Expancel Microspheres
The world’s favorite secret ingredient

Expancel

Nouryon
The secret ingredient in competitive advantages


This is the world Expancel was created for. Since 1980, this unique ingredient has helped developers and manufacturers reduce weight and cut costs while improving quality, adding functionality and enabling innovation.

Our three promises to you
Expancel is not just an ingredient – it’s also our promise of continuous innovation for a better and more sustainable world. It stands for new possibilities, more effective processes, and expertise applied to keep you ahead.

1. We give you the best
Quality makes your product – and your reputation. When you choose Expancel, you choose the gold standard. Accept no imitations!

2. We do more for you
We do everything possible to ensure Expancel is optimally implemented into your process and delivers its full potential. Our technology expertise is unmatched, and it’s at your disposal.

3. We’re in your future
We have a proven track record and a deep commitment to sustainable business. Wherever you want to go next, we’ll be here for you.
The secret ingredient that expands your horizons

Expancel came about as part of a research collaboration in the mid-1970s. The team created microspheres that could expand to up to 60 times their original size without increasing in weight. Today we are a world leader in thermoplastic microspheres.

For almost 40 years, we have continuously pioneered new products and new usage areas for Expancel Microspheres. You’ll find them in a huge array of products around the world – from the paint on your walls to the car you drive, the shoes you walk in and the packaging that protects your food.

Expancel is the secret ingredient that gives leading products the edge. If something looks better, feels better or performs better, it might well contain Expancel.

From small sphere to big idea
It’s a simple concept – a small thermoplastic sphere encapsulating a gas. Add heat and the gas expands while the shell softens. The result is a dramatic increase in volume and billions of new possibilities.

Expancel has dual functionality as both a lightweight filler and a blowing agent. When you need to cut manufacturing costs, reduce weight, create attractive textures, protect against damage or shield against the elements, Expancel delivers.
Heat

Shell thickness 2 µm
Hydrocarbon

Shell thickness 0.1 µm
Thermoplastic shell

12 µm
40 µm
WE Genuine leather
Outstanding filling capacity, low shrinkage and good buffing properties.

FG Food Packaging
High compressibility, no shrinkage, no moisture absorption. Approved by regulations authorities.

WE/DE Elastomeric cool-roof coatings
Superior reflectance and elasticity. Reduces cost and weight.

The first order of Expancel Microspheres is shipped
1980

First US office established, later followed by a production unit
1988

High-temperature microspheres launched
1991

Fourth generation of Expancel Microspheres launched
2005

Start of Expancel production in China
2009

Food packaging products introduced
2011

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Expanding where it counts

Expanscel Microspheres are marketed all over the world via our headquarters in Sweden where we also have R&D and production. We have 15 sales offices across the world and, in addition, a worldwide network of distributors that enables us to meet the demand wherever it arises. To efficiently cover the American and Asian markets, we have production units in Duluth, USA; Jundiaí, Brazil, and Suzhou, China.
A variety for every need

Expancel is available either expanded or unexpanded. Both types can be supplied in wet or dry form. We also have Masterbatch. This means Expancel works in systems with or without heat or water. We offer a variety of chemical compositions to give expansion at different temperatures.

A range of particle sizes makes it possible to achieve numerous surface effects, including matting, smoothness and roughness. The very low density gives a significant weight reduction even at small dosages.

The 7 forms of Expancel

- **Expancel WU**
  - Wet, unexpanded microspheres

- **Expancel MB**
  - Masterbatch, unexpanded microspheres mixed with a carrier

- **Expancel DU**
  - Dry, unexpanded microspheres

- **Expancel WE**
  - Wet, expanded microspheres

- **Expancel SL**
  - Slurry, unexpanded microspheres dispersed in water

- **Expancel DE(T)**
  - Dry, expanded microspheres

- **Expancel FG**
  - Microspheres for food packaging applications

**WU Wind turbines**

Add bulk without adding weight. Increase stiffness and reduce the need for binder.
Lightweight filler and blowing agent in one

Expancel is a lightweight filler and blowing agent all in one. Its high performance in these two functions opens up a world of surprising possibilities. Using Expancel improves the properties of your product, and also enables considerable savings in the cost of materials, production and finishing, handling and transportation. For manufacturers, it means economy, consistency and control. For consumers, it means quality and satisfaction.

The lighter side of performance
Expancel can significantly reduce the weight of a product while creating the look and feel needed for an attractive product.

As a lightweight filler, it can achieve very low densities. Our standard expanded microspheres (Expancel DE(T) and WE) have densities as low as 25 kg/m³ depending on product. This is much lower than, for example, glass microspheres. Even small proportions of Expancel will reduce the density of the end product to a significant degree.

Binder demand is low, so the amount of binder in the end product can be reduced with no loss of desired properties. Reducing binder also saves costs.

Expancel is used as a lightweight filler in many applications today, including elastomeric cool roof coatings, paint, cultured marble, underbody coatings and sealants, polyester putties and many more. Its many benefits include cost reduction, low density, flexibility, sandability and a smoother surface with no pinholes.
Your ingredient. Your choice.
Expancel is a product with truly unique properties. It is delivered in a variety of forms: wet and dry, expanded and unexpanded, slurry and masterbatch.

85–230°C
Different products of Expancel are available with expansion temperatures in the range of 85°C to 230°C (185–446°F).
Perfecting the structure

Unexpanded Expancel is an excellent blowing agent that gives highly controlled foaming, resulting in a fine and uniform cell structure. You can avoid the use of chemical blowing agents and achieve excellent performance at low viscosities. Expancel can also be combined with chemical blowing agents if required.

Expancel is used as a blowing agent in many applications today, including shoe soles, wine stoppers (plastic and agglomerated), printing inks, wallpaper and weather strips for cars.

As a blowing agent, Expancel delivers many essential benefits, including a fine cellular foam structure, outstanding stability during processing, shorter cycle times and an attractive surface finish.
One ingredient. Unlimited possibilities.

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<th>Application</th>
<th>BUILDINGS &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
<th>TRANSPORTATION</th>
<th>CONSUMER GOODS</th>
<th>INDUSTRIAL / OTHER</th>
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<td>Cultured marble</td>
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<td>PU foams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model-making board</td>
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<td>Polyester putties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underbody coatings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound-damping coatings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interior panels for car roofs/sides</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body fillers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper &amp; Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Porous ceramics</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Controlled and uniform pore structure</td>
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<td>Silicone rubber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cable-filling compound</td>
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<td>Reduced dielectric constant, reduced water penetration, cost reduction, reduced weight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composites</td>
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<td>Reduced weight, reduced cost / lower resin consumption, increased stiffness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crack filler</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td>Sandability, easy to apply, sanding dust less irritating than with glass MS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modeling clay</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td>Easy to shape, low shrinkage upon drying</td>
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<td>Paint</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td>Reduced weight, better applicability, higher water vapor permeability, matting effect, low emission of VOC, lower transportation cost for producer</td>
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<td>Sealants</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td>Cost savings, weight reduction, reduced volume shrinkage during drying</td>
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<td>Genuine leather</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td>Outstanding filling capacity, very low shrinkage, very good buffing properties, good flexibility, soft touch feeling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elastomeric cool roof coatings</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High solar reflectance and thermal insulation, enhanced durability and weather resistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blowing agent</td>
<td>Application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Microagglomerated cork</td>
<td>• Excellent compressibility, ultimate seal, optimal granule structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synthetic cork</td>
<td>• Reduced weight, density control, better elasticity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food packaging</td>
<td>• Excellent seal, no shrinkage, no water absorption</td>
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<tr>
<td>PU foams</td>
<td>• Reduced weight, controlled and uniform foam structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thermoforming</td>
<td>• Thinner sheets, shorter heating time</td>
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<td>Wood-plastic composites</td>
<td>• Reduced weight, easier to saw and drill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoe soles</td>
<td>• Reduced weight, matt surface, improved wearing comfort due to unique cell structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underbody coatings</td>
<td>• Improved stone chip resistance and sound damping, low UBC weight helps cut fuel consumption</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound-damping coatings</td>
<td>• Reduced noise and vibration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interior panels for car roofs/sides</td>
<td>• Low weight, improved flexibility</td>
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<td>Gaskets for automatic gear boxes</td>
<td>• Improved sealing effects, improved compression set, fills voids between matching surfaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expandable adhesives for cars</td>
<td>• Low weight, improved stiffness, improved compression set, fills voids between matching surfaces, creates inner pressure and better sealing</td>
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<td>Floor mats for cars</td>
<td>• Low weight, anti-slip effect, matting effect, elasticity, more rubberlike appearance</td>
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<td>Weather strips for cars</td>
<td>• Low weight, cost savings, uniform closed cell structure, better sealing properties, narrow specification along profile compared to CBA, more stable foaming process, better surface appearance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lightweight foam</td>
<td>• • Good absorbance and recovery</td>
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<td>Nonwoven for composites</td>
<td>• • Cost savings, reduced weight, good insulation, increased dimensional stability, increased bulk and thickness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper &amp; Board</td>
<td>• • Improved bulk, bending stiffness, thermal insulation. Coated applications can give soft touch and anti-slip</td>
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<tr>
<td>Porous ceramics</td>
<td>• • Controlled and uniform pore structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Printing ink for wallpaper, fabrics and textiles</td>
<td>• 3D effects, matting, peach or suede look</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheets, boards &amp; profiles</td>
<td>• • Closed cells, foam stability, reduced weight, cost saving potential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silicone rubber</td>
<td>• • Cost savings, reduced weight, uniform and closed cell structure, dry surface</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thermal release material</td>
<td>• Debonding at elevated temperatures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artificial leather</td>
<td>• • Surface modifications such as suede and nubuck effects</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The secret ingredient in product development

Expancel is more than a microsphere. It’s a commitment to continuous improvement and business success for the long term. Because every product – and every process – has unique demands. That’s why we strive to be an expert product development partner, not just a supplier.

Our sphere of expertise
Expancel thermoplastic microspheres were invented in the mid-1970s. Since then, we’ve been refining the most effective ways to make them work in diverse applications across numerous industries.

Achieving the full potential of microspheres demands the best brains in the business. Brains that understand business goals in addition to chemistry and processes. We know how to achieve the best results for your production process and your business. You can be assured of all the advice, support and hands-on technical assistance you need to make things run smoothly and profitably.

Bringing Expancel closer to your business
As a product development partner, we are constantly searching for new ways to make Expancel work better for your business. We aim to make it a seamless and cost-effective part of your operation.

One of the innovations this has led to is our unique on-site expansion system. This patented, high-capacity system makes it simple to expand Expancel on your own premises. It gives you greater flexibility and significantly reduces your purchase and shipping costs, helping ensure that Expancel is the best solution from every perspective.

Contact your local representative to learn more about our microspheres and on-site expansion system.
Expancel plays a key role in our products. Without it, we could not have developed the offering we currently have.

Dominique Tourneix, CEO Diam Bouchage
The secret ingredient in sustainability

Expancel Microspheres not only come with several benefits for various applications – they also provide sustainable solutions to a world that needs them.

Reflecting a brighter future
With Expancel Microspheres, it’s possible to create elastomeric cool roof coatings that are both protective and environmentally beneficial. They have excellent capacity for total solar reflectance, especially in the near-infrared region. In warmer climates, air conditioning alone can account for up to 70% of residential energy consumption in total. By applying an Expancel-formulated coating to the metal roof of a large, one-story commercial building, cooling energy consumption was reduced by 40%. In addition, an elastomeric cool roof coating with Expancel Microspheres makes an excellent water proofing coating with increased durability in all types of weather. All in all, our microspheres make a great contribution to doing more with less.

Innovation close to our customers
When heated, Expancel Microspheres can increase in volume by up to 60 times. This capability is one of its key attributes. As part of our effort to make Expancel a seamless and cost-effective part of the production process, we have developed a unique on-site expansion system. Our patented, high-capacity system makes it simple for customers to expand Expancel Microspheres on their own premises, radically reducing transportation costs, reducing emissions and fuel consumption. It’s an innovation that creates value for customers while supporting our commitment to a sustainable future.

Cutting kilos from cars
Lighter vehicles result in less fuel consumption. Expancel’s low density and closed cell structure makes it a valuable component in expandable adhesives and sealant materials. Which includes underbody coatings that protect against stone chips, water, salt and other road hazards. Adding Expancel Microspheres creates lightweight alternatives that have all the protective properties of heavy-duty coatings whilst extending lifespan and contributing to weight reduction. Just one more simple example of how Expancel can expand sustainability.

40% energy reduction
A coating with Expancel can reduce energy consumption from air conditioning by more than 40%.
Which improvements do you want for your product?

Whether you want to reduce weight, improve consistency, create a better look and feel or make manufacturing more effective, Expancel could be just the ingredient you need.

Discuss your product and your needs with us. And, let our experts guide you towards the right solution for your business.

Contact us and discover for yourself why Expancel is the world’s favorite secret ingredient.

Learn more at: expancel.nouryon.com
info.expancel@nouryon.com
T +46 60 13 40 00
We are a global specialty chemicals leader. Industries worldwide rely on our essential chemistry in the manufacture of everyday products such as paper, plastics, building materials, food, pharmaceuticals, and personal care items. Building on our nearly 400-year history, the dedication of our 10,000 employees, and our shared commitment to business growth, strong financial performance, safety, sustainability, and innovation, we have established a world class business and built strong partnerships with our customers. We operate in over 80 countries around the world and our portfolio of industry leading brands includes Eka, Dissolvine, Trigonox, and Berol.

nouryon.com

Expancel® Microspheres is the world’s favorite secret ingredient. You can find it in all your everyday essentials – your car, your shoes, the cork that protects your wine. It helps product developers worldwide expand their business, enabling them to reduce weight, cut costs, improve quality and create unique finishes. Expancel has dual functionality as a blowing agent and lightweight filler. The microspheres consist of a thermoplastic shell encapsulating a gas. Add heat and they expand dramatically, up to 60 times their original volume. The product is supported by unmatched technology know-how, ensuring smooth integration into any process. Expancel is a trademark within Nouryon – a world leading provider of expandable microspheres.

expancel.nouryon.com