



Press Release

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Holle baby food harmonises food production with climate protection

The first and only baby milk formula in Demeter quality is now also CO2 neutral

Parents who have the highest expectations when buying food for their babies often chose products in biodynamic quality. For many years these products have been increasingly sought after and can now often be found in specialised shops as part of the baby food section. What hasn't been available so far is baby milk formula not only in Demeter quality but also produced in a CO2 neutral way. This is the direction Holle, Germany's leading Demeter baby food manufacturer, is taking from now on.

"The complete life cycle of Holle baby milk formula - from the cows' feed, the whole production process through to the transportation of the formula to our wholesalers - is CO2 neutral", explains Udo Fischer. Together with Peter Kropf, Mr Fischer owns and manages Holle baby food GmbH. Holle is a baby food company with an 80 year tradition of organic production and is based in the German-Swiss border area Riehen/ Basel.

In order to offset the emissions from the production of its baby milk formulas, Holle supports an international composting project in a 350,000 square metre area of Egyptian desert, converting the land for organic agriculture. Such climate protection projects are positively supported by the German Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection. Certifications to the highest international quality standards ensure, that "unavoidable CO2 emissions during food production can indeed be offset through avoiding emissions in other areas."

For both managing directors a long-term, sustainable and future oriented approach to producing baby food is very important. This is part of the company's history. Since its founding in 1933, Holle's guiding philosophy has always been based on anthroposophic dietary principles.



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This means rejecting chemical processing and preservatives, making natural animal husbandry the norm and prohibiting GM technology. Additionally, Demeter farmers take the specific characteristics of plants and animals into consideration and enrich the soil with plant based preparations. "Whenever possible seasonal, regional, CO2 neutral and, of course, biodynamic are for Holle simply the best choice for healthy and sustainable foods." Sustainability is also an important factor for Holle when working with partner companies.

A Significantly Reduced CO2 Balance

The CO2 balance of Holle baby milk formulas - the summary of all global warming gas emissions which result directly or indirectly from the products - is already significantly less than when compared with conventionally produced foods. This is because 50% of the emissions caused through Demeter milk production are absorbed in the soil. The cows graze on biodynamic grown pastures which increases the soil hummus and binds carbon. Furthermore, the cow's fodder is produced on the same farm and is free from synthetic pesticides. This means that no soya-based feed needs to be imported from outside because the cows feed on native grass, lucerne and hay. All this together significantly reduces the CO2 balance. Demeter farmers work the arable land with much gentler methods which also has a positive influence on the balance. For example, ploughing methods prevent soil erosion and better binds carbon.

The milk's CO2 balance was calculated on the basis of the Greenhouse Gas Protocols put together by the company Soil & More International. The total of all global warming gas emissions for Holle baby milk formula production is just 3,250 tons CO2 per year. This compares roughly with the CO2 output of around 100 families in Germany within the same period.

The regional processing of Holle's milk also contributes to this low level of emissions. The dairy company Schrozberg collects the milk and organises the two hour journey to the production line in Allgau.



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“Detailed energy usage figures were available for each individual production stage and for every raw ingredient. Therefore, we could precisely identify the emissions for each ingredient”, said Tobias Bandel, one of the Managing Directors of Soil & More International, who further explained: “This helps produce very accurate results in a sustainability audit or certification.” From experience, he knows that other companies often have only the overall energy usage figures. Emissions from individual processing steps have to be guessed. This leads to imprecise results. The emissions from the Holle administration offices were also included within the calculations. They are only three percent of the overall result. “Compared with other companies that is extremely little.”

From the beginning Holle was clear that the CO2 Neutral project should not be a rash, unsustainable action. Udo Fischer: “We took our time to plan everything carefully.” And with success. The German Minister for the Environment in Berlin has praised such initiatives from companies like Holle: “Voluntary offsetting of global warming gases is a worthwhile contribution towards climate protection - as long as climate friendly production processes are put in place before any compensation payments are made.”

The CO2 Reduction Project

“In order to offset unavoidable production emissions we buy "emission certificates" from Soil & More International. This way we support a composting project, which the company runs in Egypt, together with its partner the SEKEM-Group”, said Udo Fischer. The certificates and the CO2 reduction projects are themselves certified by TÜV Nord GmbH, an EU accredited certification body for climate protection projects. The SEKEM farm lies in the middle of the Egyptian desert, 60km north east of Cairo. Here the farmers use organic matter, such as green manures and harvest residues, to produce high quality compost through a highly controlled microbiological composting method. This way, only a fraction of conventional methane emissions are produced compared with the usual waste disposal methods of uncontrolled rotting and deterioration.



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The compost is specifically used in the desert, making it possible to produce sustainable, fertile soil. Money from Holle's CO2 offsetting has produced 350,000 square metres in the first year alone. Fruit, vegetables and tea are now growing far better on this biodynamic farm. Yields have increased and less water is used - water which comes directly from the river Nile without depleting valuable, non-renewable ground water. Synthetic pesticides are not necessary. Holle is sure that: "Through the emission offsetting certificates we not only compensate emissions from our own baby milk formula production but support sustainable agriculture in Egypt, benefiting 2000 local employees and their families." This way, scores of small Egyptian farmers from disadvantaged rural areas have a regular income. Their livelihood is secured and there is a positive outlook for the future. Udo Fischer himself was convinced of the enormous benefits the scheme provides when he visited the SEKEM farm in November 2012.

About Holle baby food GmbH:

Holle baby food GmbH manufactures Demeter quality organic baby food. The company has sites in Riehen (Switzerland) and in Grünsfeld near Tauber-bischofsheim (Baden-Württemberg/Germany). The product range includes infant formula milk, baby porridges and jars. Baby weaning oil, teas and snacks round off the comprehensive offering. Holle products are sold in 41 countries. The company, founded in Switzerland in 1933, is the market leader in Germany's organic specialist retailer segment and a founding member of www.babyclub.de, with 700 000 visitors a month the most successful organic internet portal for new parents.

For more information visit: www.holle.ch

Contact person:

→ has to be filled in by country



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Udo Fischer at SEKEM farm, Egypt.

