

UNIFI SELECTS AMUT FOR PET BOTTLES PROCESSING PLANT

Unifi Inc. selected equipment makers AMUT SpA and Bulk Handling Systems (BHS) to provide the technology for a \$25 million expansion that will increase its capacity **to turn PET bottles into recycled fibers for apparel and automotive products.**

The investment is being made at Unifi's facility in Reidsville, N.C.



AMUT will design, build and assemble a new PET washing plant, said Anthony Georges, president of the Vaughn, Ontario, company. Unifi will use AMUT's patented dry de-labeling system to remove the shrink sleeve wraps from the post-consumer bottles.

"This is to give them total vertical integration of the process," Georges said in an email, also noting that **label removal is an important step in the processing of bales of municipal waste.**

BHS will design, manufacture and install a front-end PET purification system with nine optical sorters by National Recovery Technologies, which is part of the Eugene, Ore.-based company's family of businesses. The system also will feature the latest in screens and air-sorting technology.

BHS says the system will process 22,000 pounds of baled materials per hour by removing the non-PET content and preparing the PET for the conversion from bottles to flake.

The flake is used to make Unifi's Repreve line of polyester yarns and fibers, which go into product brands like Haggard, Ford and Quicksilver.

Since 2009, Unifi has recycled more than 4 billion plastic bottles into Repreve-based products. **The new bottle processing plant will produce about 75 million pounds of recycled PET materials when it begins operation in June 2016.**

"This state-of-the-art facility will raise the bar for Unifi, allowing us to internalize the majority of our flake requirements as we continue to expand our Repreve filament and polymer chip business," Mark McNeill, Unifi's vice president of technology and business development, said in a statement.