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EU-China Trade Talks Signal Hope for More Stable Supply Chains

The EU and China have agreed to a three-month negotiation framework, with talks running until October 2026, to address key trade issues including market access, rare earth export controls, intellectual property, and WTO reforms. The discussions aim to stabilize bilateral trade relations and reduce growing imbalances, offering businesses hope for greater predictability in global supply chains.

Source: Supply Chain Brain

Dow Invests \$100 Million to Expand Global Specialty Silicones Capacity

Dow is investing approximately \$100 million through 2027 to expand its specialty silicones manufacturing and R&D capabilities across the U.S., China, and Japan. The investments aim to strengthen supply chain resilience, accelerate commercialization, and meet rising demand for advanced silicone materials in the mobility, electronics, and healthcare sectors.

Source: Dow

Azelis and Chemetall Expand North America Distribution Partnership

Azelis and Chemetall (BASF Coatings' surface treatment business) have expanded their strategic distribution partnership to cover the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, strengthening regional access to surface treatment solutions. The collaboration leverages Azelis's logistics network, technical expertise, and digital customer portal to enhance supply chain efficiency, improve customer support, and accelerate market reach across North America.

Source: Azelis

Chemours Reaches Landmark \$450 Million U.S. PFAS Settlement

Chemours has agreed to a \$450 million settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice over PFAS ("forever chemicals") releases, marking the first comprehensive

Ecovyst Expands Sulfur Solutions Portfolio with Calabrian Acquisition

Ecovyst has completed its \$190 million acquisition of Calabrian's sulfur dioxide and sulfur derivatives business from INEOS Enterprises, broadening its sulfur chemicals

federal enforcement settlement involving a PFAS manufacturer. The agreement includes civil penalties, investments in pollution controls, and funding for drinking water remediation across West Virginia, North Carolina, and New Jersey, highlighting continued regulatory focus on environmental compliance and PFAS management.

Source: Reuters

portfolio and strengthening its presence in mining, water treatment, food processing, and pharmaceutical applications. The acquisition also adds manufacturing facilities in Texas and Canada and is expected to enhance growth through expanded market reach and operational synergies.

Source: ICIS

Bayer Seeks U.S. Tariffs on Chinese Glyphosate Imports Amid Industry Pushback

Bayer, through its subsidiary Monsanto, has petitioned U.S. authorities to impose anti-dumping and countervailing duties on Chinese glyphosate imports, arguing they are unfairly subsidized and threaten domestic production. The proposal has drawn strong opposition from U.S. farmer groups, who warn that higher import costs could increase herbicide prices and further strain the agricultural sector.

Source: Reuters

AI Confidence Without Accuracy: Why Human Oversight Still Matters

As enterprises adopt AI at scale, one of the biggest risks is not just incorrect answers but AI delivering them with unwarranted confidence. The article highlights the importance of implementing guardrails, grounding AI in trusted company data, and maintaining human oversight to minimize hallucinations, regulatory risks, and potential loss of customer trust.

Source: Supply Chain Brain

Activist Investors Intensify Pressure for Ashland Sale

Activist investor Cruiser Capital has urged specialty chemicals company Ashland Inc. to explore a sale, arguing that a larger owner could unlock significant cost synergies and create greater shareholder value. The campaign follows similar calls from another activist investor, highlighting growing market expectations of potential M&A activity in the specialty chemicals sector.

Source: Bloomberg

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