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Audi Electric Sports Car to Feature Alcoa's New Greener Aluminum

- Audi e-tron GT wheels will use the more sustainable metal
- This is the first use in transportation, Alcoa CEO says

By Joe Deaux

(Bloomberg) -- Audi will be the first automotive company to use a new more sustainable aluminum that's already being put to work in Apple MacBooks and Michelob Ultra beer cans.

Alcoa Corp. is supplying Ronal Group with the aluminum to make the wheels on the Audi e-tron GT, the companies said in a statement. The specialty metal comes from the joint venture between Alcoa Corp. and Rio Tinto Group, called Elysis, which uses a process that eliminates all direct carbon dioxide emissions from the traditional aluminum-smelting process.

"It's a very cool car that will have a great set of wheels and will have what I think is a really unique carbon footprint across the entire industry," Roy Harvey, chief executive officer of Alcoa, said in a phone interview. "This is a great first application for it -- it's the first application inside of the transportation industry."



The Audi e-tron GT.

Source: Audi AG

The companies didn't disclose a specific volume or mix, but the wheels will be made using the Elysis metal as well as Alcoa's low-carbon aluminum brand.

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Aluminum end users have been clamoring for cleaner sources of the metal, which accounts for an estimated 1% of greenhouse gas emissions by the industrial sector. To be sure, this new sustainable variety doesn't account for its sprawling so-called Scope 3 emissions, which includes the impact of the entire supply chain and customers' use of products.

Audi AG's head of procurement strategy Marco Philippi said in the statement that aluminum is a focus of the company's carbon dioxide program due to the high energy input required to make the metal. Electricity generation accounts for about 60% of the global industry's emissions. The International Aluminium Institute outlined plans last week for the aluminum industry to cut carbon emissions substantially by 2050, while still falling short of the net-zero goal being adopted by many countries.

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