

## PRESS INFORMATION

# MICHELIN OPENS WORLD'S FIRST MANUFACTURING PLANT TO BUILD REVOLUTIONARY AIRLESS RADIAL TIRE

*Piedmont, S.C., USA is the site of new state-of-the-art facility making the MICHELIN® TWEEL® — a tire that never goes flat*

**Clermont-Ferrand, 20 November 2014** — Michelin has opened its newest plant in North America, which will produce the innovative MICHELIN® X® TWEEL® Airless Radial Tire™ for commercial applications.

An idea first conceived by Michelin research engineers in the United States, the TWEEL is a revolutionary non-pneumatic tire that changed the configuration of a conventional tire, bringing together the tire and the wheel assembly into one solid unit. The TWEEL comprises a rigid hub connected to a shear beam by means of flexible, deformable polyurethane spokes, all functioning as a single unit.

Unlike conventional tires, the TWEEL has no air, thereby solving what had seemed to be the unavoidable challenge of chronic flat tires that plagues the landscape, construction, contracting, refuse/recycling and agricultural industries.

“The TWEEL being built here in South Carolina is yet another dramatic example of Michelin’s long-standing commitment to breakthrough innovation,” said Pete Selleck, Michelin North America chairman and president. “The TWEEL concept was born at Michelin Americas Research Company in Greenville, S.C., one of Michelin’s three global technology centers, and now the Tweel will be manufactured right here in the Greenville area to satisfy a growing commercial market.”

The new plant gives Michelin the ability to boost output of its award-winning MICHELIN® X® TWEEL® SSL skid-steer tires and begin production of the new MICHELIN® X® TWEEL® TURF™ as original equipment for John Deere to equip its ZTRAK™ 900 Series line-up of zero-turn commercial mowers.

“Differentiating us from competitors, the TWEEL airless radial tire is the industry’s first commercialized airless radial solution and verifies Michelin’s leadership for the next generation of mobility,” said Ralph Dimenna, head of Michelin Tweel Technologies. “The TWEEL airless radial tire enables Michelin to enter new markets and expand its reach in existing business segments within the low-speed application category. The industry is hungry for solutions contributing to productivity, safety and bottom lines. Serving our customers is at the center of our strategy for success.”



The new 135,000 square-foot facility in Piedmont, S.C., represents Michelin's 10<sup>th</sup> manufacturing facility in South Carolina and the 16<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. The company will invest about \$50 million in the new plant.

**About MICHELIN® X® TWEEL®**

Originally introduced as a concept at the 2004 Paris Motor Show, the MICHELIN® X® TWEEL® is Michelin's highly advanced airless radial tire and is the only commercial product available to offer the advantages of no maintenance, no compromise and no downtime. It performs with traditional radial tire technology but requires no air, thereby eliminating the risk of a "flat tire." Desperate to find a solution to reduce their flat-tire downtime, many industrial users resort to alternatives that result in diminished traction, handling and ride comfort. The X TWEEL provides the advantages of no air pressure maintenance, easy mounting, damage resistance, increased operator comfort, reduced operator fatigue, improved productivity and longer wear life than pneumatic tires.

To learn more about the MICHELIN TWEEL, visit [www.michelintweel.com](http://www.michelintweel.com).

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**Michelin**, the leading tire company, is dedicated to sustainably improving the mobility of goods and people by manufacturing and marketing tires for every type of vehicle, including airplanes, automobiles, bicycles/motorcycles, earthmovers, farm equipment and trucks. It also offers electronic mobility support services on ViaMichelin.com and publishes travel guides, hotel and restaurant guides, maps and road atlases. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in more than 170 countries, has 111,200 employees and operates 67 production plants in 17 different countries. The Group has a Technology Center in charge of research and development with operations in Europe, North America and Asia. ([www.michelin.com](http://www.michelin.com))

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