

Industrial park proves ideal host for biotechs

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Weifang Bio-medical Industry Park, in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, has become an ideal destination for ambitious biotech business endeavors.

The industrial park is home to many leading bio-technology companies and is attracting an increasing number by the day.

Weifang Jiameiyuan Biotech, a company specializing in developing bio-based products that replace traditional chemical-based pesticides, is one of the companies attracted to the zone.

It moved from the Hanting district of Weifang in March last year, and says it was attracted because key features of the company are its high growth, and because it is green and environmentally friendly and high-tech driven.

Yu Kun, executive director of Jiameiyuan, said he visited many other industrial parks before the decision was made.

"The park in the zone has a good production environment and professional testing platforms, which are ideal for startups," Yu said.

"The efficiency of the park's services and professionalism gives us strong support."



Technicians at Weichai Power, a leading heavy truck engines and components manufacturer at the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, check measurements of an engine. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Manufacturers use innovation as catalyst

Local government supports traditional companies in their resolve to upgrade and find new drivers for growth in the new economy

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Traditional manufacturing businesses in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone are speeding up innovation to support efforts to replace old economic growth drivers with new ones.

One of the companies in the zone benefiting from this support is leading heavy truck engines and components manufacturer Weichai Group.

The company announced that its annual sales revenue for 2017 reached 200 billion yuan (\$31.8 billion) last December, with total net profits exceeding 10 billion yuan, according to Tan Xuguang, chairman of the board of directors of the group.

Weichai has made such gains thanks to its development into an international and market-oriented business with a diversified product and service portfolio that covers six sectors — powertrain development, smart logistics, vehicle production, engineering mechanics, luxury yacht developments and financial services.

Founded in 1946, Weichai has a long history and has achieved significant results in powertrain development.

"Weichai is the only company in the world that has developed a complete powertrain system that includes engines, transmissions and

“We have launched five innovation projects... to stimulate companies' innovative thinking and enhance innovation capacity.”

Wang Zhende, deputy director of the industry and information office at the economic development bureau in the high-tech zone

axles. It is our core competitiveness," said Li Shaohua, vice-president of Weichai Power.

Shandong Supermaly Generating Equipment Co, a traditional power-generating equipment manufacturer in the high-tech zone, has also experienced significant growth in 2017, after the company carried out an innovation-driven development strategy.

About 80 percent of its power generators were exported last year, accounting for up to 40 percent of Russia's total market share.

"We design products based on real demands in local markets," said Chen

Guangliang, deputy general manager of Supermaly. "We offered Russian clients some relatively simply structured but highly stable and reliable products that can work properly in low temperatures and high altitudes, which helps increase our market share."

Hoaco Automation Technology, a leading emerging business focusing on precision equipment manufacturing in the zone, has promoted innovation since its establishment. The company is at the stage of rapid expansion in line with the boom of China's electronics industry.

Tian Rouxin, assistant to the general manager at Hoaco, said that the company has strengthened its research and development capacity over the past few years. It has developed the world's first 20-station circular knife die-cutting machines which are used in manufacturing.

"We reported 130 million yuan industrial output value in the first half of 2017, up 70 percent year-on-year," Tian said. "We are confident about developments in 2018."

Aiming to support companies' innovation, Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone has released a series of measures to support business innovation. Added to that, the government is building up a new industrial system to speed up regional economic growth.

"We have launched five innovation projects, including research and development center upgrading and high-end equipment certification, to stimulate companies' innovative thinking and enhance innovation capacity," said Wang Zhende, deputy director of the Industry and Information Office at the Economic Development Bureau in the zone.

The administration of the zone is aware that innovation should not just be promoted among a small group of companies. There should be an overall atmosphere of innovation to prompt companies' transformation. The zone has provided financial support and policy support to create that atmosphere.

Supported by the zone, most enterprises in the region have established their own R&D centers. As a result, many new products and technologies have been introduced to the market.

Zhuang Jian contributed to this story.



Higher spending flows into enhancing welfare of citizens

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, reporting its public budget, said general expenditure came in at 2.47 billion yuan (\$390 million) in 2017, of which 70 percent went to improving people's living conditions.

Statistics from the local finance bureau showed that total spending on bettering the lives of residents in the zone reached 1.73 billion yuan in 2017, up 22.2 percent year-on-year.

Significant investments were made in fields such as education, culture, healthcare and building eco-systems — to support a better quality of life for residents.

The zone's government revealed that about 250 million yuan was invested in school construction and expansion, to reduce student class sizes last year. New schools opened their doors, including Weifang Hansen School and Dagan School.

Dongming School's Dongfang extension welcomed 1,397 students in September. More than 700 young scholars were enrolled in 16 first-grade classes.

"Every item, including ceramic tiles and every piece of furniture was carefully selected," said Li Yuliang, principal of Dongming School. "We have to ensure every penny provided by the zone's government is well spent."

Apart from building more schools to reduce the number of students in classes, the zone has also provided more educational subsidies to students.

In 2017, every primary school student enjoyed a 1,210 yuan annual subsidy, up from 810 yuan in 2016. Students in junior high schools enjoyed a 1,510 yuan annual subsidy in 2017, up from 1,010 yuan in 2016.

In 2017, the zone also established 8 million yuan in funds to award teachers and principals in schools and kindergartens.

"The zone has long been investing heavily in boosting educational services, aiming at establishing a modern and

balanced system and increasing the zone's position in the education sector," said Li Yun, director of the budget department in the zone's finance bureau.

Last year, the zone's government also initiated several projects to create a more comfortable living environment for residents.

A total of 5.3 billion yuan was invested through public-private partnerships on projects including upgrading pedestrian walkways and new parks. "The public-private partnership model has helped to enhance the zone's living environment, attracted social capital and reduced the government's financial burden," said Wang Yang, director of the economic development department of the high-tech zone's finance bureau.

Last year, the zone spared no effort in providing more support to people in financial difficulties.

Monthly subsistence allowances for individuals were increased from 500 yuan to 550 yuan in 2017, and 185,000 people are currently covered by government-funded livelihood insurance.

The zone provided 23 million yuan and 12 million yuan, respectively, to subsidize an endowment insurance fund and medical insurance fund. Subsidies were also provided to low-income seniors and impoverished seniors unable to take care of themselves.

A public healthcare system upgrade was another key task for the local government in 2017.

Authorities established a 3.5 million yuan fund to encourage women in the zone to take breast cancer and cervical cancer screenings. Subsidies were also made available to stroke patients who are receiving recovery treatment and those on dialysis in hospitals.

An Bin, director of the zone's finance bureau, said that more investments will be made in public services and infrastructure in the coming years.

Wang Weidong contributed to this story.



Foreign teachers at Weifang Hansen School, a new school in the Weifang high-tech zone, educate students in a novel way.

Digital archives store documents, score top marks in Shandong

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shandong Shangde Software, a digital archives system developer in the Weifang Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone, has made great strides in the construction of China's digital archives.

Three archives in Weifang's Zhucheng, Shouguang cities and Changle county passed national digital archives system tests at the end of 2017.

Weifang Archive has become one of 15 archives in China recognized as a national demonstration digital archive. All those archives were developed by Shangde.

Wang Wenxue founded Shangde in 2007. At that time, people had little knowledge about digital archives, Wang said. However, he believed the digital archive market has a strong develop-

“It was easy to complete the work, but it was hard to make it excellent.”

Wang Wenxue, founder of Shandong Shangde Software

ment potential in China.

Shangde received its first big order from Weifang finance bureau in 2008.

The process to convert paper-based documents into a digital version was hard, because documents were written or printed on differ-



Designers at Shandong Shangde Software discuss an upgrade plan for the Weifang Archive.

ent types of paper and some were very old, which required people to take extreme care, Wang said.

"I vowed to make it a demonstration project for

Shangde. It was easy to complete the work, but it was hard to make it excellent."

China's digital archive market started booming in 2012. The government also

undertook many measures to regulate the market, aiming at maintaining its long-term development.

"The government raised the requirements on digital archive system developers, which was good news for us," Wang said. "It has created more opportunities for Shangde."

Shangde was recognized as a national professional digital archives development and management company in 2014.

Only 11 companies gained such recognition in that year, of which 10 companies were in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou in Guangdong province. Shangde was then qualified to deal with the most sensitive confidential archives in China.

Figures from the company show that it has built

hundreds of digital archives across China in the past 11 years. In 2017, its revenue reached 50 million yuan (\$7.89 million) and it employed more than 200 people.

In 2018, Shangde will pay more attention on financing and exploring markets to maintain its growth, Wang said.

Liu Yinghong contributed to this story

To comment or contribute, please email wangqian2@chinadaily.com.cn or call +86-531-58775018.



13 new companies

entered into the incubation process from early 2017 in the Weifang Bio-medical Industry Park

Companies have moved into the zone not only for its good services, but also for potential business and partnership opportunities.

Jiangsu Zecen Biotech Co, a high-tech company specializing in in-vitro diagnostic reagent and equipment development, production and sales, is a partner to a reagent producer in the industrial park.

Jiangsu Zecen Biotech acquired the reagent producer and established Weifang Zecen Biotech in the park in 2017.

Its operators say the industrial park implements strict standards in evaluating the capacity and capabilities of companies before allowing them to move in. Only high-tech groups which have outstanding results in such areas as research and development, intellectual property and financial performance, will be offered entry.

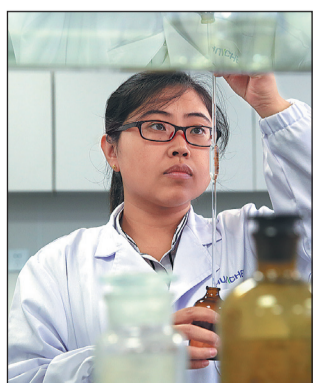
The park has designed a set of measures to help its resident firms grow bigger and faster.

Companies that are on an incubation program can enjoy discounts to utilize the park's research and office space and professional equipment.

Companies also have priority to use the resources and technological services provided by public technical platforms. The park provides groups with professional services in project applications, financing, consulting and promotional work.

Thirteen new companies entered into the incubation process there in early 2017, of which five were scheduled to complete the process by year-end.

Cui Chengwang contributed to this story.



A lab worker at Shandong Huachen Bioscience Co Ltd performs a test at Weifang Bio-medical Industry Park.