



Cooperation with Pyrum Innovations AG and TH Köln

Pilot project: Schwalbe develops recycling system for used bicycle tires

Another milestone on the path to even more sustainability: Schwalbe has started a pilot project to develop an innovative feedstock recycling system for used bicycle tires. For this, the bicycle manufacturing specialist cooperates with Pyrum Innovations AG and the Technische Hochschule Köln – University of Applied Sciences. The project partners are carrying out research within the framework of a Central Innovation Programme for SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), in German referred to as ZIM and supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi), to develop a sustainable recycling system for used bicycle tires. The aim is to no longer incinerate tires or send them to landfill, but to preserve the raw materials for recycling within a closed-loop economy system. Schwalbe is planning to use the valuable secondary raw materials generated during the recycling process of old tires for the production of new products. Simultaneously, the family enterprise is in the process of establishing an extensive infrastructure to support the recycling loop.

Schwalbe has been a leader in sustainability and recycling for many years. Therefore, all bicycle tubes they produce are 100 per cent recyclable. In 2015, a recovery system was initiated where used tubes are collected from bicycle dealers for recycling. The recycled material is reused during the production of new tubes without any loss of quality. For a closed-loop product life cycle and concerted recycling process design, Schwalbe won the German Sustainability Award 2021 in the category 'Pioneers'. The pilot project ties in with these efforts by developing a sustainable recycling system that is also suitable for used bicycle tires.