



# RESPON-SIBILITY



An update on sustainability at DMK.

**EDITORIAL CONTENTS** 

# Dear readers,

I am lucky enough to have been part of our company's sustainability journey for almost 15 years. We have come a long way in that time and are proud of what our employees and farmers have achieved, so much that we were even nominated for Germany's most important award in 2023, the German Sustainability Award. That was important recognition and confirmed we are on the right

And yet we are only at the beginning of a challenging transformation. When it comes to ESG issues (Environment, Social, Governance), we have a great deal to do, and more is to come. Finding the right balance between the many and sometimes conflicting demands of customers and the market, regulators, our business standards and the needs of our owners is becoming more challenging. We are working to meet these challenges and are contributing to EU climate targets and, as a supplier, to our customers' climate targets. Our Sustainability Strategy and Vision 2030 are important guides in this process.

Transforming our industry - in terms of climate neutrality, biodiversity, the circular economy and other sustainability issues - is a major task. We must ensure we do not lose sight of value creation while at the same time improving the potential of agriculture. Transforming the dairy industry is closely linked to changes in agricultural production. We need to redefine how we value food, what we want to consume and how we can improve production in Germany and Europe in a sustainable way. A social consensus is needed, as is planning security for all involved. We must keep this in focus and improve this as we implement Vision 2030 and the Sustainability Strategy 2030 in particular.

Business conditions and the state of the world present new challenges in many areas. We are expecting a tough market environment in Europe in the coming years. But we are sure that the

2030 strategy and the goals we have set ourselves are right and necessary and that they will guide us through this challenging market environment.

You can find more information about our progress, our challenges and the ESG goals and measures we are pursuing in this report. We are optimistic as we look forward to making our contribution and remaining a reliable partner for our many stakeholders.

We are happy to be working with you as we shape this process, transforming the dairy industry to become more sustainable. Please join us in this constructive dialogue - let's keep communicating.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Philipp Inderhees,** Global Head of Corporate Strategy, Sustainability and Innovation (CSSI) and ESG Officer, responsible for Strategy, Sustainability and Innovation at the DMK Group.

# **Contents**

Sustainability management	4
Structure, sustainability strategy, main topics related to Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, stakeholders, value chain, mission statement	
Change in the dairy industry	9
Insights into the dairy market	
Raw material	10
Climate-friendly agriculture, climate target, Science Based Targets initiative, life cycle assessments, Net Zero Farm, Milkmaster, Tuurlijk, farming method, sustainable procurement, Supply Chain Act	
Processing	18
Biodiversity, energy management, energy efficiency in the plants, environmental management, water, waste, occupational health and safety, employer attractiveness, compliance, Supply Chain Act, food safety, certifications	
Product	32
Regionality, plant-based alternatives, sustainable packaging, food safety, Product Carbon Footprint	
Securing our future	38
Market trends	
How the DMK Group is organized	40
Structure, parent company, executive bodies	
Key figures	43
About this report	45
GRI Index	46
Imprint	48
•	

# Our four areas of action

... in our sustainability strategy: Climate protection, animal welfare, biodiversity and people. These symbols show you where you can find more information about our fields of focus.



## Climate protection

See pages 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39



# **Animal welfare**

See pages 13, 14, 15, 16



# **Biodiversity**

See pages 12, 15, 18, 19



# People

See pages 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 38



# **The DMK Group**

... is Germany's largest dairy cooperative, and, with a turnover of 5.5 billion euros in 2023, one of the top 20 dairies worldwide. It is one of the largest suppliers in German food retailing, which brings with it influence and responsibility in equal measure. At more than 20 sites in Germany, the Netherlands and further global hubs, some 5,800 employees process milk into the highest quality products. We create healthy and delicious foods with sustainable added value for our customers, employees and shareholders. Our supply chain starts with milk production and collection and runs through preparation, transportation and further processing all the way through to trade and distribution. Our portfolio is diverse: cheese, dairy products, ingredients, vegan products, baby food, ice cream and whey products.

# Our Sustainability Strategy 2030

.. is based on acting in harmony with people and nature throughout the value chain. We are facing up to our responsibilities as a sustainable dairy company. Maintaining regional ties and continuing the dairy cooperative's long tradition goes hand-in-hand with pursuing a future-oriented corporate and sustainability strategy. The DMK Group has been pursuing the Sustainability Strategy 2030 as one of its most important areas of focus for years, with climate protection, animal welfare, biodiversity and people front



sustainability

Our dairy co-operative bears great social responsibility and has to ensure it is fit for the future. DMK approaches this systematically, across the board.

ow can we operate sustainably and be sure that we do not consume more resources than can be regenerated? How do we create an awareness of ecological, social and economic responsibility? These are central questions for the DMK Group, which has taken a holistic approach to improving sustainability in the production, manufacture and processing of dairy products since 2013. This reaches all areas of the company.

DMK systematically promotes sustainability, under the strategic direction of the Corporate Strategy, Sustainability & Innovation (CSSI) department. The different departments all handle sustainability issues independently, in Agriculture, Occupational Safety/Environmental Protection, Energy Management, Packaging Development, Purchasing, Production, Human Resources, Research & Development and Quality Management. But these sustainability issues are steered through an integrated management system and certified by external organizations, such as DIN ISO 14001 (environment), DIN ISO 50001 (energy), EcoVadis and SMETA (see also p. 30, Certifications).

# Clear, structured approach

We have created a range of structures over the past few years so we can take on and integrate the issues that come our way, including risk and complaints management, supply chain programs, guidelines and committees and project management structures.

We coordinate regularly and closely with management and the cooperative bodies on major issues. And when it comes to aspects that affect the market, we make sure to involve the six business units, who integrate topics from climate protection to animal welfare and packaging into their own strategies.

# **ESG Officer's tasks**

We established the role of ESG Officer in 2024. The Head of CSSI assumes the role of ESG Officer and is responsible for implementing and further developing the Sustainability Strategy and also monitoring and implementing regulatory ESG requirements such as the Supply Chain Act, CSRD and SBTi. Steered by the ESG Officer, the ESG Board acts on decisions relating to ESG issues and communicates issues to the group's departments. The ESG Board is made up of people from CSSI, HR, Governance, Occupational Safety & Environment, Agriculture, Legal and Purchasing..



SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT // Organization

## **SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT** // Fields of action

The Sustainability Strategy

has 4 fields of action

# Key topics for the DMK Group

DMK has been carrying out materiality analyses in line with GRI guidelines for many years, with a recent online survey of all relevant stakeholder groups in 2021. We reviewed and adapted the analysis as part of an external audit in 2023 and added an opportunity/risk assessment. We are currently conducting our first double materiality analysis to prepare for the new EU CSRD Directive.

These are the DMK Group's current key topics:

- · Competitive milk price
- · Value creation
- · Climate protection
- Food safety
- · Product life cycle assessment
- · Animal welfare
- · Animal feed
- · Future viability of dairy farms
- · Cooperative
- · Resource conservation
- Packaging
- Biodiversity
- Innovative dairy industry
- · Plant-based milk alternatives
- Digitalization
- · Product price development
- Employer attractiveness
- Occupational health and safety
- Compliance
- Sustainable procurement
- Food waste
- · Food labelling
- · Regionality

## **Our focus**

The departments are largely responsible for managing these topics.













The UN adopted **17 Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) to reach by 2030 in 2015 and called on all stakeholders, companies included, to play their part. At DMK, we are contributing significantly to **six SDGs** with our corporate and sustainability strategy.



# our value chain

Our **contribution** 

to the



# Milk production

almost 4,500 farmers are working in eight regions of Germany and the Netherlands.



# Milk collection

Around 180 milk collection trucks bring the milk to the 20 DMK plants.



# Milk processing

The DMK Group processes milk into a range of products at specialized plants.

action.

# Climate protection

The DMK Group has further areas

of focus to improve sustainability,

These are firmly integrated into the

beyond the four main fields of

We will reduce our CO₂ emissions along the value chain by at least 20% by 2030¹ and achieve energy savings of approx. 14.8 million kWh. ¹=compared to 2020



We are improving animal welfare on the farms in line with public demands – and have a high participation rate in the Milkmaster bonus program.



We help preserve biodiversity, on the farms and at the DMK sites.



structures and processes of DMK's

different departments, and include:

Sustainable packaging, operational

environmental and resource protec-

tion and social standards.

We supply millions of peopl with valuable food, suppor employees and farmers wit dedicated programs and focus on human rights and fair working conditions.

# Our **stakeholders**

The following groups have a particular influence on our company:

- · Milk producers
- · Shareholders in the cooperative
- **Employees**
- Business partners
- Consumers & the public
- Politics / authorities
- · Associations & NGOs
- · Media
- · Science
- · Environment

# Select memberships and commitments

- · Science Based Target initiative (SBTi)
- · Milk Industry Association (MIV)
- · Cooperative associations
- · EcoVadis
- · Sustainable Dairy Partnership
- · Farmers' Association
- · Milk Sustainability Module
- · Raiffeisen Association
- · Milk Initiative
- · Nageb

# Our marketing channels

- National and international food retail
- European gastronomy/food service
- National and international processing industry



# Transport

The products are brought from the DMK plants to the customers (transport logistics).



# Further distribution & trade

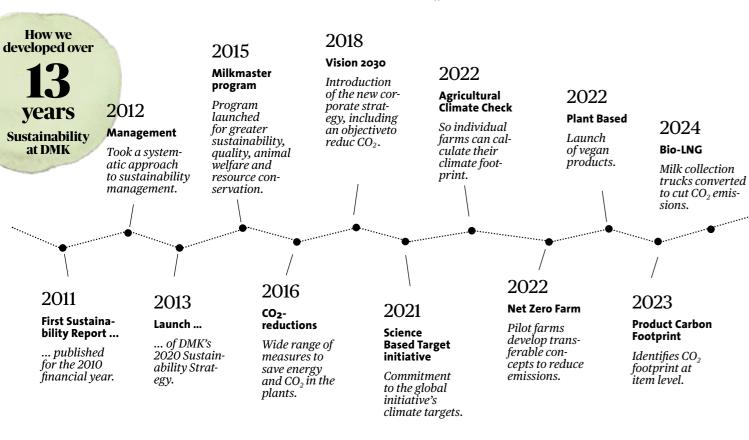
DMK products can be found in retail, catering, pharmacies and processing companies.



# Consumption & disposal

People buy and consume the products and then dispose of most of the packaging through the recycling system.

## SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT // DEVELOPMENT



# mission statement



# **Our Vision**

The first choice - for always. We select the ingredients of our dairy products with the utmost care and support consumers at all stages of their lives.



## **Our Mission**

We see ourselves as a partner with a deep understanding of our customers and consumers, maximizing value creation and committed to our sustainable responsibility...



# **Our Values**

Our three core values apply as ever: we are fair, innovative - and entrepreneurialin our actions. The wishes of our customers and consumers are our mission.

Lifelong responsibility: DMK DMK is committed to its values and obligations.

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT



## THE DAIRY INDUSTRY IS CHANGING

# New dimensiones

The dairy market has seen some profound and fundamental changes in the past few years, presenting milk producers and dairies with some major challenges.

"External

influences have an

value chain."

Andreas Gorn,

The increase in the price of raw materials and energy has led to a significant rise in the costs of milk and dairy product production, manufacturing and logistics. That has led prices to increase for milk and dairy products, fueling inflation and dampening consumption or driving shoppers to look to different products. Milk producers initially reacted to the higher price by increasing milk volumes.

# More stability again

We saw major price fluctuations immense impact on our across the entire supply chain over activities and business arthe past two years, due to developeas - we have to respond ments on the supply and demand to this across the entire side, which at times seemed to tug in opposite directions. Product prices fell in 2023 compared to the highs of the previous year but remained above average when compared to the long term. Producer prices reached their second-highest level after the 2022 all-time high. The year 2024 began with a more balanced situation on the market with more stable price trends, but most are still above the long-term average.

# **Environmental influences**

The dairy industry is also facing a significantly changed environment, which impacts DMK's business areas beyond market effects. One major factor is the availability of raw materials. After many years of growth, the structural change among milk producers means we have now passed the 2020 peak in milk volumes and expect declines going forward.

Political demands and public concerns are increasingly affecting production and accelerating the process of declining milk volumes. They are also making milk as a raw material more expensive, alongside rising operating costs. Meanwhile, higher energy prices and wages are increasing the costs of processing.

> On the sales side, changing consumer habits in Germany are leading to shifts within and

between the submarkets. Alongside issues such as animal welfare, sustainability

and climate protection, inflation and falling purchasing power have also been influencing demand for dairy products recently. Furthermore, geopolitics are increasingly overshadowing global cooperation in foreign trade, as economic and political instability weakens international supply chains.

Head of Insights & Dairy Markets. **Industry facing major challenges** 

> and in the general environment will lead to shortages of milk volumes in the future due to structural changes in milk production and changes in production and processing conditions. That means we will see increasing competition for the raw material, making raw milk more expensive. Competition is also likely to intensify in terms of the sale of milk and dairy products, while at the same time

uncertainty on the markets in the future.

# These changes both on the market side

consumers' quality expectations are growing and competition with milk alternatives is increasing. International demand is likely to be further dampened by lower purchasing power and efforts to become more self-sufficient. We can expect further price volatility and

# Factors with an impact

- 1. Raw material supply
- 2. External requirements
- 3. Wider global conditions





- 4. Higher costs in production, processing and logistics
- 5. Challenges in the labor
- 6. Changing consumption patterns



# Climate-friendly with an impact

Achieving climate targets: Many farmers are already applying effective measures

o reduce CO<sub>2</sub> – and they are working a treat.

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

**RAW MATERIAL** // Climate targets

Our goal: To slash CO<sub>2</sub> emissions along the entire value chain.

griculture is particularly important to our climate strategy: 73% of our carbon footprint is generated on farms, meaning it is linked directly to milk as a raw material. To reaffirm our commitment to climate protection, we joined the Science-Based Target initiative (SBTi) in 2021. In line with the Paris Agreement, we are committed to contributing to limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius. We developed our target of reducing our emissions by 20% by 2030 (compared to 2020) and this was validated by the SBTi in November 2022.

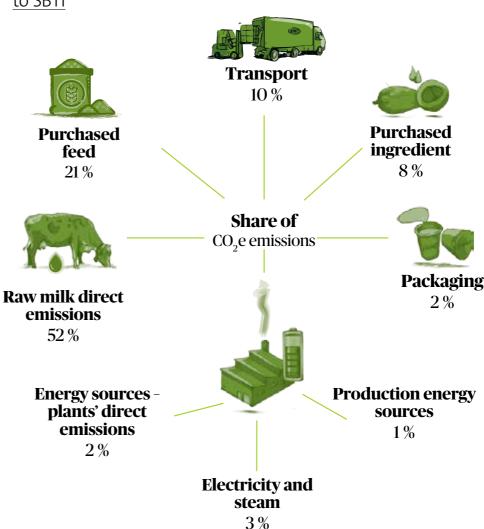
## **Significant reduction**

We are working on adjusting our targets to the SBTi sector standard as well as the SBTi Guidance in accordance with FLAG, a guideline for reducing emissions along our value chain. We have already significantly reduced the average CO<sub>2</sub> footprint per kilogram of milk: from 1.24 kg CO<sub>2</sub> e/kg in 2010 to 1.13 kg CO<sub>2</sub> e/kg in 2023. Increased productivity in milk production, scaling back soya feed and more environmentally-friendly agricultural practices, such as the GMO-free strategy, all contributed significantly to this progress. Furthermore, DMK is driving the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at the plants by increasing energy efficiency and using renewable energies (see p. 19, Processing).

Milk volumes are expected to keep falling in Germany (see p. 9, Changing dairy industry) and this factor is also included in the emissions calcula-

# Life cycle assessments

Corporate carbon footprint according to SBTi



tions. We will pay more attention to the Product Carbon Footprint in our product portfolio (e.g. for new products) and have set up the systems needed to make this happen. We are also strategically expanding plant-based milk alternatives (see p. 32, Products).

## A bonus for taking part

The suppliers of milk, our raw material, are shareholders in our cooperative

and operate as independent entrepreneurs. As the DMK Group, we are finding ways to make climate-friendly agriculture attractive and affordable. At DOC Kaas, milk producers receive a supplement to the milk price if they fall below a certain CO<sub>2</sub> emission value per kilogram of milk. In Germany, DMK farmers receive their own bonus for climate accounting via the Milkmaster program.



"By joining SBTi, we have a clear guideline for reducing emissions along our value chain by 2030."

**Dr. Maximilian Blum,** Senior Manager Strategy Business



# Measures to make agriculture more climate friendly

- Committing to a reduction target in line with SBTi.
- Calculating the Corporate and Product Carbon Footprint.
- · DMK Net Zero Farms project.
- Climate payment for Dutch members of DOC Kaas.
- Launch of the Agricultural Climate Check including a bonus for the milk producers who join.
- Training and sensitizing milk producers.
- Sustainability projects including introducing a sustainable milk flow with Tuurlijk! on the farms (see p. 15).



Going forward, financing agricultural transformation must be seen as a task for society as a whole.

Agricultural production accounts for the largest share of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in our ecological balance sheet, meaning this area plays a crucial role when it comes to cutting emissions. Milk producers are our most important partners as we work together to make the dairy industry even more sustainable. But this transformation is a task for society as a whole and will only be possible with the support of the whole supply chain, right through to the final consumer.

# Supporting farmers

DMK is actively looking for ways to convert farms to lower-emission production, to improve climate protection on dairy farms. DMK is already testing climate measures on some farms through to the end of 2025 in the company's Net Zero Farming initiative, aiming to slash the farms' carbon footprints. The process includes people from throughout whole value chain, with industry specialists, scientists, vets and farmers all meeting up regularly to work on

greenhouse gas reduction issues. DMK launched the project with three pilot farms in Saxony-Anhalt, North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony and now another farm from the Netherlands has also joined the project.

## Healthy cows

Herd management is an area that

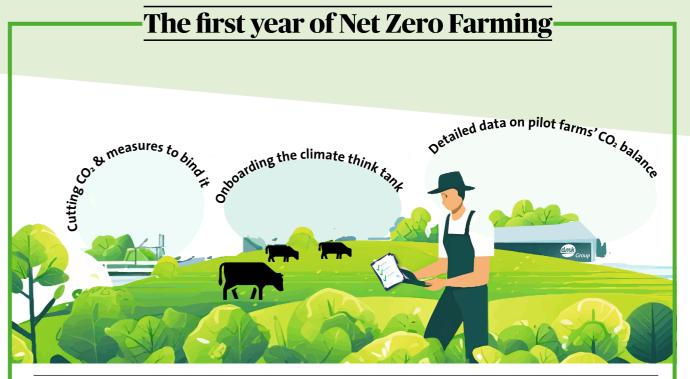
"Our production is very climate friendly in Germany and the Netherlands. We are helping farmers as they head for net zero through the Net Zero project."

> Henry Hashagen, Manager Agribusiness-Sustainability.

zation, as the health of animals, and maintaining their performance over as long a period as possible, add up to a significant contribution to climate protection. The knowledge gained during the project will be used to develop concepts that can be transferred to all farms,

with areas in focus including farm management, fodder- and arable farming and energy production. We are investigating ways to use feed additives to reduce methane, optimized feed rations, adjustments to liquid manure management or carbon capture through catch crops and biochar, within the project. We are monitoring

# offers a great deal of potential for optimi-



Net Zero Farming reveals many opportunities for sustainability on the farms: It systematically finds ways to optimize farm management, fodder and arable farming and energy production. The latest measures from spring 2024 are set to reveal even more scalable possibilities.

all of the measures tested to see how they impact milk yield, animal health and how well they work in practice.

# Looking good

The route to **more** sustainable agriculture – at DMK, specialists from many fields are

working together with farmers to explore ways to reduce CO.

Thanks to the measures implemented in the first year, the farms have already been able to save at least 10% of emissions, though of course each farm is different, one reason why the project is being carried out on different farms. But the results show that the many

different measures implemented in herd management are effective. But it also clear that cutting CO<sub>2</sub> in agriculture by working hand in hand with nature is a complex business and that the reductions are fluctuating and costly.

"The average footprint of German dåiry farms is only half the size of the global average. And it is even lower on my farm! Joining the Net Zero Project gives us farmers stability and makes us more appealing to future generations of consumers."



RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

**Building blocks for cutting CO<sub>2</sub>** 















The Milkmaster program supports farmers in Germany and the Netherlands as they make milk production more sustainable.

of DMK farms with 97% of milk volumes took part in the Milkmaster program in 2023.

of DMK farms use loose housing: No milk will be processed from cows in tie-stall housing year-round as of January 1, 2026.

# RAW MATERIAL // Milkmaster Sustainability & transparency Report and key figures Code **Bonus** Assessment Consulting Vision 2030

# milkmaster

he Milkmaster program was specially developed by DMK to promote responsible milk production. It helps farms to continuously improve across the board.

## Clear code

The DMK Group has been promoting sustainability through the DMK 2020 strategy since 2013, which even then put a focus on agricultural production. Back in 2015, we introduced Milkmaster, our program to embed sustainability in milk production for our Dutch and German milk producers. At its heart is the Production Code, which applies to all DMK milk producers. It is the guiding principle of the Milkmaster program and ensures transparency between farmers and the market. It formulates clear recommendations and expectations when it comes to animal welfare, animal health, the environment and climate protection alongside economic and social issues.

## New standards

Milkmaster was a comprehensive and forward-looking program that was in a class of its own in the industry and compared to the standards on the market at the time. Since then, the industry and the market have continued to develop, and Milkmaster as a dynamic

program was optimized again, based on the experience of recent years. It was also simplified significantly four

# **Special incentives**

Alongside climate protection, animal welfare is a core theme in our sustainability strategy. The Milkmaster program defines aspects of responsible milk production when it comes to animal welfare (such as grazing), animal health (such as a veterinarian documenting herd management) and the climate (such as joining the digital Agricultural Climate Check through the myMilk.de supplier platform). With the Agricultural Climate Check, our farmers can work out their individual carbon footprint and identify where they have potential for improvement. It is voluntary and is incentivized through the Milkmaster bonus.

The climate check helps farmers gain important insights into their own operations and take steps to improve them, including in areas from animal welfare to climate protection, sustainable feed procurement and husbandry methods. In 2023, 81% of farms took part in the Agricultural Climate Check.

DMK paid more than 202 million euros in bonus payments to farmers in Germany and the Netherlands

## RAW MATERIAL // Tuurlijk

as part of the Milkmaster program between 2016 and 2023. A large part of this goes directly into farmers' animal welfare activities.

# Top priorities

Environmental systems that promote animal welfare are a key concern for stakeholders, especially our milk producers because only healthy and happy cows have a good milk yield and produce the best quality. The DMK Group is committed to a variety of husbandry systems that focus on cows' health and welfare, the impact of husbandry systems on the environment and the economic and structural options available to milk producers. In a cooperative that is

characterized by regional diversity, no individual regions or production methods are preferred or disadvantaged.

# Clear compass

In Milkmaster, we recommend a combination of loose housing systems with grazing for dairy cows and cattle for at least 120 days per year, if operational conditions permit. As not every farm has sufficient grazing land in its immediate vicinity, comprehensive grazing is not feasible in Germany. But DMK supports pasture grazing and is a member of Pro Weideland, an association that promotes this. Stables in which cows can move freely at all times are by far the most common husbandry system used by DMK farmers.

"DOC Kaas' longterm cooperation with Jumbo and Uniekaas Holland leads to further sustainability and added value for and through the entire supply chain. We are proud of this."

> Guus Mensink. Chairman of the Board of DOC Kaas.

# Sustainable milk stream with



**ANIMAL HEALTH &** WELFARE



**LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT** 



**GENERAL** 



while also saying "of course." exhibit natural grazing behavior. on the Dutch market.

**BIODIVERSITY** 

In the Netherlands, too, we are implementing a pioneering program together with key partners. Tuurlijk! is a sustainable milk stream developed by the Dutch cooperative DOC Kaas and brought to the market together with trading partner Jumbo and Uniekaas Holland. It brings together aspects relating to animal health, animal welfare, land use, the environment, climate and biodiversity and covers five topics with a total of 41 criteria. Farmers must ensure their cows have at least 120 days a year of pasture grazing, including young cattle. Each animal must have its own comfortable resting place and access to cow brushes. Farmers also need to demonstrate that they have measures in place to prevent heat stress for the cows and to protect calves' welfare. Cows may only be given GMO-free feed and the energy on the farm must come from renewable sources. Plus, participating farms are required to maintain or sow herb-rich grassland on part of their land and provide evidence

of biodiversity measures. An indepen-

criteria are met. With the new milk stream, DOC Kaas in Hoogeveen produces a wide range of cheeses for sale under the Jumbo own brand. The name of the program sums up the future-oriented, sustainable dairy products: The Dutch word "Tuurlijk!" comes from the term "natuurlijk" which, like "naturally" in English or "natürlich" in German, has a double meaning, referring to nature, Alongside Tuurlijk!, the DOC Kaas

dent body checks and certifies that all

cooperative also maintains a separate stream of grass-fed milk. Dairy farmers who take part in this scheme receive a supplement to the milk price if they meet the conditions for grazing. Their cows need to be outside for at least 120 days or 720 hours a year and have sufficient grass available so that they From this stream of grass-fed milk, DOC Kaas in Hoogeveen produces and sells grass-fed cheese, mainly



# How we handle the challenges of raw material procurement

DMK faces a wide range of requirements and is working to find the right response.

ur customers expect a lot from us. And rightly so. The DMK Group responds to the many different requirements of industry and trade and, in discussion with our customers, is finding ways to implement these throughout our entire supply

Farming methods are a key issue and in Germany, retailers in milk processing are implementing a program concerning animal welfare, named "Haltungsform". There are many animal welfare programs in Germany, including OM++, DLG Tierwohl, Pro Weideland and more, with four levels and a fifth added in summer 2024. Food retailers must participate in the program in order to be able to display the Haltungsform-Logo on their private label packaging. On the market, demand is growing for dairy products made according to Haltungsform 3 (HF3 / QM++), in which animals are kept in loose housing. The focus is currently on drinking milk, meaning UHT milk and fresh milk, and retailers have announced concrete plans to fully convert the segment to at least Haltungsform 3.

# Meeting market needs

VIn this context, we at DMK are responding to demand and have established the new OM++ raw material stream for UHT milk at the DMK plant in Erfurt. From January 2024, farmers supplied the milk to enable us to provide UHT milk as a product to customers at Haltungsform 3. The Erfurt site is certified in accordance with the QM-Milch standard, or the additional QM++ module, which enables goods to be labeled Haltungsform 3. The expansion of our portfolio depends significantly on market demand as this is a highly dynamic

area.

## **GMO-free**

Group is

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

One of our customers' further key demands is to ensure that milk is GMO-free. This still presents an enormous challenge for the entire supply chain, as it is associated with higher costs and greater complexity. Meeting this requirement greatly depends on whether appropriate animal feed is available on the market. The DMK

continuing to address the issue of GMO-free feed in response to specific customer inquiries. We switched to GMO-free feed in selected regions and locations in 2016 and offer GMO-free products on the market based on the German VLOG standard (VLOG is the acronym for the Association for Nongenetically Modified Food). The DMK Group has been the market leader for **GMO-free dairy products in Germany** since 2017. Almost 80% of DMK's milk producers have switched to GMOfree milk production and are VLOG

The DMK Group pays





certified.

farmers who have switched to GMO-free feed a total of around 30 million euros extra each year, beyond milk payments.

# **Deforestation-free supply chains**

The feed industry has been subject to the OS SovPlus Standard since January 2024. It means dairy farms can only purchase sustainable soy, so all the feed used on farms has been certified by the standard since then. The QS SoyPlus Standard ensures there has been no legal or illegal deforestation in the cultivation of soy. Deforestation-free supply chains are another important issue connected with the feed used in milk production, so we are focusing on the EU Regulation on Deforestation-Free Supply Chains (EUDR). DMK is continuously monitoring the issue, has joined discussion forums such as the "More sustainable high protein feed" forum and is also supporting research into this area. Regional in-house production of animal feed also plays a role in the DMK Net Zero Farms project.

# **Purchasing**

# Ensuring procurement is sustainable is also important to us

The supply chain is what connects our farms with our plants and our customers from industry and trade. Alongside milk, our raw material, we also procure and process additional materials and services, meaning we work closely not only with our farmers, but also with more than 3,000 active suppliers and service providers, more than 99% of whom are based in Germany or the EU. We see them as partners who support us in developing and making high-quality products, and we expect them to adhere to ethical principles, protect human

rights and treat the environment with respect. To make our collaboration sustainable, we integrated this area into our procurement process and added contractual obligations a few years ago. When we published our Supplier Code of Conduct 2020, we

further developed and codified our requirements regarding sustainable business practices in our supply chain. The document also sets out guidelines

for transparent, ecological and sustainable transportation and includes social criteria such as safeguarding human rights along the entire value chain. With our latest update, we also ensure that our code reflects all of the requirements set out in the German Supply Chain Duty of Care Act. We also offer our suppliers and service providers training on the Supplier Code of Conduct.

# LINK Visit the DMK sustainable procurement site



# **DMK focuses** on sustainable resources



Cocoa and palm oil from sustainable sources





Wood from FSC-certified forests

# **Our certified materials**

How socially and environmentally responsible are the supply chains?

With a strong procurement organization that is experienced in sustainability issues, DMK sees itself as well prepared for further developments. For our products, we have been using raw materials procured with sustainability in focus for many years. We also only buy strategically important basic raw materials when they are certified to show they are sustainable, including palm (kernel) oil and cocoa. DMK has been procuring 99% of its cocoa and palm oil from sustainable sources since 2016, and this applies to wood too (see also p. 31). As of 2024, all DMK dairy farms are subject to the QS SoyPlus standard, which ensures there is no legal or illegal deforestation involved in the cultivation of soy.

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

Haltungs-

form

How are the cows? Trade and consumers are focusing more and more

on animal welfare labelling and certification.

# 8

# The art of processing

What kind of footprint do we want as a dairy cooperative?

DMK is working to keep it as small as possible by addressing areas from production right through to the end product.

# **Preserving biodiversity**

587
million

from almost 1,200 farms, our farmers received a bonus for pasture grazing in the Milkmaster program in 2023.

ealthy ecosystems are essential to our lives yet have been under threat for decades. Preserving biodiversity is a crucial issue at DMK and is firmly anchored in the Sustainability Strategy through to 2030. The company aims to contribute to preserving biodiversity on farms and at DMK sites. The Milkmaster Production Code has had recommendations on what farmers can do to preserve biodiversity since 2015, by using grassland, regional feed and pasture grazing. Farms are independently responsibility for specific biodiversity measures, as pasture grazing, for example, is not feasible for every farm (see also p. 14, Milkmaster). It depends on a farm's circumstances whether it is able to encourage diversity of species in meadows and pastures, promote nature conservation along rivers, streams and ditches, protect

Pasture farming

The DMK Group has for many years been a signatory to the Pro Weideland pasture charter, which encourages pasture farming and also offers a product

label with the same name. Pasture farming has a positive effect on environmental protection, animal welfare and biodiversity and is already practiced by many farmers where it is possible. DMK buys pasture milk in some places and quantities in line with the Weidegang foundation

made with this milk are marketed with the Weidemilch logo, certifying that the cows are pasture grazed. The certification means that the cows graze outside for six hours a day for at least 120 days each calendar year. DMK has also developed a sustainable milk stream with milk producers in the Netherlands called Tuurlijk! The Tuurlijk! sustainability program covers five topics: Animal Health and Welfare, Land Use and Environment, Climate, Biodiversity and General, making Tuurlijk! a holistic sustainability program (see also p. 10, Raw material).

conditions, and products

# Biodiversity

DMK took part in a project examining the links between climate protection and biodiversity together with the Bodensee-Stiftung (Lake Constance Foundation) in 2019. DMK farmers who joined the project were given recommendations for improving their individual carbon footprint while considering biodiversity on site. The foundation also developed a Biodiversity Performance Tool (BPT) to measure biodiversity, using 78 indicators to evaluate the farms' strengths and weaknesses. DMK tested the tool together with agricultural businesses as part of a pilot project in 2019.

## Measures are working

A biodiversity check was carried out in a further project with the Lake Constance foundation in 2023, as part of the Unternehmen Biologische Vielfalt (Companies Biological Diversity) program. Alongside the foundation, the Global Nature Fund and other organizations developed the analysis specifically for companies to support them in recording their impact, or that of individual company divisions, on biodiversity. The project is based on a biodiversity matrix and examines information provided by different parts of the company, from agriculture to strategy and purchasing. The check involves assessing the company's direct and indirect effects on biodiversity and involves an ongoing exchange with stakeholders. It results in a report with recommendations for a biodiversity action

# Using resources efficiently

DMK is optimizing energy consumption at its plants to make sure resources are used as efficiently as possible in production.

sustainability plays a central role in the production of dairy products. How do the plants use their energy? How do they optimize their water consumption and reduce waste, wastewater and emissions?

# High standards

DMK further develops and monitors energy and environmental issues through the environmental and energy management system, in line with national and international norms DIN ISO 14001 and 50001 and certified by an accredited company. This ensures individual monitoring of the way valuable resources are used. An integrated management system efficiently defines the necessary framework.

# Even less carbon

Emission values are an important, quantifiable indicator of how well our sustainability strategy is working. Emissions are not only generated on the farms but also come from the plants where milk, our raw material, is processed, and DMK is making adjustments in these areas too. Our climate target is to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub>emissions throughout the value chain by at least 20% by 2030 compared to 2020, which is why we want to continuously

reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at our plants as well as in our agricultural activities (see also p. 12, Raw material). To achieve these goals, many sites are being upgraded and converted and the whole energy management system is being certified accordingly. DMK is also looking for ways to replace some fossil fuels with renewable energies at some sites to further reduce the CO<sub>2</sub>footprint.

## Consuming less

The growing proportion of renewable energies in the German electricity mix has made energy prices significantly more volatile. Fluctuations in supply also pose challenges for the DMK's highly efficient energy management is continuously driving efficiency improvements: the company has already tested innovative solutions for regulating electricity consumption and energy recovery. The SynErgie sub-project within the Kopernikus projects funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research provided a series of insights and these have been incorporated into DMK's energy management since 2017. Within SynErgie, we are driving model calculations that show how individual production processes and plants can be flexibly and

profitably integrated into the energy market.

Many biodiversity measures are having a positive impact on DMK's Sustainability Strategy.

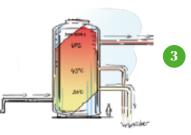
RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

grassland birds and farmland birds

or protect insects.









We applied the knowledge we won in a demonstration model at the Edewecht site. We also plan to integrate cold storage into the overall model to see whether that might offer a chance for further optimization too.

# Heat exchanger

- **1.** Heat from the gas-steam turbine is lost through the chimney..
- **2.** Efficient low-temperature economizer uses waste heat to heat water.
- **3.** Heated water is collected in the large central heat storage tank with three water layers and fed into three different heat circuits.
- **4.** Water heated to 60 degrees is used for cleaning, for example. **Each kilowatt hour that we**

**RESPONSIBILITY REPORT** 

## **Smart savings**

Alongside SynErgie, DMK is pursuing an energy project in Edewecht to make smart use of waste heat and plans to roll this out to other sites in future.

The DMK Group presented the full range of its energy project at the Edewecht site as part of the Bremen Environmental Award. "We analyzed the processes at our plant and were able to identify a number of measures to increase energy efficiency," says Lars Dammann, Head of Occupational Safety and Environment at the DMK Group. "We are using this as a basis to build a thermal insulation system to help us make better use of waste heat from our gas and steam plant."

The heat generated during steam and energy production can be used in a range of production and cleaning processes, he says. "We can now control energy-intensive processes centrally as part of an intelligent, integrated heating system and reduce consumption in many areas."

The results of the measures are impressive: the project is enabling the site to reduce the consumption of primary energy such as electricity (-540 MWh per year) and gas (-24,100 MWh per year), saving emissions of around 5,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. That spells an impressive 12% reduction in the Edewecht site's annual emissions.

## Using wood

Another way to become more energy efficient can be seen at the Waren site, and how it is operating the biomass heating plant. As an alternative to fossil fuels, biomass, in the form of wood chips, is being used to produce process steam. A maximum fuel quantity of 8,100 tons can be used per year. The biomass used consists solely of untreated wood and it burns in the combustion plant. The flue gases produced in the combustion chamber are used to generate steam through a downstream boiler system. The steam generated is then made available to the production areas as process steam.

Compared to using fossil fuels such as gas, the site is avoiding the emission of around 2,500 tons of the greenhouse gas CO<sub>2</sub> every year, depending on product capacity.

# Energy & environment - Our transformation

Dairy cooperatives like DMK also have a duty to achieve the climate neutrality target by 2045 set by the German government. In 2023, we drew up transformation proposals, together with external specialists.

## CO reduction

We are assessing ways to reduce our energy needs through further heat efficiency measures and by using climate-neutral energy sources such as hydrogen, biogas or green electricity, for example from wind turbines, at the major DMK sites in Edewecht, Altentreptow and Zeven, through to the end of 2024. Next, we will draw up a plan of action for the coming years.

## Using biogas

The Altentreptow site produces biogas during wastewater treatment. We will optimize the way this gas is used by the end of 2024

so that purified biogas can generate heat at the site, replacing the use of fossil natural gas.

# Phosphorus recovery In order to recover phosphate

contained in waste water, DMK is looking into possible processes and is taking part in the struvite workshop at the University of Braunschweig. A 2023 study at the Altentreptow site looked into ways to better use the plant's technology for phosphate recovery by applying the latest research. We are also looking at waste water at other DMK sites in regard to phosphate recovery.

# Environment and Energy

Klaus Landwehr, Head of Energiemanagement.

don't use is the most

sensible way to save

energy."

# Ecology meets economics

We are gradually converting the whole fleet of milk collection trucks to lower CO<sub>2</sub> bio-LNG technology, as of 2024.

- Using lower speed trucks
- Limiting the speed to 82 km/h
- Tires New tires with better efficiency properties

2020 to date: reducing our diesel consumption by 860,050 liters / 2,279 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

Lower emissions: The DMK truck fleet is continuously switching to more climatefriendly models.

## PROCESSING // Water

# Slowing the flow .....

## Using less water

Besides energy, water is essential for production at the plants. DMK has committed to using this important resource more sparingly, as part of its sustainability efforts and has spent many years optimizing the way it consumes and recovers water.

A look at the 2021 data illustrates our commitment: we only consume around 1.12 liters of water per kilogram of raw milk processed at our sites - meaning the DMK Group is significantly better than the average of all German dairy companies.

Despite this progress, we are still working to reduce the amount of water we use and set a further water savings target for 2024. We have efficiency measures in place at all of the plants. We plan to continuously improve and leverage further potential in the future, too. Joining the B-WaterSmart research project is part of this.



us, water is an essential issue when it comes to safeguarding our locations, so we are working to continually reduce our consumption and conserve resources in all areas."

Lars Dammann, Head of Occupational Safety and Environment at the DMK



# Conserving groundwater

Using water responsibly as a resource is greatly important to us so we are conducting a case study with local water association the Oldenburgisch-Ostfriesische Wasserverband (OOWV), the German Water Centre (IWW) and Enviro-Chemie as part of the EU's B-WaterSmart research project. Together, we are looking for ways to reduce drinking water consumption in particular areas, or to find new ways of

We generate what is known as "cow water" at our Edewecht site, meaning water produced during the condensation of whey. We set up a test facility to examine whether the cow water can be treated to replace drinking water, so we can reuse it. We see great potential in using this water to reduce our drinking water consumption as a further way to help conserve groundwater resources. We aim to treat 600,000 m3 of vapor condensate per year at the DMK plant in Edewecht, an amount that would replace around 40%-50% of the current water requirement.

# **DMK** environmental goal 2024



# Waste as a valuable commodity

## No half measures

**70** 

•••••

of our waste

is already

being recy-

cled or used

to generate

energy..

Packaging plays a major role in food production. It protects products and guarantees that they are safe from

the moment they are transported right up to when they reach the supermarket and then the consumer's fridge at home. Durable packaging is indispensable - but it can also be designed sustainably. DMK is continuously researching and developing new ways of packaging products to make progress in precisely this area. We are particularly focused on ways to combine safety and recyclability. We are always on the lookout for a combination of materials that preserves the quality of products while still being easy to recycle. We also check which environmentally friendly alternatives can be used in production (see p. 34, Sustainable packaging). Around 70% of

all recyclable materials in our packaging consisted of FSC- or PEFC-certified alternatives in 2022 and for secondary packaging, that proportion rises to 90%.

Thanks to the monitoring and documentation of DMK's waste together with modern recycling management, 98.3% (2023) of our waste is already being recycled or used to generate

# **Recycling everything**

Animal by-products are products of animal origin that are not intended for human consumption, such as sour whey, rinsed milk mixtures or product residues. Mostly, these by-products are fed to pigs or used in biogas plants. We are investigating new ways of utilizing them, for example in the soil industry: sour whey could be used to adjust the pH value in soil products such as plant soil or compost. Insect breeding is another possible area of application, with organic residues from the food industry used as feed, transforming them into high-quality proteins. Last but not least, the possibilities also include the inhouse production and use of biogas.



We are taking many technical measures to reduce water consumption, and our networks are also making a key contribution to this effort.

- Regular meetings, exchanges, training courses for environmental and water protection officers.
- Member of the Partnership Environment Company regional group.
- Chair of the MIV Environmental Working Group.
- Member of the Weser-Ems Water Future Council.
- Participation in the DWA dairy wastewater working group.

Our aim: to continuously improve our environmental performance, further develop environmental awareness within the company and comply with legal regulations and other requirements relating to the environment.

\_\_\_\_\_



# Playing it safe.

All employees should be able to work safely in an accident-free environment. Ensuring this is the case is one of the DMK Group's most important goals.

■ afety in the workplace is a basic prerequisite for work processes to function smoothly and for mutual trust. The DMK Group takes its responsibility for all employees very seriously and has dedicated itself to the goal of preventing accidents at work and constantly improving health protection. Our motto: Taking care of myself and you too! We embrace our safety culture and are constantly improving it.

# **Safer Together**

The name of our program says it all: Safer Together. We have been developing DMK's safety culture since 2021. All managers were initially given multi-stage training to carry out observations at their employees' workplaces. They then conduct appreciative discussions about work processes.

Employees have been attending workshops to learn how to carry out a routine risk assessment since 2023. That involves using the 5-finger method in order to analyze and improve their workplaces and prevent accidents. The focus is on regular communication between managers and employees. All in all, Safer Together leads to continuous improvement in occupational health and safety, reducing behavior-related accidents in particular.

# Improve the reporting culture

In order to proactively prevent accidents at work, employees report any "unsafe situations" and "near misses" to a software database. All of these reports are analyzed without exception. Measures to solve the reported problems are then made available in the software as quickly as possible and managers then process them. People will also be able to report any incidents or issues using an app in future.

# Safer Together

- requires managers take time for their employees
- promotes respectful interaction with one another
- reinforces safe behavior
- promotes regular communication between managers and employees



# Number of accidents per 1 million working hours

2023 in the dairy industry

accidents 2021

accidents 2022

accidents

2023

Industry average (accidents with > 3 days' absence from work)

Source: BGN business figures

DMK figures (accidents with > 1 day absence from work)

## **Preventing accidents**

We want to prevent accidents caused by malfunctions or maintenance and repair work on machines through the Lockout-Tagout-Tryout (LOTO) safety system. We are continuing to develop and maintain this in all plants in a shared, systematic process. Employees are given personal lockout locks that they can carry with them and use to protect themselves. Their use is mandatory, including for external company employees. The standardized LOTO system is to be introduced at all packaging and filling plants by the end of 2024 and further plants are to follow in 2025 until the system is in use across the board.

## **Rewarding safety**

Every year, we present the DMK Group Safety Award to the sites with the best results for occupational safety activities. In 2022, the Waren and Everswinkel sites were the winners and in 2023, Zeven and Holdorf won. In addition, the production plants organize an Occupational Safety Day for employees every year and invite occupational health and safety experts to present safety topics relevant to their area of work. The plant manager shows how much they appreciate and value the employees and comments on any serious accidents.

Winning ways! The plants in Zeven and Holdorf achieved the best results for their occupational safety activities in 2023. They were presented with the DMK Group Safety Award

# employee health Health matters to us and

we support this area through:

- Company sports / digital active break
- Operational integration management
- Company doctor
- Training courses

**Investing** in

# Investing in fire and explosion protection

To protect people and the DMK plants' production capability, we invested more in fire and explosion protection in 2023, installing modern gas extinguishing systems and extensive early fire detection equipment at several locations, for example. Older spray drying systems were also decommissioned or replaced with new systems.

# Winning visuals

This year, the Occupational Safety and Environmental Protection department, in collaboration with the Everswinkel plant, won the BGN Prevention Award 2024. The DMK contribution consists of short instructional videos without any written or spoken language, making them easy to understand for employees of all nationalities. Thanks to the modular structure, we can keep expanding this visual instruction method and combine the different clips together as needed.





# A good team. Doing good.

We want our employees to feel good. They need a working environment that motivates them and allows them to focus on the essentials, a responsibility we want to embrace every day.

ur employees are our greatest potential. Their passion and commitment are such an important part of the company's success that we have made the strategic topic People into one of our seven top areas in focus.

## **Targeting tomorrow**

Our working world is changing rapidly and we constantly face new demands, so it is imperative that we actively address these changes in order to remain an attractive employer for the dairy industry. We have adopted a slew of measures to ensure this is the case: We help our employees stay fit for the work of tomorrow, enabling them to further develop their skills and qualifications with specific training courses and possibilities.

# Qualifying and encouraging

We live and cultivate a corporate culture that promotes the exchange of knowledge and strengthens connection

throughout the company. Alongside a wide range of online and face-to-face training courses on our Training & Development platform, we support individual further training with the StepUp program and a comprehensive development program to unlock personal potential, in Passion.

# Working as equals

We also promote this approach at management level. Our Leadership Next Level program is driving a change in management culture, based on the principle of "less of a boss, more of a coach." That makes our managers into supporters for each and every employee. Our focus is on promoting personal responsibility, continuous

"Companies do not change - it is people who change and they change their company."

Ingo Müller, CEO DMK

feedback, providing a great deal of appreciation and leading with goals.

# **Working arrangement**

Flexibility is also something people appreciate. Flexibility when it comes to the time and place you work is an important factor in having a good work-life balance. This kind of individual flexibility makes work more fun and motivates employees. We have created workplaces for our administrative employees to make this possible. We will also offer our employees in production more freedom in organizing their working hours around their needs in future, through a new workforce scheduling system.

# Balancing work and family

A successful work-life balance is important to the DMK Group and we are aware that many of our employees have family

commitments, whether they are looking after children or caring for their relatives. We work with the pme Familienservice Group to help employees explore work-life balance issues and possibilities.

# All stages of life

We are also providing coaching to address different life situations through pme. Specially trained advisers providing support to any employees facing difficulties in their personal or professional lives. They work together to help employees look for the right solution for them and develop new prospects.

**pme**familienservice







DMK offers training and development programs for employees, for all stages of their professional life.



Employee satisfaction and loyalty are important drivers for the company, so we conduct BUZZER, our annual employee survey, to explore what moves and influences the workforce. The survey makes an important contribution to motivation and appreciation within the workplace. Everyone's opinion is important to us! Everyone should have a say in shaping our company.



# Extra time

Our colleagues' wellbeing is important to us, so our industrial employees can rely on regulated changing time, which counts as additional vacation days, regulated compensation days for overtime and time off in lieu when they do night shifts.

# **Vacation & salary**

Sufficient vacation and fair pay are essential for employee satisfaction. At our company, everyone is entitled to 30 days' vacation per year and is paid according to collective agreements.



# Diversity & equal treatment: The basis for our thinking and behavior.

We respect human rights worldwide and follow recognized social norms and ethical standards such as the General Equal Treatment Act. The DMK Group provides equal opportunities for all and does not tolerate any form of discrimination, whether it is based on age, gender, sexual identity, origin, religion or ideology. We do not accept any actions or behavior that is humiliating, intimidating or hostile, not within the company and not towards our business partners. Our Equal Opportunities Officers

handle this subject area, and we also have a whistleblower protection system (see



Content



Entrepreneurial, fair, innovative are our core values. It is essential we ensure we are responsible, strategic and sustainable in all of our actions.

# Fair play

protect the rights of each individual, always in balance with each other. Ensuring these are observed is not only fair, it is also entrepreneurial and sustainable, as that protects the company from the consequences of any violations. In this area, sustainability means meeting the needs of the present in such a way that the opportunities of future generations are not compromised.

# Systematic management

As an international dairy company, the DMK Group is obliged to comply with many legal regulations. Any breach of these can have significant consequences.

aws are created to

Compliance measures make it easier to follow the rules, in order to avert any damage and actively prevent any violations.

The DMK Group has created a compliance organization that accounts for the different structures within the group. It establishes responsibilities beyond Group Compliance and maintains close contacts and exchanges with these different areas. That means the compliance organization is always closely aligned with day-to-day operations.

# Specific objectives

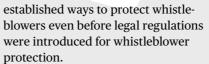
For the compliance management system, which is based on national auditing standard 980, the Group management defined the objectives based on compliance risks specific to DMK, including minimizing risks from money laundering and corruption alongside

> violations of antitrust and sanctions laws. In order to meet these objectives, the group derived measures in the compliance program including guidelines, a whistleblower system and training.

> > The DMK Group had already

"Compliance has become a key success factor. Through correct behavior, each and every individual can contribute to improving the trust of our customers and business partners and protecting the reputation of our company."

Ingo Müller, CEO.



## **Risk overview**

The DMK Group's compliance risks are constantly changing and evolving, so risk analysis is an integral part of the risk management process. The analysis serves to identify and assess risks. The results are presented annually to the Group management, which then evaluates them and derives new targets and measures.

# **Bigger picture**

Compliance contributes to society as a whole by preventing corruption for example or ensuring people follow competition rules. It is fundamentally important for every company and also makes a major contribution to a functioning economic system in which all market participants have fair opportunities and innovation is possible.

# We follow a clear code

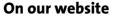
The DMK Code of **Conduct** provides guidance to help our employees protect their own interests and those of the DMK Group. It is supplemented by a series of internal guidelines to make it easier to comply with legal requirements.

# LINK The DMK Group Code of Conduct

# DMK's whistleblower system and how we protect whistleblowers

If we want to remain true to our values and rules, we may not turn a blind eye to violations of the law. That is why employees, business partners and third parties can submit anonymous reports through a digital reporting platform at "sicher-melden.de" and an ombudsman who is sworn to secrecy. The procedure for submitting reports is governed by rules of procedure. Reports of human rights violations in the supply chain (Supply Chain Act violations) can also be submitted through the reporting platform, accessible worldwide, or other reporting channels. The DMK Group protects whistleblowers from any form of discrimination or

penalization.



Follow to reach the reporting platform:



Accessible Group-wide and online, in all company languages: www.dmk.de/en/compliance

The DMK Deutsches Milchkontor GmbH reporting platform is at www.sicher-melden.de





# With care and understanding

DMK Group is protective. So that our supply chain is sustainable, we ensure our actions are guided by legislative initiatives, and are conscious of our global impact.

uman dignity is inviolable, a fact enshrined in the German Basic Law. That also underpins everything the DMK Group does. Our aim is to avoid human rights and environmental violations throughout the entire supply chain.

The German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act entered force at the start of 2023. As we must comply with the Supply Chain Act, we made sure that the DMK Group had implemented all the measures in good time. These include appointing an ESG Officer to monitor the implementation.

tation of the Supply Chain Act's requirements, carrying out the annual Supply Chain Act risk analysis and expanding

our current complaints procedure, for example. We publish Supply Chain Act reporting annually, including the policy statement, on our website www.dmk.de/en/ in the Sustainable Procurement | DMK Group section.

Overview of the DMK Group's certifications					
Area	Area Certification / Field of activity / Audit reference		DMK plants	DMK subsidi- aries' plants	
Feed	QS		9	5	
reeu	GMP +		0	5	
	BRC	Global Standard for Food Safety	2	3	
Food safety /	FSSC 22000		3	3	
quality / manage- ment system	IFS: International Food Standard	Globally recognized product quality & safety standard	9	9	
	ISO 27001	IT-Management	1	0	
	ISO 14001 Environmental Management		13	11	
	ISO 50001	Energy Management	13	14	
ESG: Environment, Social, Governance	EcoVadis Silver Medal 2024	Human Rights / Envi- ronmental Protection / Governance	DMK Group	DMK Group	
	SMETA	Human Rights / Governance / Occupa- tional Safety	10	3	
Product-related	Kosher / Halal	Nutritional require- ments	11	7	



Overview of DMK Group certified raw materials					
Certification	Type of raw material	DMK plants	DMK subsidiar- ies' plants		
VLOG	Milk	10	8		
Organic (Demeter, Bioland)	Milk	1	6		
Pasture-grazed	Milk	4	2		
QM ++	Milk / Farming method	1			
RSPO	Palm oil	3	2		
Rainforest Alliance	Cocoa	3	2		
Fair Trade	Cane sugar	1			

# **Protecting people**

All measures taken by the DMK Group associated with fulfilling corporate due diligence obligations under the Supply Chain Act aim to identify, minimize and if possible, eliminate human rights and environmental risks, working closely with employees and suppliers. The aim is to prevent violations in this area as far as possible. (see p. 16 Raw material, sustainable procurement)

## Guarantee high standards

We consider it a matter of course to comply with ethical principles, human rights and environmental due diligence obligations as well as legal regulations and framework conditions, just as we consider it essential to guarantee the high quality of our products at all times. That is why we process and refine the raw material milk using only the latest technical processes and with the highest standards of hygiene, occupational safety, human rights and environmental protection. We make no compromises when it comes to our quality and safety standards. We are committed to consumers and their quality expectations as well as our customers in the retail and food industry.

We guarantee the food safety of our products and aim to constantly improve standards in this area. That includes the legally-required HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) control system, which includes a prevention management system for assessing hazards and risks in processes and products.

We also pursue a range of audits and certifications, again to guarantee our product safety and keep raising our standards. Alongside the regulatory requirements concerning sustainability and supply chain, the DMK Group is also bound by legal requirements when it comes to data protection, antitrust law and trade secrets. Contractual compliance with our business partners, in line with legal requirements, is also a guiding principle to which we are committed. As the DMK Group, it is and remains our goal to harmonize all needs in the best possible way.

# **Culture of strength**

Acting entrepreneurially means improving every day and achieving shared goals. With the TIGER Continuous Improvement program, we keep finding efficiencies in a new culture of strength. That means we are promoting cooperation and communication far beyond our separate areas to create transparency and freedom together. Each and every individual at DMK needs to be willing to improve a little bit every day. To this end, the company is committed to very clear values: **We** are fair, innovative – and act entrepreneurially.



# Silver for good performance

DMK is delighted to have won the silver medal in the sustainability areas of environment, labor and human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement. The assessment service provider for sustainability performance EcoVadis, known worldwide, gave DMK an above-average rating in all of these areas.





# We focus on quality and safety:

**PRODUCTS** // Plant-based alternatives

Transparency throughout the supply chain

■ rust is a top priority at DMK. It is important to us as a company in the dairy industry, and it is something that consumers and customers from the retail and food industries demand. Together, we all have high expectations when it comes to the quality and safety of our products. At DMK, we take great care in selecting our suppliers, based on clear criteria. We check the quality of raw milk throughout the whole supply chain, inspect all raw materials and ingredients as well as packaging materials and end products in the laboratories. That is the only way we can set high standards and ensure that they are consistently met in each different setting.

# **Loving local goods**

Products with shorter transportation routes are increasingly valued by consumers and companies alike.

onsumers value regionality and that is a good thing. At DMK, we are dedicated and passionate about our local areas where we work and live. We process our milk in 20 regional plants in Germany, and our milk producers are based in eight large regions - meaning often, milk barely travels any distance at all.

## Many regional products

In the Netherlands, too, milk producers work close to the plants, so many DMK products originally come from the region where they are made, even if they are not always advertised as such, as

Local fans: The traditional Bremerland brand has been resoundingly popular ever since it was relaunched.

regional labeling needs a certain amount of market demand and recognition.

## **Farming matters**

DMK's Zeven plant was part of a study on indirect employment effects and the importance of agriculture in rural areas. It found that the site affects almost 4,000 jobs in supplying companies, of which almost 3,500 jobs are in agriculture.

## Tradition creates trust

A small group of Bremen farmers came together in 2020 to campaign to revive the traditional Bremerland regional milk brand. Nowadays, it is impossible to imagine the Hanseatic city without Bremerland. "This local project is strongly supported by our Bremen-based DMK farm-

"When communicating the Bremerland brand, we put the farmers at the forefront. This creates trust and wins people over, whether in

or support in Bremen." Lisa Mammen, Senior Manager Business Acceleration &

supermarkets, on Instagram

or at events that we organize

ers, who, through the revival of the Bremerland brand, can now also speak of their profession in a positive light," says Ingo Müller, CEO DMK Group. As society becomes increasingly alienated from agricultural products, such connections are becoming more and more important. Consumers need and want to know where products come from and how they are made. "This is an important task for us as the largest dairy cooperative in Germany," says Müller.

Shops and cafés have been selling fresh Bremerland milk, which merland also participates in a range of regional events, always working closely with the Bremerland farmers.



Plant-based products belong in the DMK portfolio because they meet customer needs and reflect

**Alternatives for consumers** the zeitgeist. In 2022, we expanded our portfolio to include plant-based alternatives. The DMK portfolio now includes a range of the business units' product areas. One product group that is in focus, alongside MILRAM FrühlingsStreichs, is vegan cheese alter-natives. DMK has created a series of recipes, all developed

> A jury of specialists gave the MILRAM Gouda alternative grated cheese, one kilogram, a gold medal in the vegetarian/vegan cate-gory in the Küche Best Product Awards.

e see the nutritional transformation in society as

a constant process of change that we, as a forward-

looking dairy cooperative, cannot and do not wish

to ignore. The DMK Group has anchored Non Dairy as a growth

area in Vision 2030. DMK's range has featured plant-based prod-

ucts for many years, such as products in the form of powders for

specially to cater to the different customers' needs and

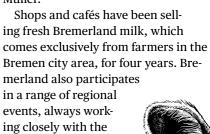
the industrial customer business.

specific applications. For the end consumer, for example, MILRAM created two grated products, as topping for pizzas and for casseroles.

# High standards of taste and functionality

In the industry business, we focused primarily on developing the melting and browning properties of the cheese alternatives so that the products have the same characteristics as cheese made from cow's milk, whether they are used on pizzas, casseroles or as fillings.

In the milk, yoghurt and cream product group, we developed a large number of alternative products and launched them under the MILRAM brand in food retail and the food service. The range starts with spreads and runs through alternative sour cream and yoghurts. We set ourselves the challenge and task of ensuring that all our products meet our customers' requirements, from the way they taste to how they can be used.





# It's all about the packaging

s a food producer, DMK sets high standards when it comes to packaging. Not only should dairy products be safe, fresh, of high quality, durable and reasonably priced when they reach consumers - they should also generate as little packaging waste as possible.

## **Extensive projects**

The company has embraced many major innovations in order to reduce potential packaging waste. The DMK Group set up the OCEAN project to avoid using plastic unnecessarily, aiming to develop more sustainable packaging that is easier to recycle, for example. DMK has been involved in a large number of research and development projects, commissioned several studies, set up workshops and pilot projects and built up an international network of industry and universities over the past few years. The focus of OCEAN is on optimizing the way plastics are used in packaging, through a range of approaches.

# High demands

The need to reduce the use of plastic plays an increasingly important role at DMK. It is not only something that customers and consumers are calling for - wider legal and social changes also require a reorientation when it comes to packaging strategies. But at the same time, the company must ensure there are no compromises when it comes to product quality, safety and the market need for functionality. Alongside sustainability, other key factors that define good packaging include maximum product protection, good performance in machine processing and logistics,

# The three stages of OCEAN

**Optimizing** recyclability Reducing materials Using plastic

recyclates & bio-based

plasticsn

and convenience for the end consumer.

# Investment in innovation

DMK has set itself the goal of measurably increasing the sustainability of the packaging and packaging materials used in OCEAN. This is a costintensive investment that does not ultimately make the product cheaper - but it does make it much more sustainable.

"There must be no compromise on product quality."

Dr. Ralf Zink, Directo



DMK is working on almost 20 projects that center on sustainable packaging and is now seeing some of the initial benefits.

o reduce quantities of plastic waste, DMK is implementing the requirements of the German Packaging Act, including tethered caps on bottles and replacing plastic straws with paper straws. But our commitment goes far further: we are also focusing on more sustainable packaging, which is something consumers clearly want. Here are a few examples showing what DMK has already achieved.

# Better recyclability

We converted the packaging of our own-brand spreadable fat to packaging that is 95% recyclable at the start of 2023, to avoid more than 600 tons1 of packaging waste every year. People can also remove the paper sleeves from the plastic cups more easily which makes separating waste at the recycling stage much more straightforward. The Brand BU implements sustainable packaging in a range of ways under the MILRAM brand, for example by improving the recyclability of the MILRAM Frühlingsquark cup, increasing recyclability from 0 to 88%1.

<sup>1</sup> Source: DMK internal calculations (packaging development/CoE-R&T)/ applies after it is separated from the aluminum lid.

# Saving material

We managed to reduce the **thickness of the film** from which cheese trays are formed. In Edewecht, we are now having all MILRAM and BU private label items converted to a bottom film that is around 15% thinner, which will save around 17 tons1 of plastic for every 10 million cheese trays produced. Similar packaging developments are also in progress at the Altentreptow and Georgsmarienhütte sites.

We have also dispensed with the **transparent snap-on** lids on yoghurt packs and MILRAM cottage cheese and fresh sour cream, saving still more plastic.

We have also dispensed with the conventional snap-on lids on our own-brand herb quark PP pots. To save even more plastic, we also optimized the use of materials in the cup, reducing its weight and improving its logistical properties. We managed this by improving the cup geometry, which also makes for better stability and optimal product safety. According to the packaging manufacturer's cradleto-gate assessment<sup>2</sup>, the project achieves a **GHG emissions** saving of around 27%.

<sup>1</sup> Source: DMK internal calculations (packaging development/CoE-R&T) <sup>2</sup> According to calculation by Pöppelmann FAMAC®Composition Calculato

# Bio-based plastics<sup>1</sup>

We began using biobased2 plastic for MILRAM 750g buttermilk drink bottles in late 2023, saving 200 tons<sup>2</sup> of CO<sub>2</sub> compared to the previous year with the same sales volume. OCEAN's longer-term development projects include the search for other bio-based plastics such as some made from whey and algae. They are just as recyclable as plastics used in the past, are made from renewable raw materials and would enable a final decoupling from chemical materials.

 $^1$  Plastics made from renewable raw materials such as maize, wood or sugar cane. Bio-based plastics have an advantage in that less CO $_2$  is used compared to fossil-hased plastics

<sup>2</sup> DMK internal calculations (packaging development/CoE-R&T)





# Sustainability in sight

Protecting the climate is a top priority at DMK. The Product Carbon Footprint provides a transparent view of the company's progress so far.

limate protection has been a headline issue for years and many DMK customers have set themselves ambitious targets. They report on their emissions every year and in order to do that, they need data from their suppliers such as DMK. For some customers, up to two thirds of all their emissions come from milk and meat suppliers, making it all the more important for them to receive emissions data from DMK every year.

## Versatile software solutions required

In order to achieve this goal for our customers, we have determined the Product Carbon Footprint of our products and also found indications for internal emission reductions.

A good overview thanks to a wealth of data

We know the recipe and energy consumption for each and every item and use special databases to calculate product emissions. Data from the Agricultural Climate Check to determine the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint of the farms is an important part of this. All the data we obtain gives us a comprehensive overview of the footprint of our raw milk.

Emissions at a glance

Thanks to adapted software solutions, we can inform our customers about the emissions associated with an article and also the total emissions purchased from

> DMK. Internally, we can also take a close look at the key levers for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

"We are doing footprint at DMK."

Lucian Paxino, Senior

# everything we can to reduce the CO2

Manager Climate Strategy.

# An example ...

Learning

to value food

There are so many ways to avoid wasting

to encourage consumers to be more aware

in how they use this valuable commodity.

food. DMK provides some practical tips

... of our MILRAM brand's commitment to reducing food waste:

We have set out on a mission to save food under the banner, "On course for more sustainability," by cooperating with "Too Good To Go" and our "Restlos lecker" initiative. MILRAM uses these initiatives to draw people's attention to the fact that food does not necessarily need to be thrown away after its best-before date. People should test it to check whether it is still good. MILRAM uses several channels to communicate this including social media and even prints details on MILRAM packaging.



**PRODUCTS** // Food waste



On track for more sustainability: Follow this OR code to find the MILRAM Freshness Blog



A label to **avoid throwing food away**: Many products are edible well beyond their

Too Good To Go

ক্ত

TASTE

RESTLOS LECKER

**TOO GOOD TO GO** 

SMELL

8

LOOK

# Corporate Carbon Footprint Product Carbon Footprint

Corporate Carbon Footprint (CCF)

All Group emissions (absolute)



DMK climate target: cut by at least 20% by 2030 compared to 2020

Focus: Milk and energy

SBTi certification



Product-related emissions

Product Carbon Footprint (PCF)

Climate targets in line with customer climate requirements

Focus depends on product

Certification ISO 14040/44

Our climate target at company level: "We will reduce our CO₂e emissions along the value chain by at least 20% by 2030 compared to 2020. Depending on the Group or product level, different targets and key measures are defined. Our climate target at Group level (CCF) mentioned above is derived from the SBTi targets (see p. 11. Raw materials), while at product level (PCF) it is based on customer requirements.

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT RESPONSIBILITY REPORT



# From vision to product

A great deal of innovation is required to develop food products. Interdisciplinary teams evaluate social trends, people's needs and wishes to capture the zeitgeist – which is increasingly about sustainability.

> ur Vision and our Sustainability Strategy provide us with clear direction when it comes to the future of the DMK Group. As a major food producer, we want to lead the way with the right ideas, translate trends into successful products and provide impetus for the whole dairy industry with our work.

## Innovative thinking

We develop new products such as our plant-based alternatives and promote innovation on farms (see p. 12 Net Zero Farm). We keep developing as a company, by introducing new working models for example. We work with partners

throughout the value chain on areas including animal feed and recyclable packaging (see p. 34 sustainable packaging). We participate

in national and international research collaborations with universities, technical universities, research and development

# Interdisciplinary work

The innovation process involves many parts of the business working together across the different functions: Research & Development and Marketing teams in the BUs, CSSI (Corporate Strategy Sustainability & Innovation) and the Center of Expertise Research & Technology.

Our two Milk Innovation Centers (known as MIC for short) in Edewecht and Zeven are key centers of expertise with their teams of people who are experienced in product, process, technology and packaging development.

institutions, suppliers and partners.



... Seasonality, regionality, local yet international food, glocal and fusion.



# **Sustainability**

... including climatefriendly nutrition, regenerative agriculture, zero waste, circular economy.



# Forms of nutrition

... such as the large proportion of flexitarians and the trend for vegan diets with growing diversity.



# **Alternatives**

... biotech innovations such as plant-based substitute products, alternative proteins.



We evaluate external studies and commission analyses to find out which trends are shaping the dairy industry and how people eat. We incorporate the results into our innovation management and make them into a building block in our strategic decisions. Some examples of these are the trends and sub-trends named above.





# Health

... with many facets relating to mindful eating, proteins, zero sugar, digestive wellbeing.



# Convenience

... Trends such as snacking, meal prepping, eating on the go, healthy food to go.



**DMK** // Organization **DMK** // Organization

# **Well organized**

At DMK, we pursue our goals together, communicating and treating each other as equals. Our focus: actively shaping the future of milk production. As a cooperative and as a company, DMK's clear and modern structures make that possible.

# 1. The parent companies

**DMK Deutsches Milchkontor eG** (DMK eG) and DOC Kaas are the parent companies of DMK Deutsches Milchkontor GmbH (DMK GmbH) and together they form the cooperative foundation of the DMK Group. **DMK's milk producers** are shareholders which makes them the owners of DMK eG and DOC Kaas U.A. The cooperatives are responsible for procuring milk as a raw material, while DMK GmbH handles the operations.

# 2. Deutsche Milchkontor **GmbH**

The general meeting is the top governing body at DMK Deutsches Milchkontor GmbH. Deutsches Milchkontor eG is the main shareholder of DMK Deutsches Milchkontor GmbH and is represented by **the board**.

# 3. Deutsche Milchkontor eG executive bodies

# The Representatives' Meeting

This convenes once a year. It is the main shareholder and the top body of DMK GmbH and is represented by the Chairman of the Board Thomas Stürtz. The tasks of the representatives' meeting include electing the supervisory board and resolving any amendments to the Articles of Association. It also adopts the annual financial statements and decides on how the year's net profit should be used. The representatives at the meeting each represent 25 members of the cooperative and are elected for five years.

## The Advisory Board

This board discusses all the major strategic decisions facing DMK GmbH and the cooperative. It also promotes the exchange of information between members and the executive bodies and may make proposals for the supervisory board elections.

# The Supervisory Board

This has twelve members, with six elected by the shareholders' meeting and a further six elected by the employees. The chairman of the supervisory board is Heinz Korte (shareholder). The supervisory board monitors the activities of the executive board.

# The DMK eG Executive Board

This manages day-to-day operations and the cooperative independently. Thomas Stürtz is the chairman of the executive board.

## The Group Management

This is where people from DMK eG's organizational units come together: The **CEO's** most important tasks include developing Group strategy and communication. The CFO's objectives include Group-wide efficiency and cost reductions. The management team also includes the heads of the cross-functional units, namely **Human Resources**, Supply Chain Management, Agriculture and Global Corporate IT, as well as the heads of the individual business units (BU), the Chief Operating Officers (COO). Our business units (BU) operate as a kind of independent company and regularly report to the Group executive board. DMK has six Business Units: Private

Label, Brand, International, Industry, Baby, Ice Cream.

# 4. Specialist units

# **Corporate Center (CC)**

This unit handles safeguarding, providing key guidelines for the entire Group to ensure that people follow all the directives and that nothing runs against the DMK Group's interests. That includes the Group's strategic orientation, uniform guidelines and managing the DMK Group's capital.

## The Center of Expertise (CoE)

This collates knowledge and provides it to the BUs and Corporate Center as a service. The CoE does not provide standardized services, but provides support in a creative form that is individually tailored to the needs of the BU. The CoE also creates synergies, because there is a great deal of knowledge within each business unit that could also be helpful to other units. If the CoE finds that a concept or a process is working particularly well in a country or in a BU, it shares that knowledge with the other BUs, for example.

## Global Business Services (GBS)

This covers the Services area and reports to the CFO. It provides the company with services for tasks that are mainly standardized and recurring such as payroll accounting or processing invoices.

# Further helpful abbreviations

BU = Business Unit

CSRD = Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive CSSI = Corporate Strategy Sustainability Innovation

GE = Germany

ESG = Environment, Social, Governance

SCA = Supply Chain Sustainability Act

BBD = Best Before Date

MIV = Milchindustrie-Verband NI = Netherlands

PCF = Product Carbon Footprint

SBTi = Science-Based Target initiative

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

# **KEY FIGURES**

# Key figures – What we have achieved

Success, performance and sustainability: The DMK Group's key performance indicators show our progress so far.

# **Economic**



Milk volume 5.5 billion kg in 2023.



**4,536 active milk producers**in GE and NL supplied the valuable raw material for our products in 2023.



With more than
20 locations
the DMK Group is Germany's largest

the DMK Group is Germany's largest dairy company. Most of the sites are in Germany, with more in the Netherlands and select international hubs.



**Turnover 5.5**billion euros
in 2023.



 $\begin{array}{c} \textbf{5,864} \\ \textbf{employees} \\ \textbf{in the Group} \\ \textit{in 2023 (DE+NL)} \end{array}$ 

Milk producers Year 2023	Milk producers Deutsches Milchkontor eG	Contract suppliers DMK GmbH	DOC Kaas (NL + DE)
Number of milk producersr	3,872	11	653

Includes milk producers and member dairies of DMK eG and DOC Kaas plus contract suppliers of DMK GmbH, only active farmers.

# 11 65

# Proportion of women in the company

Applies to DMK GmbH in 2023



Second and third levels

**Social** 

30-50 years

< 30 years

O% Management in 2023

Workforce age

structure`

Applies in GE and NL in 2023

> **50** *years old* 

82% in senior management

company-

wide

Ç

31% companywide

20/ mior gement m

18% in senior management

**Gender of 5,864** *employees, Applies in GE and NL in 2023* 

	Scope: DMK GmbH + at least 75% of subsidiaries (Germany and the Netherlands), reporting date 31.12.2023		21	202	22	202	23
	Employees	total	in %	total	in %	total	in %
	Total number of employees	5,836	100	5,811	100	5,864	100
	Permanent	5,291	90.7	5,274	90.7	5,330	90.9
TALL	Full time	4,621	87.3	4,625	87.7	4,637	87
	Part time	670	12.7	649	12.3	693	13
4.30	Temporary	545	9.3	537	9.2	534	9.1
	Paid under collective agreements	5,758	98.7	5,740	98.8	5,789	99
	Employee turnover	388	6.7	441	7.6	441	8.2
	New hires	453	7.8	559	9.6	536	9.1

 Scope: DMK GmbH + at least 75% of subsidiaries  Occupational safety	2021	2022	2023	Unit / Quantity
Number of accidents from the 1st day of absence	125	69	84	Number of accidents with at least 1 day of absence
Injury rate	16	8	9	Accidents causing at least 1 day of absence / 1 million labor hours
Lost work day rate (lost time index)	0.29	0.17	0.19	Ausfallzeit durch Unfälle (mit mindestens einem Ausfalltag) / geleistete Arbeitsstunden

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

## **KEY FIGURES**

# **Ecological**

	Wastewater discharge by type (wastewater consumption in m³)	2021	2022	2023
	Total wastewater volume	9,130,895	9,123,894	9,332,726
	Direct discharge (own clarification plant)	2,812,780	2,945,717	3,034,756
Inc	lirect discharge (municipal treatment plant)	6,318,115	6,178,176	6,297,970

Wastewater and freshwater Scope: All German production plants and Hoogeveen (DOC ZVP, DOC AT, wheyco NL).

Water withdrawal by source (freshwater consumption m³)	2021	2022	2023
Total water consumption	8,442,444	8,365,895	8,422,107
Own water (well water)	3,668,696	3,784,548	3,774,985
External water (municipal water)	4,773,748	4,581,347	4,647,122

Scope: Only German sit	es, at least 75% of subsidiaries	2021	2022	2023
Direct energy consumpt	<b>ion,</b> total, in kWh	1,520,094,616	1,401,516,738	1,366,033,413
	direct energy from ble energy sources	1,507,157,710	1,389,210,662	1,265,628,815
Electricity (inc	cl. own generation)	346,031,233	329,681,595	335,623,431
. 🖷	Natural gas	1,055,003,246	944,084,368	930,004,384
	District heating	44,332,349	41,050,576	40,516,380
	Diesel fuel	60,407,167	55,823,542	48,054,092
11 19	Liquid gas	540,485	543,271	498,215
	Heating oil	843,230	18,027,310	3,422,547
Of which direct energy from 1	renewable energies	12,936,906	12,306,076	11,336,911
	Biomass	12,803,636	12,167,277	11,217,568
Energy intensity (energy used	per kg of raw milk)	0.286	0.289	0.289
Energy savings	or energy avoided	7.07 Mio kWh	9.46 Mio. kWh	26.31 Mio. kWh

# CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions

Scope: CO <sub>2</sub> e emissions on an annual basis (Scope 1 -3) tons CO <sub>2</sub> e	2021	2022	2023
	10,506,550	10,936,988	10,633,744

# ABOUT THE REPORT

	<b>Waste</b> by type and disposal method	2021	2022	2023
	Total waste (excluding sewage sludge) in tons	11,755	12,550	14,476
	Non-hazardous waste, %	96.5	94.6	97.5
6)	Hazardous waste, %	3.5	5.4	2.5
W	Recycling rate, %	97.6	95.5	98.3
	Disposal rate, %	2.4	4.5	1.7
7.70			•	•

# About this report

Applies: All German production

his Responsibility Report applies to the 2023 financial year (January 1 to December 31, 2023). Reporting is voluntary and informs our stakeholders and the interested public about how the DMK Group is living up to its economic, environmental and social responsibility and integrates sustainability into its corporate strategy.

To this end, we have documented the focal points of our sustainability management, our approaches and selected targets, measures, progress and key figures.

This report was published in September 2024. The editorial deadline was 05.07.2024. An external review of the Responsibility Report did not take place. The last report was published in June 2022 for the 2021 financial year. DMK also reports annually on sustainability as part of the Integrated Annual Report. The last Integrated Annual Report was published online in June 2024 for the

2023 financial year (January 1 to December 31, 2023) and is available here: www.dmk.de/en.

# Scope and data collection

The scope of this report corresponds to that of the Annual Report. It includes affiliated companies and shareholdings of the DMK Group in Germany and the Netherlands (DOC Kaas) and includes milk producers and member dairies of DMK eG and DOC Kaas U.A. as well as contract suppliers of DMK GmbH, DMK GmbH and companies in which DMK has a minimum participating interest of 75%.

Unless otherwise stated, the reported content and data relate to the following segments of our scope of application:

- Key figures for employees, energy and occupational safety include DMK GmbH and companies in which DMK has a minimum participating interest of 75%
- Waste key figures include all producing German plants
- Other environmental key figures
  apply to all producing German plants
  and the Dutch site in Hoogeveen (in-
- cludes DOC ZVP, DOC AT, wheyco NL)

  Milk volume includes milk processed

The information was gathered in close cooperation with the responsible specialist departments and

by evaluating a range of management systems (including an electronic personnel management system, ISO 14001 environmental management system and ISO 50001 energy management system). Our employee data is valid as of December 31, 2023. Rounding differences may occur in individual cases.

# Significant changes and restatements

There have been no significant changes to the organization or its supply chain since the last report. We are applying the GRI Standards 2021 of the Global Reporting Initiative for the first time (see GRI Index) with this report. We are also preparing for the reporting obligation under the EU CSRD Directive from 2026.

## **Further information and contact**

For ease of reading, where we use the masculine form in the report, this refers to people of all genders.

This report is publicly available as a PDF file on our website. For any questions about the content, please contact Dr. Philipp Inderhees and Ms. Christine Barjenbruch, who can be reached by e-mail at: nachhaltigkeit@dmk.de.

# **GRI INDEX** // Overview

# **GRI INDEX**

This sustainability report was prepared in accordance with the GRI Standards 2021 and GRI 1: Foundation 2021 of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and applies to the 2023 financial year (January 1 to December 31, 2023). GRI Sector Standards were not applied. The disclosures correspond to the latest available version of the German translation of the GRI Standards, which is accessible here:

www.global reporting.org/how-to-use-the-gri-standards/gri-standards-english-language/

Disclo	sure	Page and notes
1. The	organization and its reporting practices	
2-1	Organizational details	41, 48
2-2	Entities covered in the organization's sustainability reporting	45
2-3	Reporting period, frequency and contact point	45
2-4	Restatements of information	45
2-5	External assurance	45
2. Acti	ivities and workers	
2-6	Activities, value chain and other business relationships	4, 6, 7
2-7	Employees	43
3. Gov	ernance	
2-9	Governance structure and composition	41
2-10	Nomination and selection of the highest governance body	41
2-11	Chair of the highest governance body	41
2-13	Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts	5, 41
4. Stra	itegy, policies and practices	
2-22	Statement on sustainable development strategy	2
2-23	Policy commitments	16-17, 28-31
2-24	Embedding policy commitments	4-5, 14-19, 28-33, 41
2-25	Processes to remediate negative impacts	11, 16-17, 27-29
2-26	Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	15, 19, 22-23, 41
2-28	Membership associations	7, 23
5. Stak	seholder engagement	
2-29	Approach to stakeholder engagement	6-7
2-30	Collective bargaining agreements	43
GRI :	3: Material topics 2021	
Disclo	<u> </u>	Page and notes
3-1	Process for identifying material topics	6

# \*Refers to the approaches to the GRI topics reported in this area.

List of material topics

# **GRI INDEX** // Overview

Economy		
GRI standard	Disclosure	Page and notes
GRI 3-3: Management of material topic*		9, 11, 15, 18
GRI 201: Economic performance 2016	201-1 Direct economic value generated and distributed	4, 15, 17, 42
Ecology		
GRI standard	Disclosure	Page and notes

Ecology			
GRI standard	Disclos	ure	Page and notes
GRI 3-3: Management of mater	4-5, 10-12, 18-23, 34-35		
GRI 301: Materials 2016	301-1	Materials used by weight or volume	42
GRI 302: Energy 2016	302-1	Energy consumption within the organization	44
	302-4	Reduction of energy consumption	44
GRI 303: Water and Effluents 2018	303-1	Interactions with water as a shared resource	22-23
	303-2	Management of water discharge-related impacts	22
	303-3	Water withdrawal	44
	303-5	Water consumption	44
GRI 304: Biodiversity 2016	304-3	Habitats protected or restored	18-19; only measures and partnerships
GRI 305: Emissions 2016	305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	44; only total emissions (Scope 1-3)
	305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	44; only total emissions (Scope 1-3)
	305-3	Other indirect (Scope 3) THG emissions	44; only total emissions (Scope 1-3)
	305-4	THG emissions intensity	10
GRI 306: Waste 2020	306-1	Waste generation and significant waste-related impacts	23
	306-2	Management of significant waste-related impacts	23, 34-35
	306-3	Waste generated	45

## Society GRI standard Disclosure Page and notes GRI 3-3: Management of material topic\* 24, 26 GRI 401: Employment 2016 New employee hires and employee turnover 43 GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety 2018 403-1 Occupational health and safety management system 24-25 403-2 Hazard identification, risk assessment, and incident investigation 403-3 Occupational health services 25 Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational health and safety 403-4 24-25 24-25 403-5 Worker training on occupational health and safety 403-6 Promotion of worker health 24, 25 Work-related injuries 25, 43 403-9 GRI 405: Diversity and Equal Opportunity Diversity of governance bodies and employees 43

6-7

