



Press Release

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Fans of organic Demeter quality baby food as far as China

Baby Food Pioneer Holle Turns Eighty

One of Europe's oldest baby food companies celebrates a milestone anniversary this year. Swiss based Holle was founded 80 years ago and has been manufacturing biodynamic food ever since. Today, Holle has approximately 80 per cent market share of the organic baby food retail segment in Germany, making it the leading supplier of Demeter baby food. The range includes infant milk formulas, porridges, jars, baby weaning oil, teas and snacks. Over 60 Holle baby food products are sold in 41 countries worldwide.

Joint managing director Udo Fischer sums up the secret of the company's success: "Since its founding in 1933 Holle's guiding philosophy has always been based on anthroposophical dietary principles and has uncompromisingly rejected chemical processing and preservatives."

Along with fellow managing director Peter Kropf, Fischer joined the company at a time when economic conditions were extremely difficult. However, "From the very beginning we were convinced that biodynamic baby food had a bright future and would play an important role in providing our children with healthy food," says Fischer. This faith was the reason why he and Peter Kropf bought the global marketing rights to Holle baby food and founded Holle baby food GmbH in 1999.

An organic baby food range unique in Europe

The direction Holle would take was already clear in the mid-1990s. This era was characterized by a strategic expansion of the product range to include an extensive line of baby food jars and organic infant formula milk incorporating milk from organic farms in Germany and Austria. Over time the organic raw materials were increasingly replaced with even more strictly controlled biodynamically



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cultivated ingredients. Ever since, Holle has been the only producer in Europe to offer an almost complete baby food range meeting Demeter quality standards. A range which found favour with consumers in a steadily growing number of European countries, finally prompting the decision to develop new markets further a field over ten years ago. After achieving more or less blanket coverage of Western Europe current market growth is focusing on expansion in Asia, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

Premium quality for children

Holle's managing directors are aware that the baby food market is based on a deep trust in manufacturers. "Nowhere else are quality expectations higher than with baby products," says Udo Fischer. "And that has always been the case. As a matter of principle Holle has never allowed the use of pesticides or synthetic fertilizers. We take great care of our raw ingredients and how they are processed and cooked. We ensure this through an ongoing quality control system."

Holle's manufacturing operations were already based on these strict criteria before the organic sector experienced its recent boom – the Demeter quality baby food producer has been applying them for decades. Holle signed the world's first processing contract with Demeter in 1951 and is today the leading manufacturer of Demeter label baby food. "The trust parents place in us when they buy our baby food is something we take very seriously and which we would like to safeguard by maintaining close working relationships with biodynamic farmers."

In concrete terms this means that, over and above the criteria of organic cultivation, a Demeter farmer takes the specific characteristics of plants and animals into consideration. Soil is enriched and maintained using organic products. Seeds are able to grow according to their own natural rhythm. As a result, harvested crops are bursting with a natural vitality. To preserve this vitality and nourishment Holle uses only wholegrain cereals for its baby porridges. For infants with food intolerances there is a wide range of baby porridges made from single grain varieties.



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The future of goat's milk baby formula

For almost ten years now Holle has been offering parents a cow's milk-free option for baby food, based on goat's milk. An exciting project has been launched in cooperation with the Baden-Württemberg-based Monte Ziego cheese dairy. Its aim is to gather together additional producers of organic and Demeter standard goat's milk from the Black Forest area in order to be able to fully cover Holle's future annual demand of some 1 million litres of full-fat goat's milk. The chances of success are promising – as are those concerning legislation. The European Union will shortly be passing a resolution to approve goat's milk as a source of protein for infant formula milk.

Dual brand strategy, online service and nutritional advice

In addition to Demeter label products Holle has also been marketing the "Lebenswert bio" organic baby food brand since 2010. It includes a basic range of infant formula milk, porridges and jars with ingredients originating from non-Demeter certified organic farms and is thus less expensive. In common with Holle's other products Lebenswert bio is primarily marketed via specialist retailers i.e. organic food stores, health food stores, healthcare and beauty stores and pharmacists.

Holle provides specialist retailers with extensive information material and training courses to enable them to give parents advice when purchasing its products. The Holle nutritional advice service is dedicated to answering any questions parents may have about the company or specific products and can be contacted by telephone or email.

In cooperation with companies such as Weleda and other organic partners Holle established the organic internet portal "www.babyclub.de". It offers parents wide ranging services and expert advice on pregnancy as well as their baby's first months of life. The portal currently has 700 000 visitors each month.



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Holle is not only committed to its own projects for greater transparency regarding to organic baby food: “As a responsible food manufacturer we support various initiatives to encourage natural diversity instead of genetic modification.” Because, says Udo Fischer, “No one knows the long-term implications of GM on our health or the environment – and that’s something we should protect our children from.”

The advantages of Holle organic and Demeter baby food at a glance:

- A natural cycle of cultivation without exploiting animals, soil or the environment
- Quality over quantity
- Diversity instead of monoculture
- Natural husbandry for animals
- Rejection of the use of animal hormones and growth regulators
- Natural compost instead of artificial fertilizers
- Rejection of all chemical pesticides
- No chemical additives during processing

The following applies to all Holle baby food:

- Guaranteed no GM ingredients
- No added refined sugar
- No added salt
- No added colourings, flavourings, or preservatives

About Holle baby food GmbH:

Holle baby food GmbH manufactures Demeter quality organic baby food. The company has sites in Riehen (Switzerland) and in Grünsfeld near Tauberbischofsheim (Baden-Württemberg/Germany). The product range includes infant formula milk, baby porridges and jars. Baby weaning oil, teas and snacks round off the comprehensive offering. Holle products are sold in 41 countries.





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The company, founded in Switzerland in 1933, is the market leader in Germany's with organic specialist retailer segment and a founding member of www.babyclub.de, 700 000 visitors a month the most successful organic internet portal for new parents.

For more information visit: www.holle.ch

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