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## News Release

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### Merck KGaA Curtails Production at Some Chemical Facilities

Darmstadt, December 17, 2008 – Strongly reduced demand in businesses segments such as the automobile industry and consumer electronics caused by the current economic slowdown has resulted in a substantial decrease in demand for products from Merck KGaA's Liquid Crystals division as well as from the business unit Effect Pigments, which is part of the Performance and Life Science Chemicals division. Therefore Merck will shut down several manufacturing facilities as well as business operations on a temporary basis as needed for several weeks in the first half of 2009. Approximately 800 people are employed at these sites in Germany, Asia and the United States.

In coordination with the workers council production levels at the main production sites at Darmstadt and Gernsheim will be regulated by adjusting working hours and vacation time. The occasional transfer of employees to other operations, for example pharmaceuticals production, could be another alternative.

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Merck is a global pharmaceutical and chemical company with total revenues of € 7.1 billion in 2007, a history that began in 1668, and a future shaped by 32,458 employees in 59 countries. Its success is characterized by innovations from entrepreneurial employees. Merck's operating activities come under the umbrella of Merck KGaA, in which the Merck family holds an approximately 70% interest and free shareholders own the remaining approximately 30%. In 1917 the U.S. subsidiary Merck & Co. was expropriated and has been an independent company ever since.

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