luviset is the first cosmetics application of polyurethane, a versatile plastic found in everyday items from ski boots to cell phones. With Luviset, new hairspray formulations can use more water and less solvent, meeting stricter environmental requirements.

At its Southfield, Michigan, Applications Research Center for automotive coatings, BASF simulates the painting and finishing processes used by manufacturers to evaluate coating technologies and application methods. Here and at other state-of-the-art applied research facilities across North America, BASF is fine-tuning and customizing existing product applications to help customers make their products better.

When roofing materials and surfaces absorb too much heat, more energy is required to keep interior spaces cool and comfortable. The solution? BASF’s new ULTRA-Cool™ metal coatings, which reflect heat and are available in a full range of colors. ULTRA-Cool coatings also increase the life expectancy of roofs by reducing expansion and contraction. What’s more, ULTRA-Cool coatings meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Energy Star® specifications for “cool roofs.”
BASF takes its commitment to social responsibility seriously. We encourage employees to be involved in volunteer activities that will enhance the quality of life in their communities, and we support them with flexible work policies and programs designed to match their investment of time and talent with company funds. Karen Nyreen, a Material Management Analyst in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, volunteers her time to assist the Food Bank of North Carolina – a private, nonprofit organization that distributes an average of 2 million pounds of food and nonfood essentials each month to statewide programs such as soup kitchens, shelters, food pantries, and nutrition programs for the elderly and the young. Such employee volunteer efforts do tremendous good, as do our ongoing activities related to charitable giving, environmental and workplace safety, and community dialogue.

Throughout the year, representatives from various BASF sites meet regularly with Community Advisory Panels. These include individuals who represent the interests of various community groups – schools, environmental organizations, social institutions, healthcare bodies, trade and industry associations, and municipal authorities. Through these meetings, we have the opportunity to discuss our operations, safety programs, and emergency response plans and capabilities, and build on our mutual goals and knowledge.

New targets are set annually at BASF to continually improve the safety and health of our employees and surrounding communities. The company’s philosophy, embodied in its “Seven Element Safety and Health Process,” is based on management’s commitment and responsibility, as well as each employee’s personal accountability. Our corporate-wide initiatives abide by the Responsible Care® ethic and include an increased emphasis on safety and health leadership at all levels: training, hazard recognition, accident/incident investigation, and behavior-based safety activities.

BASF encourages an open dialogue with its local communities. Holding periodic “open houses” at our Windsor, Ontario, facility, for example, allows neighbors of all ages to learn more about our business and products as well as such topics as fire safety, CPR techniques, and emergency response procedures.