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Our Hochland Magazine

2 | 2020

What's the connection between Elena and Karsten and our Vision 2025?



New family
charter



The aftermath of
the forest fires

Editorial



Dear Hochlanders,

As a result of the current coronavirus pandemic, a great many things are being de-prioritised and we are being called upon both professionally and privately to give our best.

It is in these kinds of difficult times in particular that our Hochlanders' solidarity makes itself felt most strongly: All of you have already been coping and making the best of the current situation for several weeks and have demonstrated tremendous commitment and, in particular, an admirable level of calm. For all of this and more, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all of you!

We will most likely address the coronavirus pandemic and what it means for Hochland in detail in one of our next staff magazines, as it is too early at the moment to predict its effects.

Instead, this current issue is, as originally intended, dedicated to introducing our Vision 2025. This Vision includes a number of ambitious goals pertaining to sustainability, growth, innovation, digitisation and our attractiveness as an employer.

However, we will only be able to realise these ambitious goals if all Hochlanders, in all of our companies, join forces and collectively work towards achieving them. Following years of stagnation, the key aspect of our Vision 2020 was to fuel growth. Thanks to our joint efforts, we have subsequently been able to consistently increase production throughout the Group over the past seven years in succession. We are also on track with a number of other goals from our Vision 2020, which is of course still current.

Our new Vision 2025 is much broader in its approach and aimed at preparing us for the challenges of the future. Sustainability in particular is an issue that is very important to many of us in terms of taking responsibility for protecting resources for future generations and features big.

All of the Group's companies have already developed strategic objectives for themselves based on our Vision 2025 in order to align their operations with its targets. These strategic objectives also link to our (new) Performance Management and OKR (Objectives & Key results). This will ensure that our Vision 2025 goals will become integral to our day-to-day operations.

We are going to introduce Vision 2025 and its various strategic objectives in detail over the coming weeks. We really want all Hochlanders to feel as passionate about our Vision 2025 as we do, which is why it is now also available as a video.

Over the past year, many of our Hochlanders have helped to define the key areas on which we need to focus as part of our Vision 2025 based on our vision for 2030. And I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all of them for their support. As a next step, I would also like to call upon all Hochlanders to contribute to the implementation of that vision. That said, I am also completely confident that we are going to achieve the goals we have defined for 2025.

Wishing you all to stay safe and healthy,



Vision 2025

Sustainability – a top priority

Our Vision 2025 has been created in collaboration with a great many Hochlanders who have contributed ideas and critical input and will serve as a compass for all of us for the coming years.

One of the elements that is new to Vision 2025 and has been given high priority is sustainability. Sustainability is not only a huge trend, but also an important issue for many people, including the people at Hochland. This is also why our ambitious sustainability goals have priority over all others:

More sustainability

“Hochland stands for products with a small ecological footprint and our circular economy helps protect resources for our children and grandchildren.”

Our goals in this regard include making all of production plants climate-neutral as early as 2021 and to continue reducing our remaining CO2 emissions. We are also going to reduce the amount of plastic packaging used at Hochland.

And this of course brings us to our production and hence our second goal:

More growth

“Customers and consumers love our high-quality and sustainable products and services and we believe that this justifies our aim to increase our

sales to 500,000 tons and our turnover to 2 billion Euro.”

This increase in volume will, amongst others, be achieved by increasing exports outside of Europe and by expanding our range of plant-based products.

The third goal is about how Hochland aims to achieve these growth targets:

Greater efficiency

“We are known for our ability to quickly innovate and our efficiency when it comes to working with smaller batch sizes and shorter life cycles.”

Amongst others, we want to increase our efficiency by halving the time required to develop new products and launch them on the market.

This is also where digitisation starts to come in: Every one of us has to deal with a huge amount of data on a daily basis. This is why, in future, we want to make data processing a lot more efficient through:

Increased digitisation

“We are the leaders in our sector with respect to switching to digital processes and are constantly improving our operations by systematically generating and using data.”

More sustainability, more growth, greater efficiency and increased digitisation: This is how Hochland will ensure that it continues to be an attractive employer – and that the people who work here continue to be sought-after experts.

This is why Hochland also needs:

To become more attractive

“Hochlanders are known for their agility and capacity for learning, which makes them sought-after employees. In addition to that, we are also working on making ourselves still more attractive as an employer.”

We are supported in this work by our employee surveys, which Hochland runs every three years together with the Great Place to Work Institute (see www.greatplacetowork.de).

Over the coming days, Hochland will present its Vision 2025 to all of the Group's companies. The Group has furthermore created a highly original video by way of an introduction to our Vision 2025. In the video, Elena Zloteanu and Karsten Roth go over each of the Vision's key points

and introduce Hochland's people to the exciting journey ahead of us.



Our owners: Deeply committed to the company

New family charter

Dear Hochlanders,

You may have noticed the picture of the fountain sculpture that stands in front of our office building in Heimenkirch below and wondered what that's about. What does the fountain sculpture, which has been there for the past ten years, got to do with the family charter?

The fountain sculpture is made up of three stone columns. The area in the middle of the columns is filled with a number of large natural stones stacked on top of each other. These stones are from the countries in which Hochland had subsidiaries at the time the sculpture was built – 2010 – and are held in place by the three columns. The three columns represent the company's three founding families: Reich, Summer and Fuchs. They are rough on the outside and smooth on the

inside – which represents the protective role taken by the founding families. The large rocks are loosely stacked and there are gaps between them. This is intended to illustrate that the company is free to act within the solid container provided by the founding families.

And it's exactly that container that the family charter is about.

We – that is, the company's shareholders – adopted the first version of our family charter in 2007. This charter set out the extent to which each one of us is involved in Hochland's operations.

In view of the time that's passed since – a full twelve years – we felt it was time to write a new one. This time, the family charter also focuses on integrating our junior shareholders, as well as on reinforcing our basic consensus and spelling out

more clearly the direction in which we want Hochland to develop in future. In view of the above, it proved a lucky coincidence that the board of directors and all Hochlanders were working on our Vision 2025 at the same time as we were on the new charter. This meant that we were able to contribute to this Vision through our representatives on the supervisory board and ensure that, as owners and companies, we are all pursuing the same goals.

In addition to the above, the charter also sets out our ethical stance and values. This is where we elaborate on those elements of Hochland's corporate culture that are especially important to us and that we would like to continue to see in action at Hochland in future irrespective of whether one of our family members holds an executive position or not. We strongly believe that these values have been key to our success over the past 90 years: *"Our culture is marked by bold entrepreneurship as reflected by our forward-looking approach, which is made apparent by our innovativeness, creativity, open-mindedness and risk appetite, all of which are complemented by a healthy sense of prudence and solidity."*

Our corporate culture also distinguishes itself through our strong sense of responsibility when it comes to sustainability in all its aspects. *"Our actions are always guided by considerations of*

sustainability. This applies to economic matters as well as the environment and social issues pertaining to our employees." In a nutshell, that means: *"Every person is called upon and has to take responsibility, but must also be given whatever level of independence they require to do their job. (...) What's important to us is that every employee is shown regard, openness, trust and respect."* The similarities between these values and Hochland's policies are not a coincidence!

Another part of the charter sets out the owners' expectations concerning measurable economic variables. This is to ensure the company's long-term development. *"We expect the company to grow organically and inorganically through innovation and diversification, for it to ensure that the quality of its results is solid, and for it to increase the company's value long-term. (...) The risks associated with our current business operations need to be further spread. The company should also consider generating growth through adjoining lines of business, if such were to allow us to draw on our core competencies and capabilities."* We continue to support the company's operative business by providing advice and taking supervisory responsibility through our representatives on the supervisory board just as we have for the past 20 years and, in this way, continue to exert



influence. The supervisory board is made up of three members from the founding families, as well as three experts that contribute professional expertise. In the new version of the family charter, we decided to establish three guest seats for representatives of the fourth generation of shareholders. These and a number of other measures will make sure that we will be able to smoothly transition from the

third to the fourth generation of owners by drawing on competent and motivated family members.

To conclude, we would like to quote the first sentence of the charter, which sums up the document's key message: **"This family charter sets out the owning families' consensus to continue developing Hochland as an independent family-owned company in the**

long-term." A simple sentence, but key to the future of our company and its employees. What is not always a given is that such a consensus is supported by everyone involved and that it can be put in writing without any need for further discussion.

We unanimously adopted the charter on 15 April 2019, which means that

it represents the genuine agreement of all (!) 35 (!) shareholders! This clearly demonstrates that we are all firmly committed to our family-owned company Hochland.

Yours sincerely,
your shareholders'
representatives

Claudia Reich
Angela Wagner-Summer
Franz Fuchs

Annual report 2019

Processed cheese on the up

This is the seventh time in succession that the Hochland Group has been able to increase its sales. That is, the Group sold 15,000 tons more cheese in 2019 than in the previous year. This corresponds to about 650 lorry loads of cheese.

In total, cheese sales in 2019 amounted to 378,000 tons, which is a 4% increase over 2018.

One of the key units responsible yet again was our Food Service, which achieved significant growth in particular in Russia and with its third-country exports. The Branded Products segment recorded an increase of about 5 percent year-on-year across the whole of the Group. The main contributors to this increase were Hochland Russia, which achieved record sales, Hochland Germany and Hochland Romania.

Of those, the highest percentage increases were recorded for Patros and Gervais in Germany. Almette sales remained stable across the Group. The product was unable to fully benefit from the increasing demand for

cream cheese in Russia because our Russian production capacities were not sufficient for supplying the required volumes on an ongoing basis. Following the completion of the expansion of our Prokhorovka production facility, we now have the capabilities to support further growth in that area.

The general development of the Hochland brand also gave reason for cheer as it recorded a 7% increase across the whole of the Group. In Germany, this increase even reached a double-digit figure. This was largely due to Hochland's Sandwich Slices. This means that processed cheese, which is what started Hochland's success so long ago, is also on the up again in our domestic market, Germany. Our Hofkäse cheese, which is made from 100% Allgäu dairy milk, also contrib-

uted to the brand's positive growth.

The rapid growth experienced by Simply V furthermore signals that fully plant-based products will become more important to Hochland in future, and that's not just on the German market.

Revenue also increased by 7% compared to the previous year's sales of nearly 1.6 billion Euro. This 7% increase is due to price increases in nearly all countries.

In 2019, the Hochland Group spent a total of 42 million Euro on advertising compared to the roughly 39 million Euro spent in the previous year.

The Group's number of employees has also significantly increased. At the end of 2019, Hochland was employing 5,238 people globally across the Group. In Germany, the number of employees was 1977, and in the other countries 3,261.

2019 was strongly marked by our work on our Vision 2025, which is also reflected by our annual report. This in turn is illustrated with images from our four-minute video, which is designed to bring to life our Vision 2025. The title picture is a collage formed from the illustrations for our Vision's five core pillars: sustainability, growth, digitisation, efficiency and our attractiveness as an employer.



Three Hochland companies take the limelight

A slightly different type of Oscars

The cancellation of this year's management meeting in Barcelona unfortunately also meant that the Hochland Oscars Award Ceremony was cancelled as well. However, the management board came up with an excellent alternative for making sure that the award ceremony would be as dignified as ever.

"... and the winner is..." – that is, this time, the management boards' announcement of the Oscar winners in the Rolf Summer Hall was captured by camera, just as in Hollywood! It was then streamed live using video conferencing software and directly transmitted to the Group's companies, where staff were already waiting with anticipation. Teams who received an award were then faded in at the same time they were announced as winners for everyone to see at global

level, so that everyone was able to share in their joy and surprise.

The Oscar for market position has been going to Hochland Romania every year since 2017, with 2019 being no exception as the company yet again performed excellently on the market, where it is a clear leader thanks to its 22% market share. In addition to the above, it has also been able to increase its sales and turnover, and that's in a market in which independ-

ent brands traditionally tend to lose out to retailers' own brands.

The company was also awarded the Oscar for productivity in recognition of its production facilities' high level of productivity and for the smooth commissioning of the new warehouse in Sovata, which has 2200 pallet storage spaces.

Hochland Germany also scored a double win just as last year. The company won the Oscar for innovation performance for the positive development of the Hochland brand, while the company's new product, its Hochland Hofkäse cheese, which is made from 100% Allgäu dairy milk, established itself extremely successfully in the hard and semi-hard cheese segment. After years of declining sales, Hochland's Sandwich Slices are now also experiencing a revival and are contributing to the entire brand's positive growth.

Half of the second award went to France: The management board awarded the Oscar for entrepreneurship to Fromagerie Henri Hutin for its courage in approaching the Lighthouse Project in the systematic way it did. Hochland will be investing a double-digit million sum in completely redesigning this production facility in the coming

years and equipping it for processing different kinds of milk. The Fromagerie is furthermore intended to be turned into a model of sustainability for the whole of the Group.

Six awards – but just three winners, because Hochland Russia was also awarded two Oscars again at the same time. One: The Oscar for level of attractiveness as an employer for the excellent ratings it achieved in the Great Place to Work survey. Which, at 84%, showed that employees' level of satisfaction with the company (Trust Index) is higher than that recorded for any of the other Hochland companies that took part in the current survey.

Two: 2019 also saw Hochland Russia achieve record sales again and an excellent result, for which it was awarded the Oscar for profitability for the third time running. Following a brief trip to Germany, where it will receive a new engraving, the trophy will be returned to our Russian colleagues and then stay with them permanently.



The joy of our Romanian colleagues', who were watching through "Teams" when Peter Stahl (left) announced the winner, at receiving the award

A Great Place to Work: Hochland rated as a four- to five-star employer

A valued employer



The 2019 survey included employees from nearly all of our companies – including, for the first time, GoldPeg in Australia. The companies that didn't participate were Franklin Foods and Fromagerie Hutin, which is currently using all of its resources for the initial phase of its 'Lighthouse' project.

Around 80% and above of respondents in all of our German companies and at Hochland Russia responded in the affirmative to the statement "Taking every-

Our attractiveness as an employer is one of our key performance indicators and one that we assess every three years with the aid of the independent Great Place to Work survey. We ran this survey again in 2019 and have just had the results.

thing into consideration, this company is a Great Place to Work". Hochland Germany and Hochland SE have furthermore respectively been rated as being one of "Germany's best employers". Hochland SE came 17th in the rankings for companies of its size and Hochland Germany came 21st in its category, and 3rd in the category of manufacturing companies.

The above approval ratings were followed by GoldPeg with 78% and Hochland Española with 75%. At 67% and 64%, Romania and Poland are also qualifying as good places to work.

Although the survey results are extremely positive, we are also aware that they are just a snapshot. That is, we have to bear in mind that the main reason for these surveys is to enable Hochland to improve its ratings further still and maintain its standards of excellence. The Great Place to Work survey drew a total of about 3100 responses from employees across the Hochland Group. This response rate of 90% and above clearly shows that our Hochlanders are genuinely committed to help improve our workplace culture.

The survey results are a valuable reflection of



where we are at and of the strengths that Hochland can continue to draw on, as well as of the areas where we need to further invest. We will be giving both of these areas a lot of attention until the next survey in three years' time.

Employees recommend Hochland as an employer

Study conducted by Stern and Statista

It's not just the Great Place to Work Institute, but also the German magazine Stern who agrees that Hochland is one of the best employers in Germany.

Hochland Deutschland GmbH came 19th in the industry rankings for "Food and consumer goods", and on place 229 out of 500 companies in the overall rankings. These results were published by Stern in January this year.

The study was conducted by the market research institute

Statista and involved analysing over 45,000 employee ratings in order to establish Germany's best 500 employers. One of the key criteria was whether employees would be happy to recommend their own employer to others. Respondents were asked to rate both their own company and other companies in the sector. Every

employee had to provide a minimum of 100 ratings in order to be included in the analysis. On completion of the survey, Statista was able to establish ratings for a total of 1200 companies. Fifty percent of these companies' ratings were made up by their own employees' ratings and the other fifty by

the ratings from employees working in the sector.

Stern and Statista designed the study in such a way that companies were unable to apply to participate in order to ensure that the data collected was neutral.

(N)PM – Performance Management no longer ‘new’

No going back to the annual budget

The second edition of international (N)PM workshops has shown the high extent to which our new way of corporate management has already become embedded.

After 2018, the Group’s top international management met again in January and February 2020 for a total of six workshops at Munich airport. The three boards took turns attending the workshops.

This time round, the management was called upon to assess progress made thus far, i.e. two years after the introduction of our New Performance Management: To what extent has (N)PM been implemented so far across the Group? How happy is the management board with what has been achieved to-date? What do we need to further support (N)PM?

The participants from all of the different countries and

companies presented a uniform picture: Performance Management has become part of our DNA and everybody agreed that they could no longer imagine going back to annual budgeting.

What we have achieved so far is certainly impressive: There was unanimous agreement that we have become more agile and consequently able to more quickly respond to events and trends. This is important because we are basing our actions far more on what’s happening in our markets than we used to.

We define ambitious goals and jointly work towards realising them and do so with

transparency. We regularly assess our progress and take corrective action whenever necessary.

The rapid success of our new corporate management is the result of our corporate culture as set out in our policies: Personal initiative, respectful treatment of each other, transparency, clear communication across hierarchical levels, constructive approaches to finding the best solutions when opinions differ, fostering ongoing progress across the board – all of which is feeding into the success of our new Performance Management. The success of our new corporate management, in turn,

is being reinforced by our corporate culture.

In 2018 and 2019, about 170 Hochlanders from across all of our companies were trained to support the introduction of our new Performance Management as part of the international “NPM Toolbox 1.0” training courses. This training strongly focussed on personal attitudes, taking leadership roles by way of acting as coaches, on emotional intelligence and professional management of all kinds of meetings.

So as to further support our journey as a Group, this training will be complemented with training on “Performance Management for new Hochlanders” and on “Feedback” from the middle of 2020 onwards. We consider the latter an essential component for our growth – both personally and as company successfully operating in the market. In terms of our policies, promoting a positive feedback culture is also crucial and extremely valuable for supporting our continued growth.

The “(N)PM Toolbox 2.0” courses are intended to supplement the local development measures taken by the subsidiaries. Managers can obtain more information on these training courses from the HR coordination team (Hochland SE) and the HR team at their company.



That's us: The International Business Development Team

Teamwork across borders

International Business Development – more than just a name for our customer system – it's also our motto. However, what does it actually stand for?

In addition to our two customer systems, Retail Europe and Hard-discount Shops Europe, we are also part of Bonifaz Kohler and hence of the big Customer Brands division.

Our day-to-day responsibilities are to sell our high-quality cheese in our existing markets and to develop and expand our business connections in new countries. In doing this work, there is virtually no limit on what's possible. However, it is important to us to focus on specific 'focus countries' and to invest most of our time in these.

In the coming years, we intend to focus in particular on France, the United Kingdom, the USA, Australia and China. All of which also happen to be the countries in which we would like to further develop our collaboration and/or our representation with our customer ALDI: Because, wherever ALDI goes, we go.

Working on so many different countries globally not only makes our work very exciting and diverse, but also regularly presents us with unique challenges: Different preferences concerning taste, different country-specific legal requirements for products or political framework conditions, to name but a few examples.

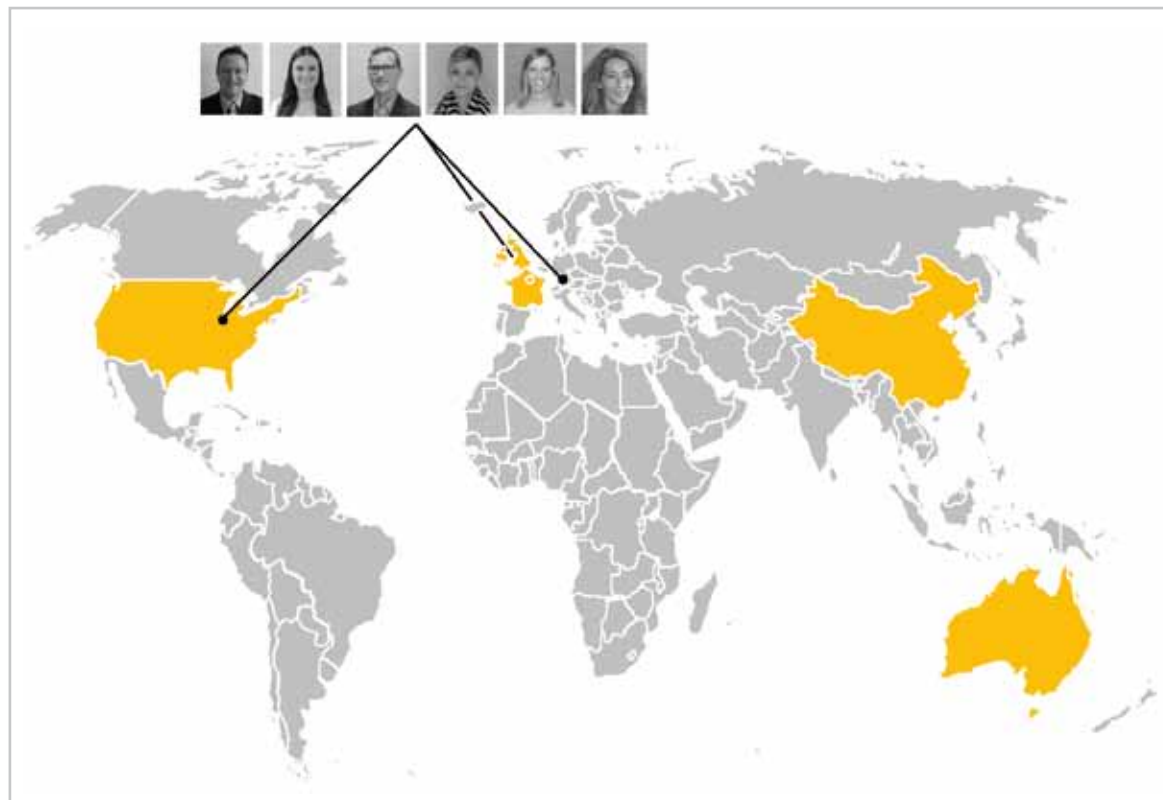
The fact that we manage to enter some of these markets despite the above is primarily due to our close collaboration with the different interfaces at Hochland. These include in particular the Food Law, Quality Management, Logistics and Supply Chain Management (SCM) divisions.

Our team is currently made up of six people who take care of everything that is

related to sales, marketing and customer service. As is usual for an international team, we are not all working from the same office, but from offices in Germany, France and the USA. In contrast to our colleagues on site, we therefore also have to hold our meetings in a slightly different way – digitally, in English and taking into consideration

the different time zones involved.

And, as might be apparent after taking a look at the map: We are definitely going not to get bored any time soon!



Our map of the world: The International Business Development Team (from left to right): Sebastian Röttger, Meike Funke, Rob Archer, Vanessa Weber, Lea Schader and Christel Vibrac.

Any news about...

...Albert Heim?

Albert Heim has been responsible for Digital Transformation at Hochland Deutschland GmbH since mid-October 2019. Question is, what does that actually involve and what is it he loves most about his job?

Albert first joined Hochland as much as 20 years ago when he took on a summer at Hochland during the days it was still operating a factory bus – which was brilliant for all of the students! In those days, digitisation was already playing a central role at Hochland and the company was running its “Quantum Leap” project with the aim of building a ‘transparent factory’.



Even in those days, people were already trying to use automated systems to record all of the data associated with our systems and processes as opposed to recording it manually. These systems made it possible to call up data from every workstation for use in analyses, early warning systems and other optimisation measures. This meant that many parts of the company were already going paperless.

Hochland subsequently started engaging with digitisation more intensively in the middle of 2017. This intensification was turned into a project called “Courage”. As part of Courage, Christoph Burger, the project’s manager at the time, developed a digitisation strategy and roadmap up to 2021 together with an internal team and external service providers.

Albert has now reviewed and assessed the issues developed by the Courage team to establish where Hochland is at at this moment and what it needs to achieve in future. The demands made of us as a company are constantly changing and do so even faster still when it comes to digitisation compared to other areas. The key question in this regard is: What is Hochland’s role in an information-based economy?

In order to find our place in the information-based economy, we have to learn to deal with ongoing and sudden changes and do our best to integrate them into our daily operations. This applies to customer behaviour, our supply chains and production processes, but also of course to laws and regulations and our jobs.

How can we best meet this challenge? By following these three steps:

Process digitisation: All of Hochland’s data-based process steps need to be digitised in order to make our day-to-day work easier. This applies to a large number of our current projects (e.g. Office 365 and S4/Future).

Data use: The company – which is all of us – has to develop a feeling for which of the data we keep in the company might be highly valuable and how we could benefit from it in terms of digitisation. This data will subsequently become important for our work in future.

(Purely) Digital business: Having a clear overview of all of our data and their analysis results can give us a number of competitive advantages. These advantages have to be identified in order for us to be able to develop new digital business models based on the same.

What do we need in order to successfully master these steps? Digital Transformation, and that’s in all of the company’s divisions.

Transformation refers to our mindset and to changes in work structure and organisation. This is something that Hochland has already started to tackle, such as through the switch from rigid annual budgets to New Performance Management and its OKRs (Objectives and Key Results), which are

regularly reviewed, and agile methods such as SCRUM and Kanban.

However, transformation is only possible if all employees are willing to embrace change. By way of support in achieving these goals, Hochland is not only actively encouraging employees to integrate digital solutions and working practices into their daily work but is also providing the structures and know-how required to do so. That is, all specialist departments will be supported with the development and introduction of digital solutions by a special team of experts set up by Albert Heim.

Digitisation is divided into three pillars:

The ecosystem: Internal and external networks and our collaborations with external partners. Internal networks, such as networks that span different marketplaces for digitisation, are being supported in particular by the Courage team. External networks will be supported through e.g. ‘meetups’. The first of these meetups will be held at Hochland in June: The “Allgäu Data Science Regulars’ Table”. This could be extended to include collaborations with startups and research institutes.

Business partners: Albert and his colleagues are acting as the sparring partners for the management board and management team and are providing coaching to the project groups. This pillar also covers, for example, the creation of the customer portal for the Customer Brands division.

Centre of expertise (Competence Centre): The use of artificial intelligence will allow us to analyse huge amounts of data, such as our production data, in order to gain a better understanding of any changes or

deviations in our production processes. We are already using this approach in e.g. our “Almette coarseness” and “Processed cheese thermal viscosity” projects.

For Albert, the main areas to focus on in 2020 are the S4/Future project, the creation of the customer portal and the REIF project, which is intended to help avoid food waste with the aid of artificial intelligence.

And so, what does he love most about his job? “After

having worked in the digital sector for the past 12 years, I am delighted to be able to bring my experience to the food industry. I would like to make the use of digital technologies even more commonplace in our day-to-day operations at Hochland and, in addition to continuing to focus on efficiency, also increasingly give attention to innovation and growth. Digitisation is of relevance to pretty much all Hochland departments. This means that I will be working with Hoch-

landers from a wide range of different departments over the coming years. I am very much looking forward to working with such a diverse range of people and hope that we will be able to tackle a great many digitisation projects together. In doing so, I would like to contribute to Hochland’s future sustainability and as a great employer in my old and new homeland”.

Hochland adopts “Mobility@Hochland” policy

Working abroad

Hochland – that’s over 5000 people working in eight different countries. As our Group is becoming increasingly more international, it is also important to strengthen the links between our companies across the different countries’ borders and to create synergies.

And, who better to strengthen such links than our employees? At Hochland, we strongly believe that an international company needs open-minded and employees with intercultural experience in order to be successful.

This is why we would like to encourage employees to work for a Hochland company abroad. It was with this in mind that we have adopted our “International Mobility@Hochland” policy.

The policy has been developed by the international

HR coordination team in consultation with local HR managers. This policy ensures that all international Hochland work placements are governed by similar criteria. This in turn is aimed at creating transparency and making it easier for employees to take advantage of international work placements.

The policy governs issues such as the coverage of the costs associated with moving, initial orientation in the host country, health insurance and a range of other topics. It also includes a number of convenient

templates such as a Starter Kit with information that could be useful when trying to decide whether to opt for an international work placement and a check list to help people prepare.

Hochland’s HR managers have also been provided with a Microsoft Teams platform where they can access specialist information and which ensures that international placements are properly documented and information is effectively communicated across the various borders.

At the moment, more than ten of our Hochlanders are working for a foreign

Hochland company – and that is primarily in the USA and Australia. We hope that our Mobility Policy will provide new impetus for even greater international exchange and collaboration at Hochland.



Surely, all offices are the same – or are they?

Arriving at Hochland

Charlotta Jansson has been part of the marketing team for the factory shop in Heimenkirch since the middle of 2019 as the product manager for our processed cheese products. Before joining Hochland, she worked for Kärcher in Winnenden – again in marketing.

The many things that went through my head while waiting for my boss Volker Büstrow in the foyer in Heimenkirch on my first day at Hochland, my first day in the Allgäu, my first day in the food industry included

of flowers, chocolates and a team waiting with open arms. In fact, if a team is busy, having to integrate and onboard a new employ is first and foremost yet another job and can be very stressful.

awful lot of her time: She explained all of my responsibilities in detail, took me around the different departments and introduced me all of my colleagues and all of the contacts that are important for my work. All the while, she always made sure that I knew how welcome I was in the team. To put it in a nutshell, she really made my first weeks at Hochland a great experience. I also think that everyone needs a person like Kathrin for the first week or so when starting a new job.

I had a very positive experience from the word go and I was really pleased to be working with such nice people and on so many interesting projects. When I eventually started working on my first projects, I also had a lot of contact with the development and project optimisation department, the production facility and the quality management team. Over that time, I also found that it was not just my office team, but that everybody in Heimenkirch showed me the same kind of friendliness and willingness to help and offered support.

I haven't ever learned so much in such a short period

of time in a job or had that much fun with my colleagues before. I am very grateful to everybody for all of this and am looking forward to working with them in the future.

If I had to sum up the whole experience, I'd have to say that our office is simply like no other!

Charlotta

Originally from Gothenburg, Sweden, where she studied mechanical engineering, Charlotta (35) now lives in Lindau with her husband and two children. In her spare time, she loves skiing, hiking and – most of all – spending time with her children. Added to that: She loves cheese!



Charlotta Jansson (2nd from left) is feeling very happy in her team. This is where she shares her story. (From left) Anika Prestel, Kathrin Kempter and Stefan Endres.

"First impressions last" and that "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" – that is to say, I was definitely a bit nervous.

I was obviously aware that new employees are rarely welcomed with a bunch

However, when my new boss Volker and I arrived at the office, all of my new co-workers were already waiting for me. I also instantly spotted my desk, which had a big bunch of pink flowers on it and everything set up ready for me. I simply couldn't have imagined a warmer welcome!

I was immediately introduced to Kathrin Kempter, who was going to supervise me for the first couple of weeks. Kathrin gave me an

How does a container get to the harbour?

Practical test for logistics students

How do our containers get to the harbour? Business as usual for our logistics people, but an exciting piece of research for three students from Kempten. In this article, one of them, Vreni Möslang, shares the details of the project:

The beginning of October 2019 saw myself and my student colleagues with hands so clean as never before: This was because we had been given a tour of Hochland's production facility in Heimenkirch during which we had to wash and disinfect our hands a great many times.

Part of our Masters in logistics involves working on exciting projects at different companies every semester. That semester, my student colleagues Silka Renz, Valentin Weber and I chose Hochland for our project, for which logistics manager Dirk Schulz presented us with the question of: "How do our containers get to the harbour?"

Our task was to find a transport route by which Hochland's export goods would be able to be transported from Heimenkirch to the harbour. This transport route had to be cost-effective, as well as low-risk and have as low a carbon footprint as possible.

At first, we investigated a range of different variations, such as combined transport – lorries transported by rail. This entails loading the lorry trailer onto a freight train at the train station and then transporting it north by train. However, we also wondered why Dirk was transporting the cheese in

a container designed for being loaded onto a ship as opposed to delivering it directly by lorry?

How did the project go?

We were very optimistic at first and contacted freight forwarders to find out about the cost of the different types of transport and whether our idea was actually feasible. This is because transporting chilled goods by rail tends to be more complicated because the lorry trailer has to be supplied with power to ensure the cold chain is maintained.

However, our investigations quickly put a damper on our initial optimism. That is, we learned that an informal inquiry made by three students was simply not given the same kind of attention than a more serious one from a company. In the end, we were still able to obtain the relevant quotes with Dirk's help.

So, how environmentally friendly is this method of transport?

We calculated the carbon footprint with an online tool. That also gave us a chance to brush up on our geography as we found that the roads from the south to the north don't just go downhill as we had assumed. I.e. the online carbon footprint calculator asked us

to specify whether the route was 'hilly' or 'flat'. The area between the Alps and the north is home e.g. to the Swabian Alps and the Rhön Mountains, which means approx. 50% of it is hilly rather than flat.

Next, we assessed the number of things that could go wrong if Dirk was to send the cheese to the harbour by, for example, train. The risks involved include guaranteeing the cold chain and of missing connecting transports, e.g. because of delays caused by roadworks or such. At the end, we were able to present Dirk with a number of different transport routes involving trains and lorries. We also knew how much it would cost, how environmentally friendly it would be and the risks involved.

What was the project like for you?

Concerning our collaboration with Dirk, things were a lot easier than anticipated. Microsoft Teams allowed us to communicate with each other quickly and efficiently. We also used video chat – although Dirk ended up talking to three blank screens the first time we did it because students would prefer not to be seen by anyone as early as 9am on days without lectures.

What was exciting was that we were able to work on a real problem and not just something hypothetical. It was also very interesting to see the actual lorry and train carbon emissions in particular in view of the current political and media debate about carbon footprints. During the project, we also looked into the latest technologies such as Hyperloop.

What exactly is Hyperloop?

It is an extremely exciting new technology that the Port of Hamburg is planning to implement. This technology will enable containers that are to be transported by sea to be conveyed to the port at high speeds of up to 1,200 km/h through huge underground tubes. In the end, that also left us wondering whether Dirk would be shooting the cheese to the port at 1,200 km/h in a few years from now.



International collaboration and having a lot of fun

Our Design Thinking community

Over the past five years, Design Thinking has received increasingly more attention and recognition from Hochlanders. And in this article, we would like to introduce the team behind this development:

Design Thinking has enabled many of our Hochlanders from a wide range of different divisions and countries to develop highly creative solutions in very short periods of time. What is key to this creative solution-finding process is that our consumers and customers are put centre stage and that those involved in the problem-solving process are open to taking a multidisciplinary approach. The success of this approach is based on the

Design Thinking training at the Hasso Plattner Institute in Potsdam. However, it takes a little more than just professional training to become a good Design Thinker: That is, it needs a passion and willingness to explore new approaches, the ability to create a common basis that enables highly diverse teams to work together and to unfold their creativity – and a fair amount of empathy. Because, it is only possible to develop relevant

And that's them – our Design Thinking ambassadors: **Andrea Tannheimer** (Hochland SE), **Emilia Mochort** and **Kasia Halwa** (Hochland Polska), **Carolin Berner**, **Johannes Ludwig** and **Matthias Pelzer** (Hochland Germany), **Teodora Vasilescu** and **Catalina Sabadeanu** (Hochland România), **Evgeniya Shundeyeva** (Hochland Russia) and **Elena Zloteanu** (Design Thinking Program Manager at Hochland SE since 1 November 2019).

presented ourselves as a team: Contrary to the accepted procedure, we didn't want every team member to present their own achievements, but show what we have achieved together as a team. Something that was completely novel and had never happened before! The fact that our team is made up of so many people working in different countries was also unique: i.e. the audience was impressed that Hochland has already got trained Design Thinkers at six of its subsidiaries in four different countries and that they are all being actively supported by the German parent company.

In the middle of February, we took part in an event hosted by the Hasso Plattner Institute in Berlin that was attended by representatives from 42 big companies from seven different countries. These companies included the like of Lufthansa, Roche Pharma, SAP and NORD/LB bank.

At this event, we managed to impress the other Design Thinking professionals there with a spectacular performance. That is, all of the event participants had been asked to present a 'hack' and we didn't have to be asked twice to join in.

A hack is defined as a simple and clever technique for accomplishing a familiar task more easily and efficiently than usual. To everyone's surprise, we started our presentation of our 'hack' by hacking the way we

We want to use our strong bond as a team, our boldness and drive to establish something new at Hochland to create added value for innovation and are simultaneously bringing a lot of fun to Hochland's day-to-day operations. We have already demonstrated the effectiveness of our approach in over 60 workshops in Germany, Russia, Romania, Poland and the USA. You can also find a report of our current workshops in Russia on page 15.

All of this work means that Hochland now has quite a strong and lively Design Thinkers community. Would like to know more? If so, get in touch and we'll help you to develop innovative solutions for your challenges.

fact that we are all inherently creative, but often forget that our creativity can only unfold if it is given the space to do so. And that is exactly what Design Thinking does – and our Design Thinking ambassadors, who are the people who enable all of this to happen.

We are Hochland's team of Design Thinkers and there are ten of us. Each of us has completed the professional

solutions and make people feel passionate about something if we are really able to understand our consumers and customers and their needs.

This is also one of the key ways in which Design Thinking is contributing to our Vision 2025: i.e. it is intended to ensure that we will continue to be able to develop foods that people will love and products that will inspire them.



Design Thinking at Hochland Russia

Huge run on workshops

Hochland Russia makes intensive use of Design Thinking. In the second half of 2019, the company ran a number of workshops and four for the food service and brand marketing divisions alone.

Design Thinking is a methodology for developing ideas and creative problem solving based first and foremost on consumers' interests and needs. In Russia, Evgeniya Shundeyeva is one of the total of ten Hochland design-thinking ambassadors that have completed professional Design Thinking training at the Hasso Plattner Institute in Potsdam. The Design Thinking ambassadors are responsible for ensuring that this methodology is applied across the whole of the Group, cross-functionally and that it will change peoples' attitudes in terms of even

greater customer-focus, a willingness to experiment, use of multidisciplinary teams and new ways of collaborating.

During the workshops, participants were able to tackle a number of challenging and interesting tasks together with Evgeniya. This included, for example, developing new products for fast food chains for the Food Service division, as well as developing new product packaging for generation Z and coming up with new names for an existing product.

The workshops were attended by employees from a range of different departments, including Sales, Marketing, Production, Purchasing, Technology and Development, Controlling, IT, HR and Accounting. The interest and demand was so great that some of the

workshops were hugely oversubscribed.

The ideas and suggestions developed during the 2019 seminars are currently being further refined. There have already been four more workshops in the new year for the Marketing, HR and Sales departments.



Hochland Poland promotes employee involvement

Uni opens its doors for Volunteering Day

"Volunteering Day" is all about corporate social responsibility and employee community involvement. Our colleague Jacek Wyrzykiewicz took part in the Volunteering Day held by Poznań University of Economics and Business (PUEB).

He is the PR manager of Hochland Polska and delivered a talk on how "Hochland Polska promotes employee involvement". The presentation showed how Hochland Polska is trying to motivate its employees to become more involved in volunteering and community projects.

The aim of the day was to provide extensive information on and motivate employees to consider volunteering. Participants were also introduced to the volunteering programs run by business organisations, NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and PUEB's staff and students.

In addition to Hochland Polska, the event was also attended by companies like



Beiersdorf and Carlsberg. Organisations like Wikimedia, the Better World Association, Home Hospiz and NIWA, a foundation dedicated to education and development, were also represented.

Jacek Wyrzykiewicz with the organisers of the university's Volunteering Day.

Any news about...

...central master data management?

Sabine Heubuch and Marco Schweizer have been the contacts for the Hochland Group's central master data management since the end of 2018.

Master data is defined as the basic information that collectively represents the identity of a product or business partner. This could be e.g. the brand name, the product's designation, weights, dimensions or name and the business partner's address. These

and complete master data from the word go. Further, in order to represent an item in full, it is assigned parts lists – much like the list of ingredients for a recipe – that contain all of the components required for the item at all of the different levels involved.

All of our companies work with SAP and with increasingly more identical processes and systems that are able to access the master data of the approx. 2000 ready-made items that are currently being produced or used across the entire Hochland Group. To make sure that all of this data is being collected and used in the same way by all of the companies, the Group decided to create a central point of contact within the Hochland Group, the Central Master Data Management team, CMDM for short, in the autumn of 2018. This division is part of the Integrated Planning Coordination unit.

The CMDM team is made up of Sabine Heubuch and Marco Schweizer. Between them, they have about 45 years of experience working for Hochland in various divisions between them and are responsible for ensuring that data is being collected, updated, harmonised and managed. Over the past several years, they have acquired substantial experience in master data management in our German companies.

Since the beginning of April 2019, the CMDM team has also been sharing this know-how with all of our foreign companies and is currently in the process of applying the associated processes and system at international level and of gradually centralising the actual process of collecting data.

Master data management involves a lot more than just creating a new item in SAP: It means using the workflows defined in the system to record data and the approvals for collecting this data in SAP on the basis of standardised processes. This means that e.g. all companies are able to trace and manage a new item that has been created in SAP at international level.

Master data management furthermore includes the entire process by which the material numbers used at the different levels are managed, changed or deactivated, from start to finish. The CMDM team hence also takes care of keeping all of the existing data up-to-date.

In view of the forthcoming switch to SAP/HANA, it is becoming even more important for all of the Group's companies to use harmonised standards. At present, Sabine Heubuch and Marco Schweizer are taking care in particular of the material master data. The material master data contains information about all of the materials that Hochland purchases, produces, stores and sells. Following that, the team will start attending to all customer and supplier data.

According to Sabine Heubuch, "The introduction of new products, systems and processes is constantly presenting us with new challenges in our day-to-day work. This fact and our interactions with a large number of different divisions and colleagues at international level means that we are always kept on our toes and keeps our work interesting and exciting day in and out".



data are then assigned to the production facility that produces the product, the sales or purchasing organisation etc.

In order to be able to represent a product in the digital systems along the entire value chain – from the planning stage to purchasing, distribution, production, QM, logistics up to its consumers – the product has to be assigned a set of correct

Not all was lost in Australian bushfires

GoldPeg news

Like many countries, Australia is no stranger to devastating bushfires; however, the recent fires shook Australians – and the rest of the world – to the core. The statistics are heartbreaking; 18,600,000 hectares (an area larger than Portugal), at least 33 people, around 3,000 homes, and an estimated 1 billion animals (excluding fish, frogs, bats and insects) have been lost.

Just as unprecedented droughts came before the fires, intense rainfall followed, causing floods in place of where fires had been only weeks before. Our country has seen it all. We were the lucky ones; the closest fires from the Gold Peg offices in Melbourne were 4 hours drive away. All of our employees and families are safe, for which we are so grateful.



recent disasters. Dr Muecke said that throughout the turmoil, the best of human nature had been on display, and in his eyes, fire fighters and emergency services personnel were the real heroes.

We couldn't agree more – most were unpaid volunteers fighting to save people, their homes, the land and our wildlife, and we are forever in their debt.

Images of the many species of Australia's iconic wildlife lost – koalas, kangaroos, platypuses and wombats, amongst others – have been truly devastating for all to

see. Once again, communities and businesses have come together to help injured animals. Here at Gold Peg, we made the decision to donate to Wildlife Victoria, a local charity doing a wonderful job supporting wildlife shelters in affected areas.

Out of this crisis came many positive stories, too; one

The natural beauty of Australia remains. Our native gum trees are regenerating, towns are rebuilding, our wildlife is healing, as are our communities... slowly, but surely.

We have seen our people come through this disaster with grace and strength, ready to welcome visitors to our land with open arms.



The Australian of the Year Dr James Muecke – a highly respected eye surgeon pioneering blindness prevention – in an unprecedented act, dedicated his acceptance speech to the



win for the environment involved a secret mission to save a variety of „prehistoric“ pine trees thought to be extinct until discovered 26 years ago. A specially deployed team of fire fighters and conservation experts was airlifted into Wollemi National Park (2 hours north-west from Sydney), successfully saving these rarest of trees.

Now that the fires have either been contained or extinguished completely, we encourage Hochland employees from other countries to come and see our stunning country... and we'd be only too happy to show them around.

Creating biospheres for insects with Almette

A 25-acre biosphere for conserving biodiversity



As part of this campaign, the fields around the production plant are to be planted with flowering

Hochland in Schongau is currently running a campaign titled “Cheese for Bees” aimed at creating a biosphere for insects together with our farmers and the help of consumers.

plants that support insects – and Almette-lovers are called upon for help: Every tub of Almette sold during the campaign period from 1 April to 31 May will cause this biosphere to ‘grow’ by 10x10 cm. The goal: To create a 25-acre biosphere with the aid of “Cheese for Bees”. The company has already secured the land required for the project and has also found farmers willing to plant and look after these protected meadows

long-term.

These meadows will be planted with special seed mixes made up of native grasses, wildflowers and herbs, and will only be mowed once all of the plants have finished flowering. These flowers will provide food for bees, butterflies and many other insects, and will also ensure that the grasses will produce seeds and will flower again next year.

The campaign will be promoted in supermarkets by means of secondary displays, posters and signs on the product shelves. Over the campaign period, all tubs of Almette will furthermore be provided with a prominent sticker saying “Help the bees!”. These tubs will start to be supplied to retailers from mid-March onwards.

Simply V at the Berlin International Green Week Berlin – worth the trip

In January this year, E.V.A. GmbH was represented at the Berlin International Green Week with its brand ‘Simply V’.

Simply V’s trade fair stand was located inside the extremely busy market hall, in which popular street foods



from all over the world was being showcased and attracted a great crowd: The E.V.A GmbH staff manning the stand were inundated with requests for the delicious food samples they were offering. Everyone who tried them loved the taste of the vegan Flammkuchen – a German speciality similar to a pizza – and the vegan grilled cheese sandwiches, which meant that Simply V was able to make a lot of new friends at the Green Week.

New trendy Almette flavour Ready for spring

In March, our seasonal Spring Onion-flavoured Almette was backed up by yet another delicious flavour: Wild Garlic & Pesto Almette.

Also known as Wood Garlic, this trendy herb gives our new seasonal Wild Garlic & Pesto Almette a slightly spicy and highly distinctive flavour, and a unique and delicious taste – all the while being 100% natural and without the use of any additives or flavour enhancers.

Wild Garlic & Pesto Almette will be available until the end of August and currently replaces our Lemon & Pepper Almette.



Product of the year

Hochland Hofkäse cheese – our No. 1

The "Milch-Marketing" magazine's Readers' Choice Awards for the product of the year 2019/2020 have revealed peoples' love of one of products in particular: That is, we received a gold medal.

Hochland's Hofkäse cheese came first in the self-serve hard & sliced cheese category. The Alpgäuer cheese produced by Stegmann Ementaler Käsereien GmbH came second and the Heumilch Juwelen cheese produced by Erlebnis-Sennerei Zillertal came third.

Our Hofkäse cheese was launched in the spring of 2019 and is the first sliced

cheese product sold under the Hochland brand in some time. It is available in three different flavours, "Mild & Creamy", "Unique & Spicy" and "Full-flavoured & Nutty". Our Hofkäse cheese is made from 100% Allgäu dairy milk and without the use of any gene technology.

Milch-Marketing announced the winners of the contest

in its March issue alongside detailed reports of the cheese producers involved. This means that we can be sure that our excellent products will receive the attention they deserve.



Hochland Hofkäse Cheese – a chance to win 50,000 Euro

Treasure hunters listen up!

Hochland is set to continue to heavily advertise its Hofkäse cheese in 2020 and has been running a promotional competition called "Join our family treasure hunt", where competitors get a chance to win a number of fabulous cash prizes since February this year.

It works like this: Hochland has hidden 'treasure chests' in just five packs of its Hofkäse cheese. Every chest contains a treasure with a cash value of 50,000 Euro. Customers who purchase one of the five packs of cheese in which the treasure chest symbol is hidden hence win a cash prize of 50,000 Euro.

Our customers will continue to be able to search for our family treasures until the end of April. As at the time of printing, we have not yet

heard from any winners, which means there were still five cash prizes out there to be won. An exciting time!

The slogan "Join our family treasure hunt" has been presented in classical and digital media, from TV to Youtube, Facebook and Instagram since February this year. In addition to this campaign, we are also offering free Hofkäse cheese samples in various shops.



Aldi's first ethical cheese

We are very proud...

... of our first cheese produced with sustainable and ethically produced milk. We first trialled this cheese at a number of Aldi Nord and Aldi Süd stores in the summer of 2019 under the 'My Local Cheese' (Landkäse) brand.

Following the success of the trial and Aldi Süd's agree-

ment to stock our Local Cheese, we finally received confirmation from Aldi Nord that it would also be stocking our ethical cheese

sold under the "Fair & Gut" ("Fair & Ethical") label at national level at the end of November. Since the middle of February, our ethical cheese has therefore been stocked at over 4,500 Aldi stores all over Germany.

fied by the German Animal Welfare Federation and is available in three delicious flavours in Aldi's chilled food sections: Mild, Spicy and Creamy.

Our AWC cheese (Animal Welfare Certified cheese) has also attracted the interest of other retailers who are keen to adopt the concept. That said, Aldi is also interested in pursuing other AWC product concepts with us.

This makes Bonifaz Kohler the first supplier to introduce ethically produced cheese at Aldi under the "Fair & Ethical" label.

This cheese has been certi-



The latest French cheeses

Mini-soft cheese on trial

As of the beginning of December, we started selling a new range of French cheeses under the name "Roi de Trefle" in addition to our existing popular French soft cheese at Aldi Süd.

This range of three special soft cheeses is still being trialled and includes the "Creamy & Spicy Mini Cubes" (5 cubes in a net), the "Creamy & Mild Mini Ovals" (3 cheeses in a cardboard case) and the "Creamy Mini Brie Triangles" (4 triangles in a cardboard case).

The reason we chose three different types of packaging for these special mini soft cheeses was to ensure that each of them would stand

out in the refrigerated sections. That is, for consumers to be able to instantly distinguish which is which. The individual wrappers furthermore protect the cheeses' aroma once a packet has been opened and while stored in the fridge and keeps them fresh.

These special soft cheeses fit into every refrigerator, are perfect for quickly putting together

a cheese board for unexpected guests, delicious for making

sandwiches at home, perfect for smaller households and make great portable snacks.

The results to date have already been very positive and we have been able to expand the number of Aldi Süd branches at which these cheeses are now sold. Once these new products are firmly established in the market, we aim to increase their sales to 500 tons a year.



For that extra portion of veg

Beetgold – new product trial

Rewe in Wangen, Germany, has been stocking our new Beetgold Fully Plant-Based Tortillas since February this year.

They are displayed right by the entrance, where customers are bound to notice them instantly. Our new tortillas are available in “Carrot” and “Beetroot” flavour.

The main ingredients used to produce them are pressed organic vegetables and a very small number of other ingredients. This means that every Beetgold Fully Plant-Based Tortilla counts as an extra portion

of veg on your plate, and the sky is your limit when choosing the type of filling.

Every 180g pack contains four wraps. They are packed with healthy fibre, are gluten free, organic, fully plant-based and lower-carb, which means that they are lower in carbohydrates than conventional wheat wraps. They are also free from artificial colours and preservatives.

The aim of the trial is to collect as much feedback as possible: How do consumers respond to these products, are they happy to pay for them and what is the best position for them?

In parallel to the launch, Beetgold also went live with its own website and opened

a Facebook and Instagram page. Why not pop by to take a look at www.beetgold.com.



Hochland Española's mozzarella 100 % Organic

Hochland Española is the first company ever to introduce grated mozzarella to the market. The new products are 100% organic.

We are very proud of these new organic products, which we launched in Spain in March. They contain nothing but 100% organic mozzarella and are available in two different versions: Once as a grated cheese ready for melting and once as cubes for use in salads. Both packs weigh 150 grams.

And, what makes us even prouder still: This is the first time that Hochland Españo-

la has been using 100%-recyclable packaging made of a material that can be fully recycled. In doing so, Hochland Española is also taking its first step towards using sustainable packaging.



100% Greek goat milk For an even greater flavour

In March 2020, we launched a new Patros cheese flavour to complement the original. As you may have guessed, our new Patros is a goat cheese with a highly aromatic flavour and a perfect complement to our Original Feta Patros, which is made from Greek sheep's milk.

Our new Patros Goat Cheese is made of 100% Greek goat milk. Just as with all of our Patros products, this cheese has also been produced without the use of any gene technologies, artificial colours, preservatives or artificial flavouring.

The market for goat cheese has seen substantial growth over recent years and sales in this segment have quadrupled over the period from 2016 to 2018 alone. As consumers become more knowledgeable about curd cheeses – which this cheese

is – the demand for more authentic and aromatic products made of sheep's and goat milk is also increasing. And our new Patros speciality goat cheese is our answer to this rise in demand.

This goat cheese has a delicious taste and highly aromatic flavour that hits the mark without being too dominant. This makes it perfect for combining with other foods, such as in a salad.



Hochland "Burger & Toast" voted product of the year

Hochland Polska wins award

In a consumer survey on the best products of the year 2020, consumers in Poland rated our new Burger & Toast cheese slices as one of the top products of the year.

As a result, Hochland Polska won the bronze medal in the hard and semi-hard cheese category.

This was the ninth time that the Market Research Institute GfK Poland ran this survey. This year's survey, held in January, included 176 products in 58 categories that people were asked to rate.

One of this survey's special features was that consumers were free to decide the criteria by which to rate this year's product of the year. This revealed that consumers not only rated taste, quality and price-performance ratio very highly, but also took into consideration package design, the weight and that the products had been produced in Poland. The survey consequently



clearly showed contestants the kind of criteria consumers apply when shopping.

Our Burger & Toast Slices were rated very high in particular in the quality, brand and taste categories.

For more information on the survey, market research institute and method used, please visit: www.najlepszy-produkt.com.pl

How happy are the people living in the towns of Węgrów and Kaźmierz?

Hochland Polska investigates

Hochland Polska sets great store by being a good neighbour and on showing itself from its best side to the communities where it has production facilities. In order to find out whether it is achieving these goals, the company ran its third survey in Węgrów and Kaźmierz to investigate how happy the community is with it.

Locals were asked to answer six questions choosing from "Doesn't apply at all", "Doesn't quite apply", "Mostly applies", "Applies".

We received 1578 responses to the current survey, which is 82 less than in 2018. Everybody who took part in the survey was presented with a Hochland cheese product by way of a thank you-gift.

The survey results were slightly less positive than those from 2018, as was evident from the drop in the percentage of "Very happy" ratings. However,

considering that over 60% of respondents still answered "Very happy", it seems that we are still performing pretty well.

The questions were:

1. Is Hochland Polska an environmentally friendly company? 62.5% respondents replied in the positive.
2. Does Hochland Polska support social initiatives? 65% were very happy with Hochland's social responsibility.



3. Does Hochland Polska support young peoples' education? 62% were very happy with the company's actions.

4. Does Hochland Polska support initiatives that promote physical activity? This is where the highest number of respondents, 72%, replied in the positive.

5. Does Hochland Polska contribute to the community's development? This question received a positive response from 62% of the respondents.

6. How happy are the locals with Hochland Polska overall? This achieved a posi-

tive response from 64% of respondents.

The percentage shown behind the questions is the percentage of respondents who replied with "Very happy" to the question.

Overall, the survey results clearly show that the people of Węgrów and Kaźmierz genuinely value our contributions and involvements. The survey results will help us to review our previous activities and to plan additional projects with these communities.

A new advertising campaign for Almette

'Light & fluffy' prizes for him and her

Up to the end of March, Romanian Almette lovers were able to win a number of 'light & fluffy' prizes for him and her.

The prize draw was part of Almette's new communication strategy. The prizes, a light bean bag for him and light lamp for her, were a reference to a key Almette product characteristic – its light and fluffy consistency. All Almette products were included in the campaign and the prizes were drawn every day.

The campaign was also supported with a ten-second TV spot which was run straight after the

current Almette TV spot. The campaign also included radio, Youtube, Facebook, RichMedia and Google AdWorks adverts.

We also presented consumers in supermarkets with product samples and promotional gifts.



Happy Hochland 2020

10,000 Happy New Year Wishes

Hochland Russia ran a nationwide promotional New Year campaign from December 2019 to January 2020 under the motto "Happy Hochland 2020" to promote Hochland as a brand and its new slogan "Hochland brings us together".

During the campaign, consumers were able to create novel New Year greeting cards for friends and family together with Hochland at www.happy.hochland.ru. These cards could be printed out and sent by post, as well as sent immediately through social media like Facebook.

Participants were also able to win cash prizes for as

much as 20,200 Rouble and shopping vouchers worth 2,020 Rouble.

The campaign was supported with advertising banners on social media channels, promotional cards that were distributed in parks in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg and Sotschi, and spectacular flash mobs at Kazan, Yekaterinburg and Moscow airport.

The results of the promotional campaign have far exceeded our expectations: Participants posted as much as 10,000 greeting cards and the campaign had a very positive overall effect as demonstrated by the large number of consumers becoming involved and by their loyalty to the brand.



A ride in the Almette hot air balloon

An unforgettable experience

Sabrina Braun attended the 25th hot air balloon festival in the Tannheim valley in Austria and joined the Polish Almette hot air balloon team on their flight. This is her report:

We were extremely lucky with the weather and I met the five members of the Polish hot air balloon team at the festival site with the sun shining on us.



The crew members were all dressed in their unmistakable olive-green flying suits and had just returned from the prep-talks for the pilots, which meant that we were able to start setting up the balloon right away. We transported all of the equipment from the trailer to the start line with a special metal trolley.

Next, we connected the burner to the basket. The basket is not only big enough to hold the four gas bottles and all of the passengers, but also the equipment for the pilot, i.e. the radio unit, maps, GPS and altimeter.

As we were loading the equipment, two of the crew started rolling out the envelope on the ground and partially inflating it with cold air

from a wind machine. I was allowed to stand inside the envelope and it was amazing to see how it continued to gradually unfold around me. The pilot then closed the parachute at the top of the balloon while it was being inflated. This parachute is used while flying the balloon and in particular during landing to allow the hot air to escape.

The crew tilted the basket and then attached the envelope to it using carabiners hooked into the burner's frame. After less than 15 minutes, the envelope was sufficiently filled to make it rise up with just a few bursts from the burner. This made the 23 metre-high and approx. 600 kg Almette balloon – which also very much stood out from the other 27 balloons around on that day – ready for takeoff.

Rudi Höfer, the organiser of the festival, gave the all-clear for takeoff and wished us a successful takeoff and landing. We then took off so fast that I didn't even get a chance to be scared! That

is, we were up in the air before I knew it and I was in the grip of ballooning fever. Any worries about being cold and whether I should have hired a polar expedition down suit proved unfounded. The experience of flying in a balloon and silently gliding through the air over a landscape that gradually becomes ever smaller is simply indescribable.

On this trip, my first one, I was accompanied by just three members of the Polish team, including Tomasz and Jarek. It is now more than 20 years ago that they founded their company "Sky Adventure" (www.lotybalonem.pl). They have a fleet of six balloons, which includes "our" balloon with the Almette design. A balloon with such an elaborate design costs around Euro 50,000 and has a service life of about 10 years, which translates into 600 to 700 hours of flying.

Conditions couldn't possibly have been any better than they were on the day of my flight. It was so perfect that the photos from that day even look a bit unreal. However, the views – looking down from both sides of the balloon – were simply breath-taking. Looking down onto snow-covered mountains on one side, with the Zugspitze close enough to touch, and green fields on the other – we were gliding over two very differ-

ent worlds. The maximum height we flew to was just over 3300 metres. Once we had passed over the mountains, we were greeted by Lake Hopfensee and Forggensee, and also got a splendid view of Neuschwanstein Castle.

The time passed much too quickly and after about an hour and a half we gently touched down in a field. It then took less than five minutes for the crew, who had stayed on the ground and had followed our balloon by car, to locate and join us. We then started packing everything up again, but stopped for me to be baptised as a new balloon flier before stowing away the basket. This entailed me kneeling down on a small mat and kissing the ground, singing a strand of hair with a lighter and extinguishing it again instantly with champagne. Once that was done, I was given my certificate and we drove back to the Tannheim valley with the trailer fully loaded.

I would like to express my sincerest thanks to the entire Sky Adventure crew for this unforgettable experience and think everybody should go on a hot air balloon trip! Provided they have no fear of heights! I definitely have a feeling that I might want to repeat this wonderful experience in the not too distant future!



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