



Press release

Next step on the road to sustainability

Hochland plants are now climate-neutral

Cheese manufacturer offsets CO₂ emissions – Cooperation with Plant-for-the-Planet

Heimenkirch/Schongau/Dieue-sur-Meuse. Hochland Deutschland GmbH is one of the first companies in the food industry in Germany to operate its production facilities 100% climate neutral. For the Schongau and Heimenkirch sites as well as for Dieue-sur-Meuse in France, which is also part of Hochland Deutschland GmbH in organisational terms, the cheese manufacturer has prepared carbon footprints for 2018. The total direct CO₂ emissions (Scope 1 and 2 according to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol) amounted to almost 35,000 tons.

Hochland will fully offset these emissions as part of the "ZNU goes Zero" programme by investing in projects to bind and avoid CO₂. Therefore, the cheese producer works closely with Plant-for-the-Planet (<https://www.plant-for-the-planet.org/de/>). The initiative is planting trees on the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico for the "ZNU goes Zero" campaign and promoting renewable energies through certificates. Compensation thus achieving a genuine, immediate contribution to climate protection.

Moreover, Plant-for-the-Planet trains children as climate ambassadors. Hochland is organizing two climate academies for children between the ages of 8 and 12 in autumn 2019. The registration period is currently running. At the same time, the company is making possible another academy in Botswana through cross-subsidisation. The contract with Plant-for-the-Planet runs for ten years. That is to say Hochland has made a long-term commitment to offset its CO₂ emissions every year.

Wherever possible, the company is also working to avoid or reduce its own CO₂ emissions, for example by generating part of the required electricity itself using photovoltaic systems. For the remaining electricity requirements of its Schongau and Heimenkirch plants, Hochland purchases 100% "green electricity" from VKW (Vorarlberger Kraftwerke) since the beginning of May 2019. Additional measures are planned for 2020 to further reduce the company's own emissions.

What is the Greenhouse Gas Protocol?

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol is a set of rules for recording climate balances. It distinguishes between direct CO₂ emissions (Scope 1 and 2) and indirect emissions (Scope 3).

Scope 1 emissions originate from emission sources within the company, e.g. the company's own production and vehicle fleet.

Scope 2 emissions result from the generation of energy that is sourced from outside, mainly electricity and heat from energy services.

Scope 3 emissions are all other emissions caused by the company's activities but not under the control of the company, e.g. from suppliers, service providers or employees.

What has happened so far in Hochland

In 2018, various Hochland sustainability initiatives set international standards in the industry: The cheese manufacturer has concluded an agreement with its milk suppliers for the Schongau plant against the use of non-selective herbicides and against the application of fermentation substrate if this could contain microplastics. Hochland has also gained new milk producers who have been supplying organic milk and "Tierwohlmilch", i.e. milk certified by the German Animal Welfare Association (Deutscher Tierschutzbund), since the beginning of 2019. Hochland is thus continuing its pioneering role. It was also the first company to establish cheese production without genetic engineering in its production facilities in several European countries – Germany, France and Poland.

In early 2019, Hochland received the „Nachhaltiges Engagement/Testsieger“ award ("Sustainable Commitment/Test Champion") from FOCUS and DeutschlandTest for its efforts.

Already 25 years ago the company was a pioneer in sustainability: In 1995 Hochland was the first company in the dairy industry in Germany to have its plant certified according to the EU eco-audit regulation.

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