

# MILCHWELT

The Official Magazine of the DMK Group



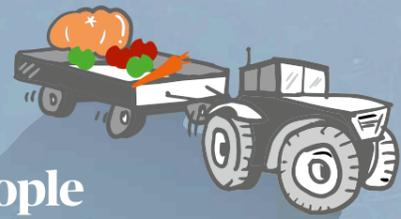
APRIL 2021

# 2021



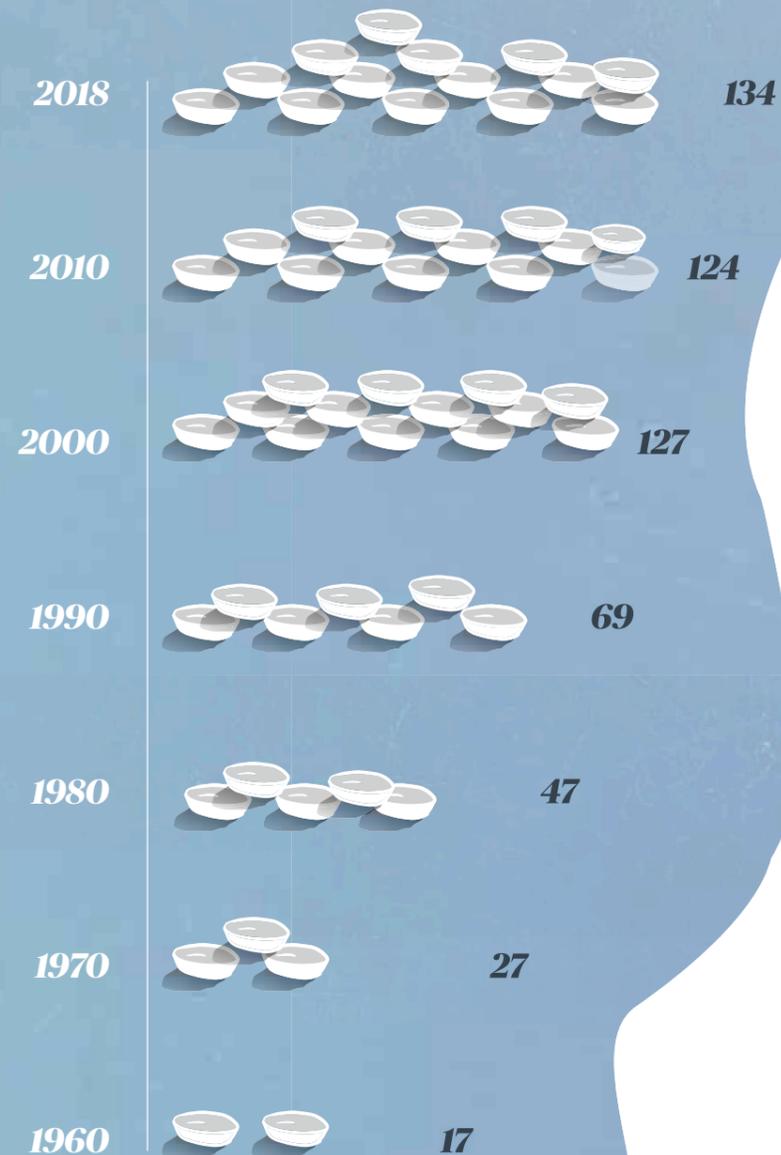
*What Drives Us!*

Did you know?

## How many people does a farmer feed?

Sixty years ago, a single farmer fed fewer than 17 people – nowadays, one farmer feeds far more than 100 people.



Source: BLE



## What drives you?

**Oliver Bartelt**  
Head of Communications,  
DMK Group



*Dear readers,*

That's a highly personal question we can only answer for ourselves, as what drives one person is quite different to the next.

What's interesting is whether we do things because we can, and they are possible - or because we're driven by the desire to do something that we love.

In 1953, New Zealand mountaineer Sir Edmund Hillary and Nepalese Sherpa Tenzing Norgay reached the top of Mount Everest. When Hillary was asked what made him climb the mountain, he said, "Because it's there." But is that reason enough? Do we get up in the morning and go to our desks or barns or plants "because they're there"? Or are we driven by something deeper, namely the desire to make something happen?

It's perfectly conceivable to want to do something even though it doesn't seem possible, like wanting to fly, or create something that doesn't exist yet like developing a new vaccine. Mount Everest, on the other hand, was already there, so reaching the summit was possible, theoretically at least. But just because something exists doesn't mean we necessarily want it. Curiosity is also involved. Sometimes we want to explore uncharted territory. In Sir Edmund Hillary's world, that was the mountain. It was possible to climb it - or try. That alone is sufficient motivation.

At DMK, we are not up against mountains though perhaps they can serve as an image: Together, DMK unites people on farms and in dairies who, facing adversity and what seems impossible, feel the drive to change things. These are the people this issue is dedicated to, and they share some exciting insights in the following pages. Have fun reading this issue of MILCHWELT!

Stay safe and healthy,

Oliver Bartelt



**HAND IN HAND**

Teamwork with Uniekaas colleagues from the Netherlands.

**32**

**TREAT YOURSELF**

Treets, Capri Sun and Batida de Cocô: Brand new ice cream flavors create a burst of nostalgia.

**42**



**#WE'REONIT**

*Here's why!*

Employees and farmers share what drives them, as the motor of the company.

**12**



**OUR GOALS**  
*New strengths*

DMK CFO Dr. Frank Claassen on the outlook for 2021.

**28**



**THE STARTING WHISTLE**  
*has sounded*

DMK's podcast focuses on football and company issues. Oliver Bartelt in conversation with Marco Bode.

**24**

**46**

**GREEN GIANT**

Sustainable energy management is making DMK a model company.



**INSPIRING CONTRIBUTION — 49**



The DMK employees who are donating stem cells to help those who are ill.

**52**

**NEW GENERATION**

A working group is opening up the route to honorary office – for young farmers such as Christoph Prüser.



**MORE RULES**

**54**



New laws, requirements and social pressures all add up to additional challenges for agriculture.

**TOP TOPIC**  
**WHAT DRIVES US**

Motivation, identification and passion – why farmers and employees do what they do **12–23**

**NEWS**

Digitalization at DMK	38–39
About Our Brand	40–45
Sustainability	46–48
Uniekaas Campaign	48
Heart's Desire – Stem Cell Therapy	49
One Year on, myMilk	50

**COMPANY**

A New Podcast	24–25
Milk and Consumer Behavior	26–27
Finance in 2021	28–29
Shared Values – Compliance	30–31
Column – Marco Bode on Motivation	33
The Latest News from the Netherlands	32–36
China – Milk Drink for Kids	37

**FARMING AND AGRICULTURE**

Heading for Honorary Office	52–53
New Rules – Regulations for Farmers	54–55
Comment by Heinz Korte	55

**IN EVERY ISSUE**

Do it yourself	51
Contacts to the Editorial Department	56
DMK in the Media	56–57
Masthead	57
Contact to Regional Leaders	57
DMK Sweepstake and Photo Contest	58
Recipe	59

## 2 **PHOTO** **CONTEST!**

---

Fawns were nestled in the tall grass in the meadows at Edeweicht when the Janßen family found them a day before the grass was to be cut at the end of May. The photograph might be from last year but is a happy reminder of when neighbors, friends, children, family and dogs met and searched for fawns left in the tall grass, saving their lives.

# 10,000

Milk collection truck driver Alexander Leiker was on his way to Haaren, near Osnabrück, Lower Saxony, when his tanker – holding 10,000 liters of milk – came to a standstill. If farmers hadn't come to his aid, he would have been stuck there for a long time. February's wintry weather spelled tough times for DMK employees, with snow reaching drivers' cabs in some places.



# 36,000

Chocolate delights! The production line at the Everswinkel plant creates 36,000 stick ice creams every hour. One of three new plants is now in operation – and is currently producing the mini ice cream treats coated in milk chocolate and almonds.



**#WE'REONIT**

*And here's why!*

They face major challenges, but all have one thing in common: a powerful belief in their work, the desire to give all they can and the drive to discover new things. DMK's farmers and employees love what they do. In the following pages, they share what motivates them.

## The CEO

**Ingo Müller** believes that DMK is only possible thanks to the fact that people work together as a team with a great deal of passion – unleashing the company's full potential.

**“T**he stories in the following pages show how a cooperative never works alone but succeeds thanks to everyone working together. And that requires motivation. You need people who share a belief in the same thing - and here, we show why people love what they do, despite all the difficulties.

It's the same for me. People often ask me what motivates me, given the huge challenges in the company and beyond that, in agriculture. I say: that we all share a common vision and are focused on the future.

And that is not easy. DMK has by far the largest share in the consolidation of Germany's dairy industry. Back then, it cost a lot of money to merge the dairies. There were almost only private label and standard industrial products and barely any brands or special products. Hardly any of the dairies would have been able to make it on their own. And we still face major challenges.

I grew up on a tenant farm in Strückhausen and early on, I knew of the Botterbloom Milch Eiskrem cooperative, as my parents were among the suppliers. It was later merged into DMK eG. At Botterbloom, I completed

an apprenticeship as a dairy specialist. Even then, the focus was on the milk price, lease price, quota price and the beef price. When I was 12 years old, I sat in a tractor with my father at a demonstration against the introduction of the milk quota. At the age of 14, I went to the dairy's general meeting for the first time.

I grew up with a deep sense that the milk quota was unfair, though when I was young, I didn't understand why it had been introduced. As a farmer, I wanted to stand up for farmers' interests.

*“As a farmer, I wanted to stand up for farmers' interests.”*

I was always interested in agricultural work but later, I decided to study the dairy in-

dustry and dairy management. I was convinced that dairies also need people who understand farming and are committed to it. During my training, I worked in the dairy's ice cream department or headed home at the weekends to collect silage, bring it to the barn, do the milking and spread slurry and manure.

It hurts when people say I or other managers have no idea about farmers' real problems and that we're far away from the world of agriculture in our Bremen headquarters, because it isn't

true. I've seen or experienced every single change in the company since 1997: including as a QM manager in Neubörger, plant manager in Strückhausen, as a crisis manager and as CEO since 2016. It's always been important to me to improve the company and the way it's organized, to take responsibility and to develop it further in line with the owners - not matter the sleepless nights.

For me, closing sites or departments has been particularly painful. And losing milk volumes as the payouts were too low felt like a defeat. Losing the owners' trust is the ultimate penalty for me. But I'm the kind of person who gets up again after a fall, and I do everything to be able to look at myself in the mirror each day.

What I've learned is that things at the company will never go entirely smooth as we are in a highly complex industry and there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. I've been in the dairy business for 32 years and I don't like the absolute milk price level either. Everything we're doing now is to continually improve exactly this for our members.

It touches me to see how the company it's employees and members in all the different areas keep on going, keep working, keep their faith in the cause and show such strength of purpose. We were only able to change and adopt a sector strategy because people don't just do their jobs on autopilot, but shared their thoughts and ideas and believed in what we were doing. They put their minds and hearts into it. There

*“Losing the owners' trust is the ultimate penalty for me.”*

were plenty of difficulties along the way, yet employees and farmers are still doing everything they can to support all these changes.

I am immensely proud of the fact that so many people in so many parts of the company have been brave enough to embrace the new and are delivering tangible results. That's the bedrock, and the only way we can go on. The company is us.”

“I never thought the job of a milk tanker driver would be so demanding. When I first started at DMK, I was just happy to have a stable job and to do something worthwhile at the same time. Together with my managers at the Edeweicht, I make sure the route is planned so it makes sense in terms of logistics and timing - which is an exciting challenge, especially when there are traffic jams or snow blocks the roads. Sometimes it pushes you to your limits, like when you can only get to the farms where the roads are at least halfway clear of snow.

But apart from all the driving - I do about 65,000 kilometers a year - the many conversations I have with farmers are really important to me - though they can be pretty tough, too. I collect milk from 15 to 20 farms every day and really get to know a lot about how the farmers are doing and feeling. I'm the interface between dairy and the farms and I can understand their concerns, but at the same time I also understand DMK's approach. That contact - not in the pandemic of course - gives me the chance to spend some time with them and listen to their problems, which eases things a bit.

I was a farmer myself, until a few years ago. I had to give it up after the milk crisis in 2015, when it was no longer economically viable to go on. I was passionate about farming and for a long time afterward I couldn't go into a cowshed without feeling a deep sense of loss.

## The Milk Tanker Driver

Thorsten von Aschwege loves his job - though he used to be a farmer, a profession he loved.

*“I felt like I'd been saved, caught by a net.”*

They made it really easy for me to join DMK. I felt like I had been saved, caught by a net, as the job meant I could stay in touch with my colleagues, the farmers. In the driver's cab I'm also my own boss and can be as entrepreneurial as a farmer. I decide how to optimize my tour, and I'm the one who sees directly what's happening on the roads.

That means I can plan my costs and time more efficiently. That spurs me on. What I'd like in the future is for society to have much more appreciation, respect and recognition for what our farmers do and the services they provide. That means we all have to pull together and take the same approach.”



Ingo Müller, DMK CEO since 2016.



Thorsten von Aschwege, Milk Tanker Driver in Edeweicht.



Karl Eismann, Director Operations Business Unit Private Label.



## The Networker

Karl Eismann puts teams together to work on solutions. The results are often surprising – even to him.

“Cross-functional from an end-to-end point of view” – that may sound a bit complicated, but it describes something simple: a way to optimize work processes and keep losses to a minimum. We look at the entire value chain, from raw material to customer.

Employees from marketing, sales, agriculture, milk collection, purchasing and logistics met up in Zeven last year together with production managers to optimize quark production with a focus on the future. Everyone talked about the situation from their point of view, describing how their area of work functions, and what could be improved. The results of this E2E workshop were amazing, affecting quality, cost, safety, the end result – as well as employee

morale and motivation. Everyone came away with a better understanding of the others' situations, and didn't focus only on their own department but towards improving things together. It's a way of working that spurs me on and motivates me. It's a totally new approach. In another meeting like this, a team from Erfurt, for example, worked out how to optimize the costs of producing a pot of mascarpone. The machines weren't able to seal the pot properly and that was causing production problems. The team decided to expand the board by one millimeter – enabling us to save 150,000 euros a year in production costs.

Taking a multidimensional view of things like this is part of the TIGER project, which is helping to continuously improve value throughout the company. These workshops also help us understand each other better. Exchanges, a sense of unity and exper-

tise coming from many departments all help us break down problems into parts and find solutions together. That only works if bosses don't lead and think in a hierarchical way. Managers need to bring the right team together to address a particular problem – and nominate one person from the group to moderate and frame the discussion. That's a way to tap into creative output – something that's so vital for companies.

We're still at the start of this development, but I can already see how good it is for employees to get more personally involved like this. It's incredibly important to recognize the potential of each and every individual and it gives me a great deal of pleasure to see how everyone grows into their role and feels seen and valued – that should be a matter of course in any company. Promoting that is my greatest challenge.”

## The Lateral Thinker

When it comes to overcoming obstacles, Nina Rempe values team brainstorming sessions.

“Anyone who stops improving ceases to be good” – that's my favorite quote by Philip Rosenthal, an entrepreneur. It suits me because I love new subjects and challenges. I'm not one to stand still. Giving up is not an option. What counts is getting colleagues inspired about something, and pushing things forward together.

My job is exactly right for me, because I always have the chance to seek out new paths and embrace new directions. I'm responsible for New Business within BU Brand. New Business is to be taken literally. We focus on the new and consider what kind of trends we'd like to take on for the brand in the future. We're looking at what kind of new product groups would be right for the MILRAM brand, for example, or how we can serve new target groups and needs.

We have several ways of doing this: Currently, our best-known example is MILRAM KALDER KAFFEE, which we launched in 2019, and found new ways to reach a younger target group.

However, we have to create products before we get to the point where a shopper can buy it in the store, or see our advertisements. So my job involves a lot of research and analysis about the future of MILRAM. That means looking at trends, the market, competitors and target groups and their needs. Once we have an idea, we move on to implementation. We ask: How can a product be produced? In-house or do we have to use external production facilities? How profitable would the projects be in the short, medium and long term? As a team, we find answers to all these questions. We work closely with people from research and development, plants, quality management, purchasing, controlling, legal, market research and many more. I'm really lucky that in the process, I work across functions with many great colleagues. We all pull together, talk about how to implement new projects and focus on shared solutions and that's what I enjoy. I'm always looking forward to our next meeting because I know that we can achieve so much more than just one person working on their own.”

*“I want to drive MILRAM's future forward.”*



#WE'REONIT

DMK farmer Agnes Greggersen on her farm in Schleswig-Holstein.



The Farmer

André van Vliet, Farmer in the Flevoland Province, the Netherlands.

**Agnes Greggersen** cannot imagine a life without cows. Despite all the difficulties, for her, being a farmer is the best job in the world.

“**S**maragd, Wilde or Primadonna - all 120 of the Angeln cows on our farm have names suited to their characters. Each one is part of the Greggersen family, I've never known it any other way. My father was really proud that even as a child, I knew I wanted to be a farmer.

After completing my apprenticeship and studying agricultural sciences, I worked on a cattle farm in Australia to broaden my horizons and prepare to take over the 130-hectare family farm. I love my work but I don't see it through rose-tinted glasses. I can

## The Farmer

see that agriculture will keep changing - I only have to look at how the farm was in my grandfather's and father's time. We farmers will have to face plenty of challenges. I'm still optimistic though and see change as an opportunity. Perhaps there will soon be farms that offer insects for people's consumption? Or we farmers will be able to live from environmental measures and continue production?

To ensure our farm survives in the future, it's important to me to keep up to date with agricultural trends and developments. That means buying technology like two milking robots, which are automatically activated when the cows want to be milked, giving us more time to take care of other things, and is more relaxing for the animals. Another innovation is that we invite visitors

to our farm, to come and relax in the countryside. Offering vacations is part of our strategy and how we position ourselves as a family farm: Diversification makes sense. That's currently not on offer, given the pandemic, but I have faith that we'll find our way out of the crisis.

I love how things change every day outdoors and the versatility of my work: I'm on a tractor in the morning watching a beautiful sunrise, welcoming a new calf or having a beer with my colleagues in the evening after a demanding day. It's not the right job if you like being alone; teamwork makes all the difference, and being able to rely on each other at all times. I'm also active in social media and promote farming as a way of life on Facebook and Instagram. Like for people in cities, my smartphone is my constant companion.”

Dairy farmer **André van Vliet** feels like he got a few things right as a father. His sons are going to take over his farm, something he didn't necessarily expect.

“**T**here's a special kind of freedom I associate with my work. By that, I don't just mean that I'm out in the fresh air almost all day. I'm my own boss and I work together with the best team I can imagine: My family. Together we run an 116-hectare dairy farm called “Lakeside Holsteins” in the young province of Flevoland. Our farm is on land reclaimed from the sea in the 1980s, when a large artificial island was created from the Zuiderzee. So we're not a traditional family farm, but we've made a start as now, two of the children have decided to take on the farm.

What greater motivation could I have? And especially now, in these difficult times for dairy farmers. My

children have known country life from an early age. We all get up together at six in the morning and start the day, which is always packed with variety. Just like nature itself. Calving cows and farm work are hard to plan - and we also grow grass, corn, sugar beets and wheat. There's a lot to do and my boys are well aware that they've chosen a very challenging profession. Here's what we do: We breed more compact cows so they'll produce for longer, because we know from experience that larger cows have more health problems. We also want to expand our herd, which is expensive in the Netherlands, it means we have to

buy phosphate rights per cow.

We also have to improve the soil fertility - so we'll produce more sustainably and use alternative energy, that's our contribution to fighting climate change.

*“My children have known country life from a young age.”*

That's a huge agenda for the family - and as the Netherlands is so densely populated, running a farm becoming less promising as things develop. So our membership of DMK was another important factor in the children's decision. The milk price is much more stable given the diversity of the

product groups. That's the only way a dairy can be viable. We have faith in DMK and that drives us.”

#WE'REONIT

Esther Thieme, Plant Manager, wheyco, Altentreptow.



## The Commercial Director



## The Plant Manager

What **Stefan Keller** values about DMK's company culture is working as a team of equals.

**I**n the morning, when I look at my busy workday ahead, I see much more than a list of meetings, work calls and daily goals.

It's all part of a larger framework of meaningful exchange with my colleagues who I've been working with and relying on 100 percent for the past 14 years at DMK. In the Private Label Business Unit, we support discounters and supermarkets who are establishing themselves with the DMK Group's products and concepts. The Commercial unit is part of that, and it handles all the essential commercial tasks, from marketing to developing the product and packaging, sales, retail sales management and contract manufacturing. My team and I are united not only by our knowledge, but also our sense of fun and the desire to succeed, and that's all the more important during the pandemic. That helps

us think creatively, for example when we look at market and customer issues together: What are the latest nutritional and social trends? How should we interpret the latest market

research? What does it mean for our customers? How could some of our concepts look? Thanks to our experience, we have a good view of all the market dynamics. We also hold workshops in our unit to develop target-oriented strategies, in close cooperation with our customers. But whether it's customers or

employees, it always matters to me that we have an exchange of views as equals and I'd like to see managers setting the best example of that. I'm hugely motivated by how positively the Private Label Business Unit and its Commercial branch are developing. I see the area as a stable and successful pillar for the whole DMK Group."

*"It's not only our knowledge that unites my team and I, we also share a sense of fun and the drive to succeed."*

**A**ll of a sudden I'm a boss, that's pretty much how it feels. Leadership was part of the trainee program I joined at DMK, it's still totally different to manage an entire plant. I've been plant manager at wheyco in Altentreptow since January 2021. I deal with employee motivation, occupational safety, quality, environment and energy issues, cost management and the value chain.

What makes a good manager? They should be inspiring, motivating and create the right conditions so people can succeed at their work and enjoy it. They should have the courage to get involved, be honest and open - even when things get tough. But above all, it's about empathy: Something that works for one employee does not necessarily work for another. The learning process probably lasts forever. I don't know if I'll be able to manage that, I haven't been in the job long enough yet. All I know is that these are my goals and that I love a challenge and I'm up for it.

It was only in 2019 that I was asked by DMK if I wanted to get involved in a

whey strategy for wheyco. I was project manager at ARLA for three years. That was a good time: I was responsible for optimizing production and then moved to plant engineering. Plant engineering is pretty exciting, it's a bit like an adventure playground because each day you do a lot of the work yourself and it's very practical, with overalls and a wrench. You have to work things out with a lot of people, from the technicians to the programmers and the plant engineers - and sometimes in different languages. All that meant the job was really exciting and varied.

Initially at DMK, I was a project manager for the implementation of the whey strategy and then took on more projects with a greater scope. When the opportunity due to the succession plan arose, it made sense for me to take on this post.

I have no regrets! You have to get involved and seize opportunities - especially when you're young. That's the only way I can get to know lots of interesting people and encounter new ways of thinking."

As a brand-new plant manager, **Esther Thieme** has a lot of responsibility - and that suits her fine.

“As a team leader in production, I provide support, and am a port of call for my employees' needs, worries and concerns. They come by if they have something on their mind. That's important to me and it motivates me to know that they are doing well, that they enjoy working in the team and that I'm getting to know them better.

That mutual trust makes my job really enjoyable. At the same time, of course, I also love my operational work. My area of responsibility is the cheese dairy and as a deputy I'm also responsible for the plant room. I work and evaluate the production data, looking at how production went, and how the laboratory data looks. I ask questions like where can we change something to improve? Where do I need to intervene? The great thing about my job is that it's so versatile. I'm in contact with the employees and am involved in production, but I also organize and plan, which I really enjoy. So it never gets boring.

I get a jolt when something goes wrong, perhaps a machine has no steam for example, or a defect, or there's not enough raw material. I have to think carefully to plan and resched-

ule everything. Those are challenging times and I don't look forward to them, though they do shake up the daily routine.

It's nothing to make a big fuss about, but as a master craftswoman, I have a lot of advantages. I grew up on my parents' dairy farm near Edeweicht and we always sent our milk to DMK, then to Nordmilch, so I learned about the dairy at an early age. In Edeweicht, I also trained as a dairy technologist, then I went to train at the dairy science school in Oldenburg. I really have to say a special thanks to DMK here: For the training I was given a funding contract and received financial support

## The Master Craftswoman

In her profession, **Hanna Büßelmann** values the operational business and much, much more.

from the company for the entire time, and was released from my work.

It meant I could totally concentrate on my course. I had already realized during my training that I did not want to be a journeyman as I like to study and learn new things, and that shift work wouldn't suit me in the long term. So I had already decided during my apprenticeship to go to the dairy science college. After further posts at DMK, I became production manager at DMK Bergen on the island of Rügen. My department manager asked me whether I could imagine taking over production management until the site there closed. I was a bit unsure at first as Rügen is quite a long way from Edeweicht and I had no experience of a job like that. I was only 24.

But in the end I gathered up my courage and took the post. It was the best decision! I am so glad that I was given the opportunity to gain so much experience in such a completely new environment. Today I'm team leader in production at Müriz Milch in Waren. Things worked out for me - and that's what I want to share with young people. My aim is to get young people excited about our company and the exciting job of dairy technologist.”

### Martin van Dijk:

“Our careers mainly ran in parallel during the past few years and our paths only crossed when one of us needed help from the other. But we've been working more closely together ever since the customer service teams at the Dutch sites Hoogeveen and Kaatsheuvel were integrated into the Bremen customer service team. Robert Brünjes and I work as managers in the Maxima project team that focuses on enabling the Dutch companies to grow closer together. We're integrating the tasks and responsibilities of the Dutch Customer Services teams into the German Customer & Commercial Services team. It's a delicate and complex process that requires us to have a clear understanding of each other's processes and at the same time understand the wishes and needs of customer service users.

Customer service is the heart of the company. It's at the center of all departments and aims to achieve customer satisfaction and the best possible customer experience. Therefore our team members are constantly in contact with all of the departments. We also measure our results and know what we do well and where we can improve.

## The Border Crossers

DMK is growing together and it's transcending national borders in the process. Team leaders **Robert Brünjes** and **Martin van Dijk** describe the challenges involved.

I like doing business internationally and the different kinds of customers are also a challenge. Retail customers expect very different services than export customers and the other way round, so each day can wind up being different to what you expected. The job is never dull. Beyond that, I like and learn a lot from working with all departments in the company - from quality to the sales department.”

### Robert Brünjes:

“I want us to understand each other well. We need to, in order to adapt our work processes to

one another, create new teams and develop joint recommendations for different approaches. It's really important to be willing to work as a team and be open.

It's challenging to optimize such a large number of projects. No two days are alike. We at Customer & Commercial Services are the link between many internal customers: Sales, supply chain, production, accounting and others. Our broad product and customer portfolio also provides plenty of new challenges. And we also need to constantly adapt to the different needs of the business units - and therefore the market requirements. But that's also helped us find some good solutions so far!

What's most impressed me is how the company has developed over the last 20 years. That change has allowed me to be involved in more and more cross-departmental projects and processes, which has further increased my job satisfaction.

In the future, what I hope is that DMK is able to keep finding the right balance between providing a high level of service and having cost-oriented processes. However, positive interaction between colleagues, farmers and consumers will be the most important thing.”

**Hanna Büßelmann**, Team Leader Production at Müriz Milch, Waren.



**Martin van Dijk**, Manager Customer Services, DOC Dairy Partners / Uniekaas.



**Robert Brünjes**, Team Leader CCS Excellence, DMK.



# Our <sup>New</sup> Podcast

Being open and approachable, talking and listening are also part of DMK's team spirit. Footballer Marco Bode talks about the parallels between soccer and the corporate world in a new podcast called "Denkfutter," which translates as "food for thought."



Just scan here to hear what he has to say. You can find all episodes on Spotify, Google Podcasts, Amazon or Apple Music and Apple Podcasts.

**Excerpt from the podcast with Oliver Bartelt and Marco Bode (abridged)**

**Bartelt:** DMK is a giant team, spread out through dozens of countries and business units. People can't just jump in and get going - smart, measurable targets help give the company direction, including visions and mission statements. Is that also the case in the world of soccer?

**Bode:** In soccer, the question we ask ourselves is, is there a concrete goal? How should we communicate that internally and to the outer world? We often have a target for the season developed by the team and coaches in the dressing room. Then we ask ourselves, is that something we can communicate directly to the media and our fans? That's how we identify what we want to achieve, and that's motivating.

**Bartelt:** How much guidance should leaders give - and how much should they do themselves?

**Bode:** If you want to lead, you have to let people get on with it. Does the perfect coach also have to have been a professional? No. I don't agree that someone has to have been a successful professional player in order to be a good coach. At Werder, we think that the coaching team should include someone who's experienced the game at a high level. That doesn't necessarily mean the head coach though.

**Bartelt:** Do today's managers need more soft skills than hard skills?

**Bode:** Leadership means inspiring people, supporting them and using their potential - those are the soft factors. You need to deal with people as equals. On the other hand, you also need a certain amount of distance to make decisions they then have to implement.

**Bartelt:** You speak of "inspiring" people but I would take it a step further. In the course of transforming a company, I'd speak of "annoying" people a bit. A manager needs courage and to be able to question established processes and ways of working. They need to ask whether the approaches that were perfectly good up until yesterday are still good now - and whether they are good enough for tomorrow, too. Managers

shouldn't be like the police, checking if people are following the rules. But I enjoy irritating my team up a bit. I'm not looking for everyone to be in agreement - what I want is for people to take a critical look at things. That's what gives me energy as a leader. But that also means taking a relaxed approach to mistakes. I have to ask myself whether I'm willing to say to my employees that "I don't know everything either, and I also make mistakes!" Or do I always need to be a bit more distant?

**Bode:** That depends on the corporate culture - it's like that on a soccer team, too. Is there a certain level of trust? How do we relate to each other? How do we communicate? If there's a good culture, then a manager will be able to admit mistakes. But often, it isn't like that in real life. What I've seen in soccer is that people keep rubbing your nose in it if you admit to making a mistake. As a coach, if you show "weaknesses," your team might accept that but it's different with the media and that becomes a problem for the coach. That's why soccer coaches are more dominant than company managers, as they have to make sure that the team follows them. Dialogue and feedback are all well and good, but at the end of the day, someone has to make the decisions.

**Bartelt:** How do teams work best together, in your view, from the world of sport?

**Bode:** Good team spirit is essential. No one would deny that an individual's skills are also key. But when you have two Bundesliga teams that are roughly the same level in terms of performance, the team that works best as a group is the one that will win. That means the team that has a plan, communicates well and is pursuing a shared goal - then the soft factors really count. That's why I think the "how" is important. When it comes to teams, I think there are two dimensions. One is the relationship level. How do we deal with one another? How's the atmosphere? Can the people have fun as a group? Then there's the tasks, that's the other level - what's our job, what's our goal? If the team works well in both dimensions, it becomes a winning team. And that is also really important for companies.

## Q & A

### What's a podcast?

It's an audio or video file you can play or download at any time, rather than being broadcast at a particular time of day. You can watch or listen to podcasts using a computer, smartphone or an internet radio. "Denkfutter" - which means "food for thought" - is an audio program.

### Where can I find podcasts?

You can find them on Spotify, a streaming service that offers music, audio plays and audio books - not videos. You can access it by downloading an app onto your smartphone or visiting the website.

### How do you record a podcast?

Using a recording device and two microphones. You don't necessarily need a booth although that could improve the quality of the sound.

### Why are we making this podcast?

Podcasts are becoming more and more important as a way of sharing information, as people can listen to them at any time of day, while driving or shopping, for example, just like a program on the radio.

### Sound is the new text.

**Audio is not just a new fad - it really meets a need.**

The number of podcasts is increasing rapidly and they are finding more and more listeners. Podcasts are increasingly becoming part of people's daily lives. In Germany, for example, more than 10 million people actively listen to podcasts.

### Who else is listening?

Our podcast is aimed at anyone who's interested in finding food for thought on issues in corporate culture. All of the episodes are available on Spotify, Google Podcasts, Amazon or Apple Music and Apple Podcasts.





Susanne Rusch,  
Head of Market Research.



# Milk, a bestseller

How did 2020, a year of crisis, affect dairy product sales? Which retailers are making a profit? The latest market research by GfK provides some interesting insights.

One thing is for sure: The year 2020, marked by the pandemic, was the best year for food retailers in recent memory. Aside from the headlines about people panic buying toilet paper, in Germany, consumers showed how much dairy products matter. Sales of milk, yoghurt, dairy and cheese products rose by a good 10 percent. In terms of cheese, the trend was driven in a large part by the self-service segment which grew 11.4 percent, while counter sales only increased in a single-digit range. In

terms of dairy goods, plant-based milk alternatives are still highly popular. "DMK also benefited from the positive developments of dairy products," says Susanne Rusch, Head of DMK Market Research. "MILRAM saw cheese sales in the self-service segment rise by a good 30 percent. And another key trend was also well served with the MILRAM protein range, through products such as MILRAM active spring quark, and cottage cheese." A look at the distribution channels shows supermarkets full-range food

retailers in particular, such as Edeka and Rewe, were clear winners in 2020, and were able to expand their market share. That's thanks to younger generations in particular, who sought out sustainable brands, and brands aligned with a clear set of values, in addition to standard products. This year, German market researcher GfK forecasts that some consumers will see their financial situation worsen, dampening consumer sentiment in some households, meaning sales are not likely to continue growing at this level.

## Share of the market

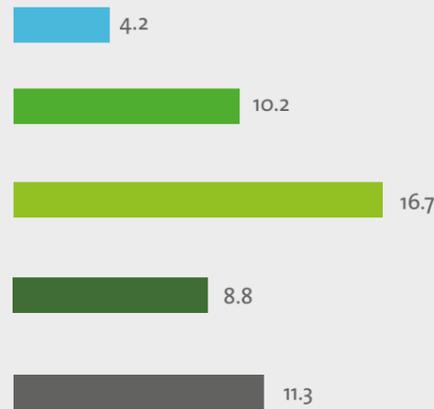
in the German food retail trade\* in %

Share of revenue



- Drugstores
  - Hypermarkets
  - Supermarkets
  - Discounters
- Billion euros**  
Change in previous year, in %

Change in Value 2020 : 2019  
JANUARY – DECEMBER

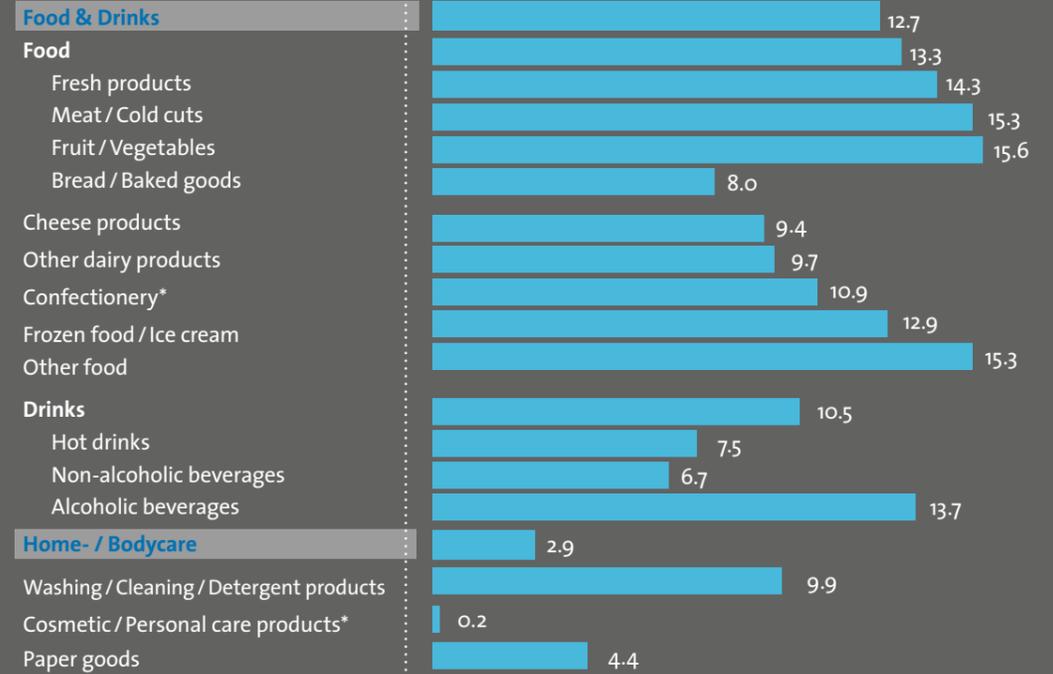


© GfK 2021 | Source: GfK Consumer Panel FMCG, as of year-end; changes in absolute and relative value \*excluding specialist retailers; total receipts FMCG (incl. fresh produce)

## Product Range Development

Degree of change (value) compared to the same period last year in %

Change in value 2020 : 2019\*  
JANUARY – NOVEMBER



© GfK 2021 | Source: Consumer Panel FMCG (CP+), \*GfK Consumer Panel Individual

## Changing market share



Supermarkets are growing at an above average rate mainly among the younger generation.

Shows the change in market share (value) Jan.-Nov. 2020 vs. Jan.-Nov. 2019 in percentage points.

**Frank Claassen**, the DMK Group's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) since 2019.



**“We act in the service of the farmers”**

... In 2021, CFO Dr. Frank Claassen is looking forward – as for him, the company has lots of financial potential, working together with the farmers.

**Despite the ongoing pandemic, the DMK Group is looking forward to the year ahead – rightly so?**

Absolutely! We are all hoping for an end to the pandemic – but until then, we're learning better and better how to cope with it, thanks to our health and hygiene regulations. There's also a silver lining on the horizon as dairy prices are rising and the markets are expecting the situation to keep improving. So our goal is to push through higher prices.

**How have the different market segments changed during the crisis?**

Food retailing has expanded, with Edeka, Lidl, Rewe and Aldi at the forefront – and that has helped our brand and trade products too. However, there was also a larger impact on the whole food services market, which is very important to us. That means customers from the food service, hotel and restaurant sectors, who process cheese, cream or butter for their own customers.

**Why is the food service area so important for DMK?**

The segment is highly profitable, because the focus is less on the price than on the characteristics of the product. For example, we can offer our customers the right melting properties for cheese, or help them prepare milkshakes faster. This market is really driving growth at DMK. Unfortunately we haven't recovered to the levels we were at before the crisis, which is painful, as we have a very strong position on this market.

**DMK has reorganized and modernized the entire finance department and has also reassessed procurement. How are these measures helping?**

They're making money for us because they optimize our purchasing of non-dairy products that we buy, such as packaging. We spend a billion euros a year on this, so it's really important to make savings.

**You reorganized the Finance department under the banner**

**“One Finance.” What's the department working on right now?**

The team examines each business unit's figures and plays a key role in helping us make faster and better decisions that are more accurate and more transparent. We're developing digital financial tools that are able to show us sales and earnings at the push of a button. With prices changing rapidly, I need to know what my costs and revenues are, and how they are changing, on a daily basis. But at DMK, we also benefit from the S&OP – the Sales and Operations Plan. That's where we calculate the flow of milk volumes: How much comes in, how is it distributed and what is it used to produce? With the information available faster, we are able to make better and more accurate decisions.

**Germany has an election this year and farmers are protesting more and more about environmental regulations and milk prices. How does DMK see that?**

Farmers are our owners and we stand alongside them in solidarity with their interests, which are justified. People have often said it's the dairy against the farmers but that isn't true. Without their milk, the company would not exist. There are many farmers on the supervisory board and other committees. We discuss every step and we are here to answer questions. We're very much aware of their difficulties – though as a dairy, our job can't be to speak out on the political stage. Our job is to turn milk into the best dairy products at competitive prices and market them. The more world-class products we produce, the more farmers benefit.

**Farmers are also benefiting from the Fixed Price Model...**

We're happy it's becoming more popular! The size of our company allows us to offer the model where we buy their milk at a fixed price, as we trade the milk on the futures exchange. We put ourselves at the service of the farmers and act on their behalf. The fixed price isn't aiming to be better than the market. That would be reckless. It's a hedging instrument to free farmers from price fluctuations. It means six to eight months ahead they can

know what they will get for a certain amount of the milk they produce. That stabilizes their revenue flows and makes them more independent.

**The cooperation with the Netherlands is also going well. What are you hoping for, from the synergies between DMK and Uniekaas?**

Uniekaas is a great cheese with a long tradition and with it, we can further develop the brand business in the Netherlands and Benelux. In terms of sales, Uniekaas has been integrated into the BU Brand, while production-wise, it's integrated into the BU Private Label. In both areas we're also using local knowledge to become better and better. Uniekaas may be a small brand, but it's growing profitably.

**Is DMK planning further investments abroad?**

We never rule it out but markets abroad have their own rules. We weigh up the risks and advantages of doing some of our production locally. The places where we see opportunities are in those markets where the dairies aren't all underbidding each other, and where customers appreciate DMK as a reliable supplier. The top priority for exports should, of course, be our milk and our dairy products and that's going well right now in Japan and the Dominican Republic, among other places. Our Oldenburger cheese brand is very popular abroad.

**Are there other areas where major work is needed in 2021?**

DMK's main focus is set the pillars of our strategy are in place. Now, we are working through our projects one by one – that's what we did in 2020 in spite of the pandemic and we'll keep doing that in 2021. We're reorganizing business in BU Baby, we're continuously improving thanks to the Tiger project in the plants, we're continuing to grow closer together as DMK across the German/Dutch border, and we're continuing to look very closely at our cost structures. We can't just relax – standing still isn't an option. “We're on it!” is our motto.

# We Need One Set of Rules



**Bernd Burfeind,**  
Global Head of  
Corporate  
Governance.

Compliance is becoming more and more important – and it’s also protecting DMK and its employees from serious trouble.

**B**ernd Burfeind has encountered all the prejudices out there: “Compliance only costs money!” or “It’s totally unsexy!” Not forgetting, “Compliance gets in the way of business!” The Chief Compliance Officer understands why the issue is so divisive while at the same time so important – essential – for DMK: Compliance ensures people follow the laws and internal guidelines that affect the company or its employees. Without it, problems can arise – to put it mildly. In summer 2020, the Compliance Management System (CMS) was rolled out across the Group, and internationally. It was the first Group-wide project that also included Russia, China or MENA. The main focus for DMK is clearly to prevent corruption, money laundering, auditing business partners and, in the future, antitrust law. In terms of sales, compliance also helps protect the company’s earnings and assets. “The business we do by day allows us to sleep soundly at night,” says Burfeind. “If we play by the rules.” Burfeind mentions a case that is familiar to many. “Imagine if we had a compliance incident like the diesel scandal,” he says. “That kind of negative press can do enormous reputational damage. And in the antitrust area, or corruption, the fines can be really high.”



*“My two-person team coordinates Group-wide compliance team and reports to the Executive Board. For 2021, employees whose work is directly affected by certain compliance requirements will be trained in anti-corruption, anti-money laundering, and antitrust law.”*

**Alexandra Janshen,**  
Group Compliance Officer.



*“For me, the big challenge is finding the right balance between what’s necessary and what’s excessively bureaucratic, or develop that instinct, to put it another way.”*

**Christina Künneke,**  
Management Support International  
and Compliance Manager at BU  
International.



*“The DMK cooperative – DMK eG – as the parent company of the Group, has also decided to introduce its own compliance management system and has appointed Dr. Klaus Hein, General Representative, as Compliance Officer. The CMS has the same standards as that of the DMK Group, with just a slightly different focus based on the eG’s particular compliance risks.”*

**Dr. Reinhard Vogel-Lackenberg,**  
Manager Agri Busin. & Member Affairs  
and Compliance Manager DMK e.G.



*“We pay a high price if we don’t behave properly. Customers lose their trust in us, it would damage the image of DOC Kaas or DP Supply and talented young people would no longer see us as a good employer. We’re currently adapting our systems to those of DMK – that includes learning how they implement compliance.”*

**Marcel Bruins,**  
Managing Director DOC Kaas B.V.  
and Compliance Manager, the  
Netherlands.



*“The fact that we make contracts with suppliers theoretically increases the likelihood of risks such as corruption. The Supplier Code governs that issue in supply chains, so compliance has been part of our business relationships for a long time.”*

**Kim Wilkens,**  
Procurement Expert Sustainability  
and Compliance Manager.

The CMS reduces or prevents violations of company rules and personal penalties for those involved in business. It includes compliance risk analysis, compliance guidelines, and a decentralized compliance team consisting of more than 30 compliance managers throughout the Group who drive this area forward alongside their other work. “Every managing director has a personal duty of care and is responsible for ensuring that his or her own conduct and the conduct of their organization comply with the law,” says Burfeind. For compliance to succeed across divisions, all employees and managers must be committed to lawful conduct and behave accordingly. Measures to prevent violations must be introduced, that support business and that are monitored to ensure they’re implemented. That is not easy and, according to Burfeind, can only be achieved if people in a company live a culture of compliance. “Every single employee can make a contribution by openly addressing problematic issues, taking advantage of training opportunities and complying with the rules of the game.” The introduction of the CMS is not yet complete – it’s still a matter of getting everyone on board and firmly embedding the issue into the company’s DNA – and its corporate culture. “Having compliance structures at DMK is also important for our customers and other stakeholders such as banks, as they take all that into account before entering into a business relationship.” Bernd Burfeind notices this in many audits, and also in customer questionnaires that ask about compliance structures as a prerequisite for further cooperation. But looking at how CMS is developing at DMK is encouraging, he says. “If everyone participates, we can reduce the occurrence of major problems – and that is certainly in the interests of every employee.”



*“I’ve implemented CMS measures such as business partner screening, how to handle donations and more at TURM. It meant intensive exchanges with specialist departments and meaningful documentation were indispensable.”*

**Daniela Schoch,** Management  
Assistant and Compliance Manager  
at TURM-Sahne GmbH.



*“I am the contact person for Group Compliance at DMK in Russia and adapt Group and EU requirements in line with local legislation. Compliance helps us to develop sustainably and to keep transparent in our dealings with shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, and the government.”*

**Natalia Alexeeva,**  
Business Partner Finance and  
Compliance Manager. IKAM Richart  
Holding TK, Russia.



# Retail and brand – hand in hand

In the Netherlands, Uniekaas works closely together with a supermarket. That is not only creating new products – but also optimal synergies.



**Wilfred Walstra,** Senior Sales Manager Retail, Uniekaas, the Netherlands.

Occasionally, the relationship between dairies and retail may be described as “grating.” But at Uniekaas in the Netherlands, grating has much more positive connotations: The cheese producer develops, sells and markets grated cheese together with JUMBO, the second-largest supermarket chain. That’s developing into an extremely promising business model that ultimately benefits our farmers too.

## Great interaction

“When we slice our cheese into pieces, that creates offcuts too, secondary products that we use as an ingredient for grated cheese,” explains Wilfred Walstra, Senior Sales Manager Retail, Uniekaas, the Netherlands. This approach is much more profitable than selling the cheese as offcuts. The second-largest supermarket chain in the Netherlands soon spotted the fact that grated cheese is a promising product. Since 2018, the two have been expanding the range to include jumbo private label pieces and selections. The contracts for grated cheese were added in week 50/2020. And beyond that, the two partners carried out extensive market research in order to significantly expand and optimize the range of grated cheese, and improve the quality.

**Popular all rounder**  
There’s a growing need for grated cheese that can be used in a variety of ways.



**Full shelves**  
The JUMBO supermarket chain stands out on the market thanks to an optimal range of high quality products – resulting from its collaboration with UK Holland B.V.

## Getting to know the shopper

To do this, they first looked at consumer behaviour: What do shoppers use grated cheese for and what kind of quality are they looking for? Is the cheese used in Italian recipes, traditional dishes or some other kind of dish? “We had an external agency test different qualities of grated cheese. Surprisingly, we found a wide range of types are suitable for grated cheese.” The business partners worked together to develop a series of recipes and quality levels to establish what age of cheese was needed, when it should be delivered and to define the marketing measures needed. Together with JUMBO, Uniekaas controls the whole process from the cow to the refrigerator.

## More space, more volume

“We set up a whole new production line at the Kaatsheuvel site to expand our range,” says Walstra. “We were already producing grated cheese but that used to be just a small portion of our current volumes. We have now created more capacity, with the new line.”

It was a huge step forward, he emphasizes. By optimizing the added value, that ultimately has a positive effect on the milk price for farmers. Both partners have now agreed on a longer cooperation - for an unusually long time, for BU Private Label.

Walstra says the new partnership kills two birds with one stone: It optimizes use of the plant’s machinery, Uniekaas works more efficiently, and retail and brand work hand in hand.



**Marco Bode,** head of the SV Werder Bremen Supervisory Board and European football champion

# Getting to the heart of motivation

How do we reach peak performance? How can I reach my full potential? Or how can I motivate others to give their best and to push beyond their limits? Motivation and what really drives us as people are exciting questions but they’re also difficult. And they’re as relevant in the world of sport as they are when it comes to working at a company!

In my experience and from what I’ve observed in the world of professional sports is that what counts is intrinsic motivation, that comes from within. When we see meaning in what we do, if we enjoy what we do and feel good about it, we are motivated and ready to perform at our best, without thinking about potential rewards or penalties. Usually, professional athletes have strong intrinsic motivation, as they have managed to make something they enjoyed as a child into their profession.

Perhaps that is not as often the case in companies but it’s still the ideal situation: Ideally, employees should be able to see meaning in their work, and enjoy it, that definitely helps improve perfor-

*“Employees should be able to find meaning in their work.”*

mance. But what about extrinsic motivation? Can you improve performance by promising someone more money or power? It works in principle, but you need to be careful with this kind of incentive as sometimes, a bonus can drive people to behave in ways you don’t want them to!

In football, for example, a striker has a powerful intrinsic motivation to work for the team’s success. But trying to further motivate your player, say with a bonus for the number of goals scored, could lead to egotistical behaviour which would negatively impact their overall performance and the team’s success.

Furthermore, psychology teaches us that there can be many motivational drivers that differ from one person to the next. Some people long for freedom and independence while others yearn for safety and stability. One player might give their best in the knowledge that the coach will give them two days off if they’re successful, while others reach peak performance if their family or someone important to them is sitting watching in the stands! As far as I was concerned, both mattered!



**dmk BRAND**

*“Uniekaas has a unique brand story.”*

Matthias Rensch, COO  
Brand Business Unit.



**Onze heerlijkste Uniekaas**  
- SINCE 1958 -

*“We’re achieving significant synergies!”*

Ron Krekels, Uniekaas  
Managing Director.

## A Shared Goal in Sight

The Brand Business Unit is where all the different product marketing strands come together. That covers Uniekaas too – how is the German-Dutch collaboration doing?

### Why is Uniekaas now part of BU Brand?

**Ron Krekels:** It was an important move as BU Brand’s knowledge and experience and the close collaboration is leading to significant synergies.

**Matthias Rensch:** In Strategy 2030, we defined Europe as our home market, so we no longer see it as international business. Uniekaas is special as it’s the oldest cheese brand in the Netherlands, it’s got a unique brand history! Perhaps it’s also worth mentioning that Uniekaas is now divided into two parts, with

marketing and sales assigned to the Brand business unit, while production - including maturation, factory and warehouse, is in the Private Label business unit, which already has all the knowledge and experience.

### How do two companies become one?

**Rensch:** We focus on a trio of purpose, values and personal strengths in the BU. Purpose is related to our origins, our cooperative DNA, and our social responsibility to our owners and their families. We’ve developed our values together with almost all of the employees in the BU and they provide the foundation for our work. And we’ve identified each individual employee’s personal strengths, as we want to understand them and build on them, rather than focusing on fixing what people think of as weaknesses - a more traditional approach. We’ve also discussed all this with our Uniekaas colleagues, and worked on it. We rely on that trio I mentioned, it makes a lot of sense and constantly accompanies our work.

### How is cooperation going amid the pandemic?

**Rensch:** We’ve done a lot of work in video and phone calls since last fall, because of the coronavirus. But I wanted to reach out to our new colleagues and help them get in touch with one another, too, so I came up with the idea of “Talk With Cord,” an online internal talk show, in a company context. It’s hosted by our colleague Cord Heiseke, Sales Manager BU Brand. He uses MS Teams to invite people for interview, a chat and to have fun.

**Krekels:** It’s about having the same mentality. We’re a team, because together we are stronger and better able to take on the market. We profit from each other’s experience, and that brings us valuable synergies.

### Uniekaas is one of the fastest growing cheese brands in the Netherlands. What does that mean for the BU Brand?

**Rensch:** It’s an ideal starting position for us, because Uniekaas is such a special brand. We want to make it even stronger as it has enormous potential. The challenge is to gain a sustainable hold on the market through clever marketing and sales. Category Management will also play a big role in this.

**Krekels:** The big challenge for sales and marketing is maintaining the growth curve. Around 90 percent of the Dutch eat natural cheese. That’s exactly what Uniekaas is. What’s also important is that we have a valuable partner at our side: Jumbo, a fast-growing supermarket chain, and they’re also based in Belgium. Benelux is also an important market for Uniekaas.

### Do you a goal in mind for Uniekaas?

**Rensch:** We want to be the first choice in Europe when it comes to cheese that’s matured naturally and otherwise, for consumers, retailers and food service companies.

**Krekels:** BU Brand has really clear ideas about how marketing campaigns should look. We want to support the DMK Group as part of BU Brand..

### BU Brand

As a unit, BU Brand has an overview of the European milk brand business. It aims to market high-quality DMK products in the food service sector, including gastronomy and catering, as well as in retail, addressing consumers in Germany with brands like MILRAM, or Uniekaas in the Netherlands since the start of 2021.

### Uniekaas

The oldest cheese brand in the Netherlands with a wide range of quality cheeses – from young to extra-old, for everything from snacks to high-end treats. It’s made out of fresh milk from Dutch farmers who are part of the second largest dairy cooperative in the Netherlands: DMK/DOC Kaas. All of the cheeses are made according to the original recipe and are available not only in the Netherlands but are also exported to several countries abroad.



A special caravan from 1992 where shoppers tried cheese, milk and buttermilk and found out more about "D.O.C."

## Happy Birthday!



It all started with a small steam-powered dairy in the Netherlands. On January 6, 1896, the dairy produced 1,100 liters of milk to make butter and buttermilk. What was new was its operating model: It was a "Coöperatieve Stoomzuivel-fabriek," conceived as a cooperative and gave farmers who participated a greater degree

of planning security for their milk sales. The investment paid off: Milk volumes soared to 12 million liters by 1912, requiring larger production facilities. Then in 1928, the plant was expanded, involving the purchase of several houses, a canal being dug and a bridge built. Things were going well until the economic and agricultural crisis hit. With the stock market crash, milk prices fell, and in 1931 France and Germany also raised their import duties. But in 1932, a dairy fund guaranteed farmers a minimum milk price. The crisis passed five years later. The situation calmed down even further with the end of World War II: The plant took over the "De Voor-uitgang" (Progress) dairy cooperative and processed some six million kilos of milk into cheese

A whole range of **Uniekaas products** has been developed through the years, thanks to Hoogveen – and the merger with DMK

The **Hoogveen** site in the Netherlands has been churning out milk products for 125 years – and it has an event-packed history.

every year. Then, in the early 1960s, the company merged with other milk plants in order to remain competitive. D.O.C. was born. Some 20 years later, the Hoogveen site was rebuilt and automated, and 250 tons of milk

Talk turned to the possibility of further mergers. Little by little, plans were formed for a merger with the German dairy cooperative DMK, a move completed in 2016. It's a win-win as their strategies complement one another. DMK operates internationally, has a large range of dairy products and is well positioned in growth markets. D.O.C. Kaas has a great deal of know-

# 125 years

products were leaving the site each week. In 1995, the plant was called D.O.C. Kaas. Then, from 2008, the dairy market became increasingly erratic, requiring a new strategy to stabilize the milk price and secure earnings.

ledge and experience in producing cheese. That's led to synergies, better use of capacities and increased innovation and investment capacity. The cooperation of equals is helping both sides succeed on the international milk market.

Since 2003, production has been underway at a new plant in Hoogveen..



**The plant in 1901.** At the time, the cooperative model was new to farmers – and brought advantages.



**Made in Germany**

**Vitamin D + E**

## DMK ABROAD

# For China's Future Stars

Milk is highly valued as an important food product in China. DMK has created an innovative drink especially for children.

DMK launched "Oldenburger Shining Star," a new product for children, in China this March. It's made at the Zeven site and is based on whole milk fortified with vitamins D and E, omega-3 fatty acid DHA, and valuable dietary fiber, meeting the needs of Chinese consumers. Some 60 percent of shoppers in China say they eat fortified dairy products, according to market research. "For us, this is an important step in the Chinese growth market towards a range of value-added products alongside classic UHT milk – which is really popular thanks to the high quality image of German milk," says Frauke Windolph, Marketing Manager at DMK International. "I am delighted that this project is now reaching the market, following a long period of cross-functional development." DMK is now launching a broad marketing campaign, presenting the product in a playful way in local social media channels and on e-commerce platforms. The campaign also features an animated film.

Check out the film on the Oldenburger website:

**FIBRE**

**Omega-3-fatty acid**

The marketing of Oldenburger Shining Star includes a film showing a rocket launching the product into space.

CHINA

## Management Gets Digital

The pandemic has fundamentally changed work at DMK. Managers can also support their employees online, but they should bear a few things in mind.

Virtual meetings rather than in person, working from home instead of a quick chat by the water cooler: The trend to digitalizing entire work processes has accelerated enormously.

“The past twelve months have shown us the importance of flexibility and adaptability,” says Jörn Eggemann from DMK’s personnel development department. “And we have learned that we can only solve the really big problems as a community.” Employees and managers face whole new challenges in the new, more digital world of work. How can we develop and maintain team spirit online? What are the advantages and disadvantages of communicating with platforms such as Microsoft Teams? These are some of the questions considered by Eggemann and his colleagues. His most important advice to managers: “Digital leadership means developing a greater degree of trust in my employees. If I monitor them too much, there’s a risk that employees will focus more on documenting their work for me than actually making progress. If I am unable to trust as a manager, I have to ask myself, do I have an excessive need to control things?” It’s important to find a sensible balance: “If we don’t take enough time for individual employees, that can also be perceived as a lack of interest. So personal

discussions are also important, as well as team meetings.” The general rule in times of decentralized working is: It’s better to communicate more frequently and more briefly.

Eggemann also believes it’s important to “be positive! Don’t just focus on the negative aspects of the current situation, but also see the advantages and opportunities for you and your employees. Be encouraging, and convey a sense of confidence.” Beyond that, he says, it’s mainly things that seem mundane that help virtual meetings run more smoothly. Eg-

gemann recommends defining a kind of etiquette in advance that everyone can then stick to: Everyone can turn on their cameras at video conferences, if that’s been agreed beforehand. The “raise your hand” function can help people avoid interrupting each other. You can also encourage and reward commitment online, too. “Executives should arrive at meetings on time and be well prepared. Their agenda should be shaped according to the time available and provide help orient all those in attendance.” On the other hand, doing other activities at the same time is a no-no, such as checking your emails or playing around with your smartphone. “We have all taken a big step toward the future,” Eggemann says. “Now we have to rethink how we want to work together after the pandemic.”



Jörn Eggemann, Director HR Development from DMK’s personnel development is focusing on digital leadership.

### MILRAM FOOD SERVICE

## “New, digital working environments require new services”



MILRAM Food Service’s new marketing strategy is focused on digital formats.



Marketing chief **Sven Kreitz** wants to strengthen MILRAM Food Service’s emotional appeal.

as it did before. New, digital working environments require new services. The pandemic has accelerated this transition enormously, which is why we are setting new standards with digital formats.”

### Digital services and individual experiences aren’t mutually exclusive

In March 2020, when the pandemic broke out in Germany, MILRAM Food Service was one of the first in the industry to create a concept for a digital trade fair. A year on – alongside the virtual INTERGASTRA and INTERNORGA – it has further developed its digital trade fair presence. Now it has new channels, whole worlds of exciting and engaging images and a more individually tailored approach. Its services are shaped according to the needs of each user group from chefs to bakers. “We want to be in direct contact with the professionals and users – also to find out a bit more about them,” says Kreitz.

### MILRAM Food Service has come through the pandemic pretty well.

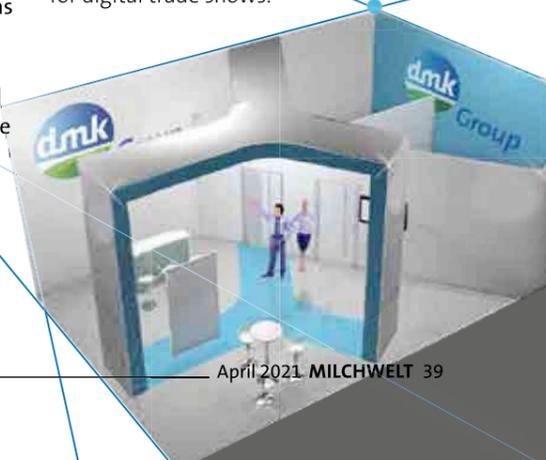
Classic restaurants have only been able to cater to their guests to a limited extent, if at all, while canteens and cafeterias have been organized remotely. Nonetheless, despite these challenges, MILRAM Food Service has come through the crisis well so far. “From production to sales and marketing, everyone involved has made the best of the situation,” says Marketing Manager Sven Kreitz. “At the same time, the pandemic has shown us that the industry can’t go on the same way

Now, the brand is presenting yet more added value, with #OneMoreIdea on social media channels from Facebook to LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram, as well as its own website, <https://messe.milram-food-service.de>. The campaign helps users find all social media posts as well as content from the site. Alongside creative takeaway concepts that promise greater sales amid the current situation, Kristin Mitlewski of Corporate

Strategy presents the DMK trend scout app in a video.

The new website will go online in April 2021. Users will be able to see chefs from outside the company who have been working with MILRAM Food Service for years. The content will also be more clearly focused on particular target groups in future, from restaurant chefs or community catering, bakers or caterers. “These social media activities will emphasize the brand’s strengths once again,” says Kreitz. “We’re emotionalizing the brand and showing the people behind the products. We’ll keep taking this route – in social media and on our new website.”

MILRAM Food Service was one of the **first in the industry** to create a concept for digital trade shows.





HUMANA  
**“Exactly what we need”**

Humana has developed a new generation of milk formula for infants, under the banner “Exactly what we need.” The result is Humana PROBALANCE™, the best Humana milk formula ever – with HMO. These are human milk oligosaccharides, which, along with lactose and fat, are a major component of breast milk\*. Thanks to complex technology, Humana can enrich milk formula with the HMO “2FL” (2’ fucosyllactose)\*\* – the most abundant and best researched HMO. To make everyday family life easier, all Humana PROBALANCE™ products are available in the innovative myHumanaPack, packaging which makes

preparing milk formula safer, more hygienic and easier than ever before. Humana PROBALANCE™ Follow-on Milk 2 has been on the market since October 2020 and is ideal for supplementary feeding or as the sole milk formula following breastfeeding or an initial formula. The starch-free formula is based on nutrition experts’ recommendations so is optimal for complementary feeding.

\* not derived from breast milk.

\*\* Breastfeeding is the best nutrition for your baby. Talk to your pediatrician or midwife if you want to use an infant formula.



Humana PROBALANCE™ is the best Humana milk formula ever – now with HMO.

PRODUCT INNOVATION WITH A BITE  
**MILRAM Skyr,**  
 now as cottage cheese

Packed with 13 percent protein and with only 0.1 percent fat, the new MILRAM Skyr cottage cheese is not only the best in its class, but it also has real bite. With its subtly tart taste, this innovative product is not only a hit with sports enthusiasts, but also works as a protein-rich breakfast or in sandwiches, salads or bowls.

The 200-gram cup carries the “Too good to go” symbol of a campaign that aims to reduce food waste.



FRESHLY-BAKED SPRING FEELING  
**Great news for**  
 grated cheese fans

MILRAM’s new range of grated cheese products hit supermarket shelves at the beginning of March. The mix of tangy cheddar and melt-in-your-mouth mozzarella, MILRAM’s gratin-love is perfect for topping your favourite oven dishes. Meanwhile, MILRAM pizza-love is a slightly milder mix of Gouda and mozzarella that works well on top of any pizza.



Leader of the pack MILRAM’s new **grated cheeses** are available in bags that are even easier to recycle.

The first  
**choice, for**  
 always

From baby food to buttermilk, DMK products can accompany people throughout their lives. There are more and more to choose from – here are the newest ones available.



ALETE AWARE  
**On your spoons, get set, go!**



For children from the age of 3: “Alete Aware” has launched a soup and stews range.

“Alete aware” accompanies little ones as become children, and is growing alongside them. A new “Soups and Stews” segment sees Alete Aware expanding its portfolio as it keeps providing sustainable child nutrition. Shoppers with youngsters aged 3 and above have a choice of cream of tomato soup with vegetables, a pumpkin cream soup (each 350 ml) and a vegetable stew with noodles (350 g) since the start of 2021.

All of the products contain no added sugar or flavourings. The new products are suitable for this age range, packed with vegetables and tasty herbs and spices – and are also practical and easy to use. Nutritional awareness also means helping your child appreciate variety. As with the other jars available, the “Soups and Stews” range is also organic quality, meaning the ingredients come from controlled organic agriculture.

COOLING REFRESHMENT  
**Summer time**  
 is iced tea time!

What could be better for fans of fruit-flavoured buttermilk than the refreshing combination of buttermilk and the classic summer drink, iced tea? MILRAM thought so too, and is bringing two iced tea limited editions to market. With aromatic green tea extract, both are fruity and refreshing, and low in sugar. Ideal for keeping a cool head on hot days.



Summer feeling thanks to the new buttermilk iced tea drinks, in apple and lemon flavours.

OSTERLAND  
**A winning**  
 combination



Osterland’s popular dessert classic is now also available in separate pots, with the red-berry-packed compote now available in a 460-gram tub. You wouldn’t want to forget its perfectly-matched partner, Osterland’s creamy dessert sauce, as the classic combination creates a true highlight. It’s now available in a new 230 ml cup, ready to serve. You can find more delicious recipe ideas at: [www.osterland.de/rezepte](http://www.osterland.de/rezepte)

A perfect match: Osterland red fruit pudding and dessert sauce are now available in large cups.



INDIA CURRYQUARK  
**Nice**  
 and spicy

MILRAM used a range of delicious spices from South Asia to create its new India Curry Quark. The creamy product combines juicy mango chunks with a mix of chili flakes, spicy ginger and turmeric, a super food. It’s ideal spread on bread, as a quick dip or to accompany chicken, salmon or anything else at a barbecue.

Ginger, mango, chili, turmeric: MILRAM’s new India Curry Quark will pep up your meal.



**SKYR & SMOOTHIE MINIS**

So refreshing and packed with more than 30 percent fruit: The new mango-passion-fruit flavour shows the brand's focus on protein and healthy snacking, two key trends.



**This Summer's Thrills and**

**Chills**



With powerful new brands like Capri Sun and Batida de Cocô, DMK is dreaming up new ice cream creations – many of which will bring back memories in a whole new form.

**BAILEYS**

A fireplace, a snowy ski lodge and crackly music from a record player – these are some of the romantic associations Baileys has been creating for nearly 50 years. DMK transformed it into ice cream and has now improved the Coffee Delight recipe. The whole product portfolio is also receiving a full design relaunch.



**AHOJ-BRAUSE ON A STICK**

Ahoj-Brause sherbet has been making mouths tingle for almost 100 years. After the success of the sherbet sundae last year, DMK is going a step further, launching the sherbet popsicles in woodruff, raspberry and orange flavours.



**EHRMANN HIGH PROTEIN ICE CREAM**

Last year, alongside Ahoj-Brause ice cream, Ehrmann High Protein Ice Cream was one of the top 10 new products in the segment. Why stop there? The popular ice creams will be available in strawberry yoghurt and passion fruit yoghurt flavours.



**CAPRI-SUN**

Suncream and swimwear are essential parts of summer – along with Capri-sun. The refreshing popsicles in cherry or orange flavour hit shelves in April and the taste is likely to unleash a flood of holiday memories.

**MANGAROCA BATIDA DE COCÔ**

The name alone conjures up images of palm trees, sand and the sea. After Baileys, here comes another classic liqueur in ice cream form, available in passion fruit or cherry flavour.



**TREET'S – THE PEANUT BUTTER COMPANY**

Even in the past, Treet's were a good reason not to necessarily share everything all the time. DMK is paying tribute to the chocolate-covered peanut snack in 2021 by transforming it into an ice cream. It's a tasty combination: creamy peanut butter ice cream with salted caramel sauce, milk chocolate and crunchy peanut chunks.

## BU INDUSTRY

## The Endless Possibilities of Sweetened Condensed Milk

Thomas Mintus and Markus Schacht develop new varieties of sweetened condensed milk in line with customer wishes. It's all about creativity, expertise and precision as any deviation can have far-reaching consequences.

Sure, "condensed milk" may not sound particularly sexy – for many people, it's associated with memories of coffee with grandma. But condensed milk is capable of so much more – as Thomas Mintus and Markus Schacht can explain. The development- and application engineers at the Industry BU are responsible for the product, and it's more versatile than any other when it comes to use in the industry. "Sweetened condensed milk is both easy and difficult to make," says Markus Schacht, who's from the Research and Development department.

### Multi-skilled all-rounder

This all-rounder is made from milk and sugar. But making it becomes highly complex as soon as the condensed milk is involved in particular applications or processes. It's used in almost all confectionery, and from color to viscosity or degree of caramelization, in many ways, it can be adapted to the customer's wishes. And it goes beyond the taste. The recipe for condensed milk, which is exported around the world – including to Japan, New Zealand and Australia – can even influence its customs classification. The smallest differences in sugar content or the addition of a third ingredient such as coconut fat can change its classification, making it a key price factor.

### Good mixer

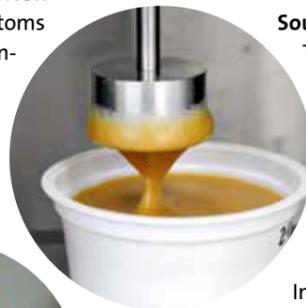
The decisive factor, however, is the customer's processes. If the condensed milk is to be pumped through a lengthy system of pipes before being further processed, then it's better if it is thin initially and is only thickened later on. However, another customer with a more compact system and a different process may find that more viscous condensed milk works better. In order to respond to all these variations, Mintus, Schacht and their team need a highly developed understand-

ing of the product and marketing, to coordinate well and maintain close contact with customers. That's particularly important if complications arise, needing a response at short notice. One customer complained that in his Café Bombón, there wasn't a clear enough line between the layer of espresso and the sweetened condensed milk. The problem was solved with a more viscous condensed milk. Another customer request led Thomas Mintus to a large production plant in Poland: The DMK condensed milk was running off the caramel wafer bars being produced there, as it was too fluid. "I took a look at what was happening on site to gain an understanding of the process. Insights like that are a real highlight for us," says Mintus. The customer now gets a condensed milk that has been optimized for his particular process.

### Source of creativity

Tinkering with the details is part of Mintus and Schacht's daily routine. "There are the everyday standard processes and then there are the challenges that mean we need to try out all that we have: Technology. Product. Creativity," says Schacht. In order to preserve the knowledge they have gained on the way, his colleague Mintus is developing a knowledge database containing all of condensed milk's properties, and they measure and assess these in the lab and in practice. The data will help them (pre)select a suitable product and ensure that the results of their work can be reproduced at a later date. The infinite variety of the product that is made solely from fresh milk and sugar makes it very sexy indeed for DMK Industry.

**Thomas Mintus (l.) and Markus Schacht** at work in the laboratory. Above: Sweetened condensed milk is used to make sweets that contain caramel.



### Say cheese!

The largest product category, the DMK Group produced 426,000 tons of cheese last year alone. The process involves four business units: BU Industry is responsible for production and product development, while BU Private Label handles the assembly. BU Brand manages most of sales, with more than 35 percent. And BU International completes the cycle at DMK.

### Dream team

MILRAM Northern Light provides a perfect example of what such teamwork can achieve. The product was launched on the market in October, after the idea arose in an exchange between the units. The cheese experts from research and development used a special culture to create a Gouda-based cheese with a sweet, full-bodied taste. Brand managers from BU Brand realized the product's great potential during a marketing presentation. They developed a coherent product concept and then commissioned it for development.

### Fine-tuning processes

The production of the new cheese was optimally integrated into production planning and plant capacity utilization in Edewecht. Ever since, MILRAM Northern Light has been produced at the BU Industry cheese plant in 15-kilo blocks. BU Private Label handles the packaging of all DMK cheese products. BU Brand, which is involved in all stages of the process, takes care of the positioning and marketing of the product, along with distribution. The journey from the very first idea to distribution makes up a unique, internal value-added cycle at DMK. And it is a lucrative one, too: with 150 tons sold in just three months, sales in 2020 exceeded all expectations right from the outset.

### Incentive for employees

"In 2021, there will also be a lot going on in terms of cheese," says Dr. Annika Schrader, Director of Marketing at BU Industry. She has set her sights on trend products, as today's trends will become the volume products of the future and need to be developed accordingly. "Developing the cheese portfolio is relevant for the whole of DMK," says Schrader.

## TEAMWORK Four Business Units Turn the Wheel of Cheese

Cheese is by far the largest product category at DMK. Several business units pulled together on the MILRAM Northern Light success story.



**Data, Facts, Figures**

**42**  
thousand tons

less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at the production sites by the year 2030 – that's DMK's declared climate goal.

.....  
**approx. 25**  
million kilowatt hours per year

that's what DMK is saving thanks to its energy management system in line with DIN EN ISO 50001.

.....  
**approx. 1,533**  
billion kilowatt hours

That's the DMK Group's total energy consumption per year.

.....  
**>2 thousand**

measuring points regularly record DMK's energy consumption.

# Full of Energy for DMK

The Energy Management team is making an important contribution to the DMK Group's 2030 climate goal. However, they face complex challenges that are constantly changing.



\* Please note that these photographs were taken in line with pandemic health regulations. The images were put together later with picture editing software!

Klaus Landwehr

Claudia Scheil

Christine Fischer

Torben Hinck



**Klaus Landwehr**, Head of Energy Management.



**Christine Fischer**, Expert Energy Management.



**Claudia Scheil**, Expert Energy Management.



**Torben Hinck**, Expert Energy Management.

## CO<sub>2</sub> Strategy

In the future, the DMK Group aims to reduce carbon emissions at the production sites by 42,000 tons. That will involve further reducing the use of fossil fuels and greater use of renewable energy sources. Energy Management develops methods and measures to help achieve these ambitious climate targets.

## Certification

The DIN EN ISO 50001 norm supports companies in developing and maintaining a certified energy management system in line with international standards, and is a prerequisite for energy and tax privileges for DMK. The standard is driving annual savings of approx. 25 million kilowatt hours of energy at the DMK Group.

## EEG & Taxes

As an energy-intensive company, DMK is entitled to exemption from the EEG surcharge and relief from electricity and energy tax. Energy Management manages the application and verification process.

**D**MK is about more than milk and dairy products. The Target Image 2030 also emphasizes responsibility for people and the environment and a commitment to ecological sustainability. Energy Management plays a key role in this.

Klaus Landwehr, Head of Energy Management, and his team are working on further developing DMK as a company that's modern and energy efficient. "We communicate a lot with experts, authorities, certification institutes, research organizations and interest groups and ensure there's an optimum transfer of knowledge to those responsible in our plants," says Landwehr. "Our aim is to help make sure our sites receive a secure and sustainable energy supply." That

commitment is paying off. DMK has already received several awards for its sustainability projects, including in the Energy Efficiency category at the German Awards for Excellence. The energy management specialists' work has concrete effects on everyday life at DMK.

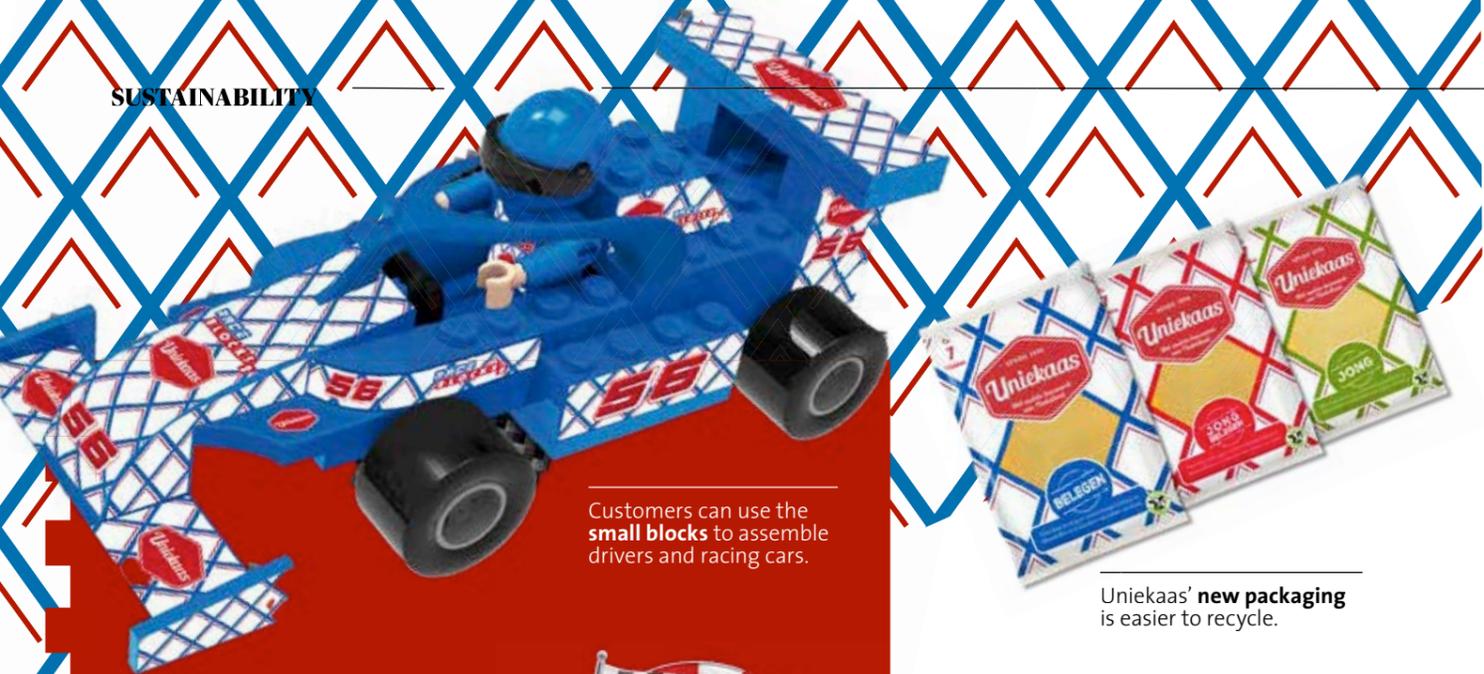
Whether it's applying for a subsidy, the annual report, or contributing to a decision about a possible investment, the energy team gathers the relevant data, provides background information and prepares documents and reports. For the team members, day-to-day work is mainly **focused on four core topics:**

- Supporting and advising management on shaping DMK's sustainability strategy,

- implementing and maintaining energy management certification in accordance with DIN EN ISO 50001 (see above),
- advising and supporting those responsible at the plants on energy management and energy law, and
- ensuring the DMK Group complies with all its energy-related obligations.

That requires close coordination with all parts of the company, which is a major challenge but also the most interesting part of the team's daily work. "We are the central point of contact for all issues relating to energy," says Landwehr. "Together, we can make an important contribution to increasing energy efficiency at DMK." A true team effort!

**#MyTeam**



Customers can use the **small blocks** to assemble drivers and racing cars.

Uniekaas' **new packaging** is easier to recycle.

**43** Percent  
Less  
**Material  
Used**

When it comes to packaging, Uniekaas is focusing on sustainability and a new design.

Environmental protection is a huge priority for Uniekaas, which is why the packaging used for the cheese slices is to be more sustainable in the future. Rather than using two materials – paper and plastic – only plastic is to be used from March onwards, making the packaging easier to recycle. On top Uniekaas is reducing material usage by 43 percent thanks to a much thinner plastic film.

Uniekaas is working on a whole new look and its packaging is being redesigned as well. A larger window will give shoppers a better view of the cheese inside. The logo also places a greater emphasis on Uniekaas' tradition as the "oldest cheese brand in the Netherlands." And, in line with the tastes of Dutch shoppers, there's more focus on the maturity of the cheese.

## Uniekaas Hits the Race Track

Cheese gets a Formula 1 look: A fast-paced ad campaign aims to significantly increase sales and awareness.

Full speed ahead for Uniekaas: Dekamarkt, one of the Netherlands' best-known supermarkets, naturally also features the country's most traditional cheese brand in its range. After last year's successful promotion, the "Raceblocks" campaign is heading for a second lap in Deka stores. Uniekaas is also playing a leading role. This spring, Deka shoppers who spend 15 euros will be given a small bag of Raceblocks that they can use to create racing cars, grandstands and Formula 1 drivers. The more they buy, the more bags they can get – and the greater their chances of building the whole race track and all the cars. Also, special products are to be promoted each week and

shoppers who buy those products receive an extra bag of Raceblocks and a different car each week. Uniekaas also has a car in the running. Dekamarkt's campaign includes a dedicated online platform that displays the racing cars along with the building instructions, and exchange platforms are planned too. Taking part in the campaign will increase sales and awareness of the brand in the Netherlands, where sports and collectibles are highly popular. What could be better than a Formula 1 Grand Prix campaign, seeing as the event is due to be hosted in Zandvoort for the first time in 36 years? Better still, local hero Max Verstappen is among the contenders for the world championship title.



### Donating stem cells by giving blood

Once a suitable donor is found, a medical examination is carried out three or four weeks before the actual donation is made. Stem cells come from blood taken from a donor's veins. Before that, the donor receives four days' treatment to increase the amount of stem cells in their blood. Each day, they are given two injections under the skin with G-CSF, a growth factor the body also naturally produces to fight infections. Donors do not need to stay in a hospital, and the process does not require surgery or an anesthetic.

### How you can become a donor:

In Germany, go to the [dkms.de](http://dkms.de) homepage or visit your country's blood donation service to see how and where you can become a donor.

## DMK's Big-hearted Heroes

Thanks to DMK employee Justine Platter, an 18-year-old was able to survive leukemia. Her stem cells were essential to his recovery.

**S**tem-cell transplants are the most effective way to fight leukemia – but also the greatest challenge. The donor and recipient need to have exactly the same tissue type. Once a suitable donor is found, therapy can begin but searching worldwide for a "genetic twin" can feel like trying to find a needle in a haystack.

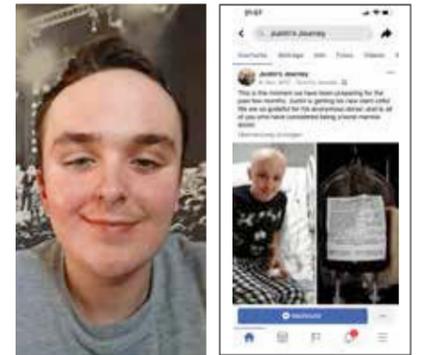
Justine Platter had her details entered into the database at DKMS, the German blood service, as a potential donor at the age of 17. For the DMK employee who works in Corporate Communications, this was something she had always wanted to do as someone in her family had also had leukemia, and had not recovered. "I always thought about how other people must feel and what would happen if something like this were to happen to me or someone close to me," says Platter.

She is overjoyed that she was able to save someone's life. An 18-year-old Canadian who was seriously ill responded positively to her stem cell donation and is now well again. Her "genetic twin" also happens to be called Justin. "After two years of being anonymous, we got in touch and even talked on Skype. Maybe one day we can meet in person." Her willingness to be a donor gave the story a happy ending.

Stefan Dahlenburg, a DMK employee from the Zeven plant, is also hoping to rescue someone. A father of three, he met a boy with leukemia from a town nearby. He has been tested and can donate stem cells, and although he isn't able to help the boy, he can help someone else who's a genetic match.



For DMK employee **Justine Platter**, donating stem cells was a matter close to her heart.



**Justin**, 20, from Canada beat leukemia thanks to Justine Platter.



**Stefan Dahlenburg** from Zeven also wants to donate stem cells to help someone.

A REVIEW:

## The first year of myMilk and the digital Milkmaster program



The communication platform is off to a successful start – and is making work easier for farmers.

**I**t all started in early 2020: myMilk, the digital platform for communicating with milk producers, went online. DMK farmers can find all the services they need to work together with the dairy, in a structure that's easy to navigate. There are forms, individual milk quality data, milk money statements and an area with the latest company news. It's straightforward and easy to use.

**Individual use**

Users can organize the tool to suit their individual needs, so each farmer can choose the most relevant areas and applications. The platform can be used on PCs, or on a smartphone or tablet for those who are out and about, so farmers can integrate it into the day's work, and access myMilk at their desk, the barn or out in the fields, if they can get a signal.

Much has happened in the year since the launch of myMilk: around 5,000 farmers have registered to use it, 143 items have been posted in the news section and there were some 6,000 queries on the hotline.

**Constantly updated**

More and more new applications are becoming available, with the introduction of a pasture diary, for example, or the immediate display of some sample results. The platform has been further optimized thanks to the implementation of Google Analytics, which generated a clearer picture of how people use myMilk.

The Milkmaster program has also found a home in myMilk and has been entirely online for around a year. The content of the program has also been reviewed and adapted to integrate

social and industry-specific changes.

In the first year since the refocus, some 86 percent of farms have taken part in the program, making up 97 percent of the total milk volume, an increase on the year before.

**Better planning**

Part of the bonus system involves DMK farmers entering their planned volumes online on myMilk twice a year, and providing further information to meet the bonus criteria. A digital diary was created for farmers to record their herds' grazing days. It was updated and optimized at the start of the new grazing season so it's now even easier to use.

myMilk is constantly evolving and more services and applications will be created this year to make DMK farmers' day-to-day work easier.

## Ingredients

- A 250 g piece of any MILRAM cheese
- Oven grill and baking paper
- Microwave \*\*

## Do it yourself Crunchy Cheese Pops

With a bit of patience and some delicious cheese, we're creating a brand new snack: Puffed cheese, straight out of the microwave.

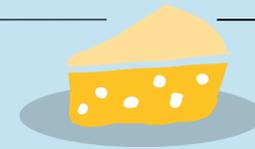
*Text: Stephanie Riedel*

**\* Tip:**

If the cheese melts, eat them and let the remaining cubes dry out for another 1-2 days then try again. Some types of cheese just won't "pop" - they melt into cheese chips instead. Try them - cheese chips taste great too.

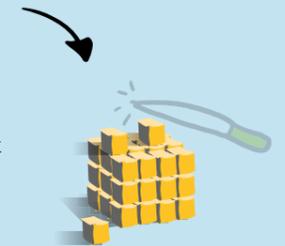
**\*\* Microwave alternative:**

Puff up the cheese in the oven at 230°C for 3 minutes - though it doesn't always work.

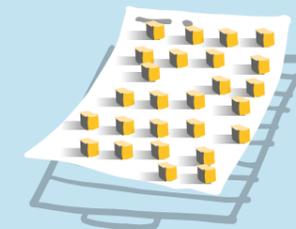


**1** Buy a piece of any cheese you like - we recommend Gouda/Emmentaler or try Müritzer which is a bit spicier.

**2** Cut the cheese into small cubes (1x1 cm) and lay them out on a sheet of baking paper on the oven grill - the smaller the cubes, the faster your snack will be ready!



**3** Leave them to dry for 3-4 days (leave the oven tray out on a surface in the kitchen). Important tip: don't cover it, otherwise the cheese won't really dry out. The cheese will lose some of its fat in the process, which will collect on the baking paper.



**4** After 3 days, you can see whether or not your cheese is ready to "pop." Take one of the cubes and place it on a microwave-safe plate (not forgetting the microwave cover). After 2 minutes at 700 watts, the cheese square should either have become a cheese pop or else will have melted.\*



**\* Tip:** If the cheese melts, eat them and let the remaining cubes dry out for another 1-2 days then try again. Some types of cheese just won't "pop" - they melt into cheese chips instead. Try them - cheese chips taste great too.

**\*\* Microwave alternative:**

Puff up the cheese in the oven at 230°C for 3 minutes - though it doesn't always work.



**5** You can spice up your cheese pops with paprika or eat them just as they are.

Enjoy!



AKJM – THE FUTURE OF THE COOPERATIVE

## Heading for Honorary Office

Farmer Christoph Prüser is getting even closer to the dairy, thanks to AKJM.

Promoting young talent is one of DMK's top priorities, as after all, the future of the cooperative lies in the hands of its members. This led to the founding of the young milk producers working group (AKJM), a committee for young farmers up to the age of 30. The AKJM is not an official body of the cooperative, but it prepares its members to hold honorary office later in their careers, so the committees have a steady supply of new energy. The AKJM members are given information about the development of DMK, the milk market and agricultural policy. They learn about what the cooperative's governing bodies do and are given further personal and professional training in courses and meetings. The focus is a combination of current business topics and future issues. The 72 members of the AKJM usually meet up three to four times a year and right now, those meetings are taking place online. Internal and external speakers give presentations on aspects

of the dairy market at the meetings. The group also goes on tours of DMK dairy sites or discusses current farming issues. Once a year, the members take a trip together to a place that's important to the dairy market and industry issues. Past trips have included traveling to Brussels to visit a dairy and meet agricultural ministers from the European Parliament. AKJM members were appointed at the end of last year and Christoph Prüser, 25 years old, was among them. He runs a family farm in Scheeßel, Lower Saxony together with his parents. "For me, it's important to get closer to the dairy and to understand the interplay between day-to-day business and market developments. I also appreciate the opportunity to build up a network outside the region where I live, and to benefit from the experience of other young professionals - that's why I'm looking forward to getting involved in AKJM in the future," Christoph Prüser says of what motivated him to join the group.

Christoph Prüser, on his farm in Scheeßel, Lower Saxony.



## What Engagement Means at the Cooperative

How does voluntary work help DMK?

Their work is essential for the dairy to function: People who take on an honorary post at DMK in addition to their agricultural work. Whether as a member of an advisory board, a representative, or on the supervisory board or executive board: Members of the cooperative join these bodies and create a key bridge between the company and the farmers. More than 300 colleagues currently hold honorary positions at the cooperative and in the company.

### Democracy needs participation

In a democracy, people elect representatives to parliament - the Bundestag in Germany - where they shape the government's agenda. It's no different at DMK.

The 242 members of the representatives' meeting make up the cooperative's highest decision-making body. Each person represents 25 members. The representatives elect the supervisory board, decide on amendments to the articles of association, approve the annual financial statement and decide how the annual net profit should be spent. Elections to the representatives' meeting took place at the end of last year.

The cooperative's advisory board is made up of the 66 members elected in the electoral districts, who stay in office for five years. The advisory board discusses all of the major strategic decisions of the DMK Group and its cooperative. Additionally, the advisory board enables the exchange of information between members and the executive bodies, and can propose candidates for election to the executive board and supervisory board. As a rule, the advisory board meets four times a year.

### Membership of the supervisory board and executive board

The supervisory board is another important body. It is made up of 12 members, six employee representatives and six employer representatives. All remain in office for a term of five years. The supervisory board appoints the cooperative's executive board and is there to monitor its activities. In the dairy, the supervisory board monitors and supports the work of the management.

The eight members of the cooperative's executive board are generally appointed for around five years. The executive board manages the cooperative. Those who hold honorary positions at DMK safeguard the self-determination of the cooperative of milk producers - so their voluntary work for the cooperative cannot be valued highly enough.



# The Regulation of Farming

Laws, demands and social pressure all present major challenges for agriculture.

**T**he situation farmers find themselves in is clearly a difficult one: Agriculture plays a significant role in society. Farmers make a major contribution to food security - both in their own countries (in our case, Germany and the Netherlands) and around the world. But at the same time, their activities face more and more demands, with politicians making new laws and regulations, and demands from society and the retail trade in particular. Farmers' day-to-day work is shaped by animal welfare, sustainability and conservation concerns, making the production of dairy products increasingly complex and expensive for farmers.

The German government's new insect protection law is the latest new requirement, alongside adjustments to the plant protection application ordinance. These changes and other legal requirements don't just affect everyday work, they also have a considerable impact on farms' finances. Farmers are being called upon to ensure production is ever more sustainable and flexible, using less and less land and amid ever more difficult conditions.

When it comes to sales, there are only five major distributors and around 120 dairies producing mainly private label products for the food retail trade. Everyone

involved - aside from retail - is now calling on the government to intervene because the market, and competition, is no longer working. Ultimately, consumers also play a key role: Shoppers' growing calls for local products, better animal health and animal welfare labels are passed onto the retail sector, which in turn passes on these demands to the agricultural sector. All that means many regulations aren't based on sector expertise - in this case, agricultural experts are responding to other influences. Instead, such regulations are shaped by social pressure or consumer trends.

That creates growing pressure throughout the supply chain, and especially among farmers, to implement these requirements or risk penalties from beyond the regulator.

So it's understandable that farmers no longer see themselves as independent operators but increasingly as scapegoats, and take part in protests to express their frustration.

If you look at other industries, all transform higher costs into price increases, except for the dairy industry, as we can see by the way the milk price has developed over the past 20 years. Prices urgently need to be raised so the dairy industry can survive and do its job of providing consumers with high quality food.



## Dear Readers,

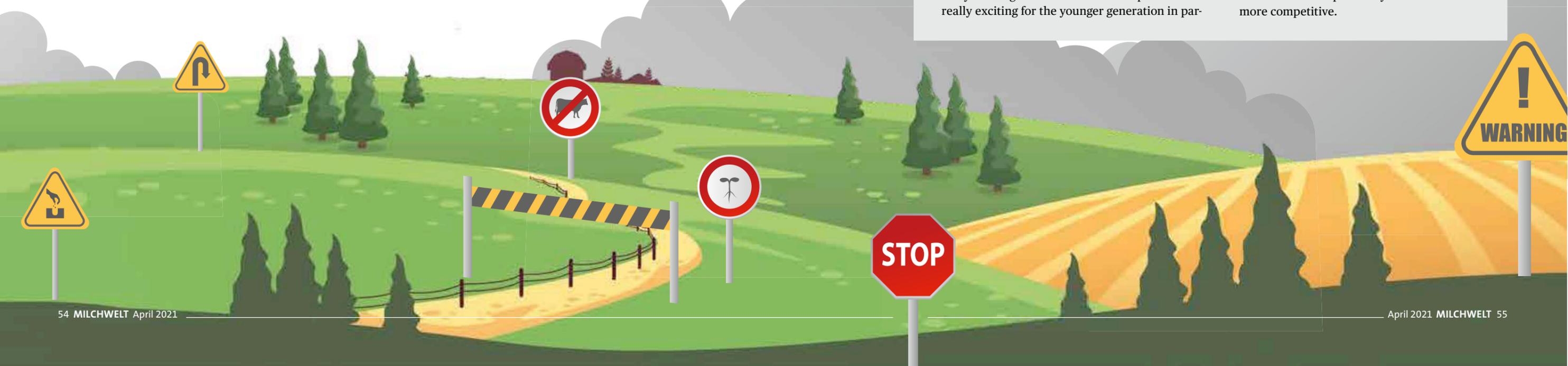
**T**he insect protection program, the fertilizer ordinance and red zones, the water act and animal welfare standards have all been troubling us as farmers for some time, driving many to worry about the future. They all seem to suggest that lawmakers from across the political landscape want to change our modern way of farming - and in a move away from standards in neighboring countries! I haven't seen anything like this in Germany since the BSE crisis under former consumer affairs minister Künast. No wonder farmers joined rallies and protests to express their understandable displeasure. However, what we also learned is that the public still has a high regard for us as farmers.

So why are things so crazy for us farmers these days? Probably because NGOs are better at lobbying and communicating than we are as a profession. And how are we farmers handling the current troubled mood on the farms? The worst response is always to stick your head in the sand! I believe we have to accept that change is coming - but one thing I've learned in life is often, these kinds of transformations take longer than politicians might like and can be corrected to some degree in the process. Young farmers need stable prospects to motivate them to keep going, while more experienced farmers also need to look together and see if and how farms can continue, without necessarily racing to grow. Agriculture is now seeing greater technical innovation than the automotive industry, particularly dairy farming. I believe these developments are really exciting for the younger generation in par-



**Heinz Korte,**  
DMK Chairman  
of the Supervisory  
Board.

ticular. Countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands have also gone through similar processes. And last but not least: it isn't only we farmers who are facing change - employees at all our plants also face growing demands, as does everyone in the world of work. We can only look forward to the future if all these demands are affordable, and right now that's the main problem! There has only been one "good" milk year since 2015, and that was in 2017. Currently, positive market signals give us hope that milk prices will improve significantly. And if we consider that the profit contribution from milk over the last few years has been only 3-5 cents per kg of milk on average, it makes a difference if prices rise by several cents. For farmers, it's also important which dairy you partner with. At DMK, we have not always delivered in the past, but looking ahead, I am very confident that the course we have set over the past few years will make us more competitive.



**Your contact to the editors**

Your contact for all MILCHWELT-related topics



**OLIVER BARTELT**  
Global Head of Corporate Communications  
+ 49 421 243 – 2310  
oliver.bartelt@dmk.de



**KATRIN POPPE**  
Internal Communications Manager  
+ 49 421 243 – 2143  
katrin.poppe@dmk.de

**DMK DEUTSCHES MILCHKONTOR GMBH**  
Flughafenallee 17,  
28199 Bremen, Germany

**Service for Employees**  
Hotline for employee issues, such as pension scheme, parental leave, labor contracts

**FIRST LEVEL SUPPORT**  
Monday to Thursday, 8am – 4pm  
Friday, 8am to 2pm  
+ 49 421 243 – 57100  
mitarbeiterservice@dmk.de

**MILCHWELT INTERNATIONAL**  
Alongside English, MILCHWELT Magazine is of course available in the original German language and now in Dutch, too. You can find all the editions available for download as PDFs at [www.milchwelt.de](http://www.milchwelt.de)

**In the media**

From regional newspapers to international magazines, the media often reports about DMK. In the past few weeks, the focus was on the pandemic's effect on the dairy industry. One highlight was the new podcast "Denkfutter" – which means "food for thought."



**Werben und Verkaufen, 24 February 2021,**  
Oliver Bartelt and former Werder footballer Marco Bode talk about the parallels between company life and soccer. In February, they were chosen as "audio tip of the week."



**Lebensmittelpraxis, 26 February 2021,**  
Do milk and dairy products need a new image? The trade press weighs the opportunities and risks of a new approach to public opinion and concludes that action is urgently needed on many levels.



**Bäcker Zeitung, 13 February 2021**  
Is veganism just a trend for big city hipsters or is there more to it than that? The baking trade considers this question – and comes up with some exciting insights for the dairy industry.



**Agrar Heute, 29 January 2021,**  
The butter price is an important component in the milk price. Retailers' reductions are leading to significant uncertainty. A closer look at the situation.



**Land & Forst main issue, 4 February 2021,**  
Do dairy cows benefit from grazing? A wide-ranging two-year study is seeking answers to this question. The article presents the study and calls for participants.



**SG Sweets Global Network, 1 February 2021,**  
Online food sales are booming amid the pandemic. The right measures can help make this increase a long-term trend.

**Milk on Social Media**

Users discuss milk on social media platforms

**TWITTER**  
[www.twitter.com/DMK\\_Milch](http://www.twitter.com/DMK_Milch)



**LINKEDIN**  
[www.linkedin.com/organization-guest/company/dmkgroup](http://www.linkedin.com/organization-guest/company/dmkgroup)



Join the conversation!

**Regional Managers of the Cooperative**

The regional managers are the principle points of contact for all the concerns of milk suppliers and shareholders of our company

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <br><b>HELMUT ENEWALDSEN</b><br>Schleswig-Holstein<br>+49 4639 / 9506-52320<br>helmut.ewaldsen@dmk.de | <br><b>JENS RUGE</b><br>Mecklenburg-Vorpommern / Brandenburg<br>+49 3991 / 154-41211<br>jens.ruge@dmk.de                        | <br><b>CLEMENS NIEDERWESTBERG</b><br>Weser-Ems<br>+49 5401 / 854-59132<br>clemens.niederwestberg@dmk.de           |
| <br><b>DETLEV BOSSE</b><br>Elbe-Weser<br>+49 4480 / 81-64160<br>detlev.bosse@dmk.de                   | <br><b>KERSTIN GRABARSE</b><br>Thüringen / Sachsen-Anhalt / Hessen / Sachsen<br>+49 361 / 5977-16285<br>kerstin.grabarse@dmk.de | <br><b>JULIA RIDDER</b><br>Nordrhein-Westfalen / Süd-Niedersachsen<br>+49 5401 / 854 59180<br>julia.ridder@dmk.de |

**Masthead**  
**Publisher:** DMK Deutsches Milchkontor GmbH, Industriestraße 27, 27404 Zeven  
**Responsible for this magazine:** Oliver Bartelt  
**Project management, Art Direction:** Andin Tegen, Regina Bense  
**Editorial:** Katrin Poppe, Birgit Lüdemann (DMK Group); Andin Tegen, Simon Pausch, Alexander von Tomberg  
**Assistant:** Anika Gaudian  
**Editor:** Dr. Agnes Przewozny (Grünes Lektorat) **Graphics:** Regina Bense, Anita Ackermann, Annette Kociemski, Irene Wilhelm **Illustration:** Regina Bense **Photos:** Matthias Hornung, Sebastian Vollmert, Alexander Leiker, Timo Door, Silke Janßen, Katharina Reising, Adobe Stock, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, unsplash.com

**PUZZLE**

# Only for smart people:

Here's a SUDOKU puzzle, a logic number-placement challenge. Fill out each grid with the numbers 1 to 9 so that each row, column and 3x3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9, with each number occurring once in each grid. The answer is the sum of the numbers in the colored boxes. **Good luck!**

5	3			7				
6			1	9	5			
	9	8					6	
8				6				3
4			8		3			1
7				2				6
	6					2	8	
			4	1	9			5
				8			7	9

Keep your eye on these prizes:

**1X**  
MILRAM SUP Board

**3X**  
SANDWICH toaster

**10X**  
MILRAM BEACH towel



**10X**  
MILRAM BICYCLE bell

**ANKER PLATZ**

**Send in the solution:**

**By email to:**  
milchwelt@dmk.de, with "Contest" in the subject line,

**or by post to:**  
DMK Deutsches Milchkontor GmbH  
Katrin Poppe  
Flughafenallee 17  
28199 Bremen

**Important:**

Please include your first name and surname, address and DMK location!

**Deadline for entries:**

May 31, 2021  
Only employees and cooperative members of the DMK Group are eligible to participate.

**Congratulations to the winners of our last contest:**

**2 x Raclette grill:**

Bernd Schnakenberg Bremervörde/Hesedorf  
Joanna Livesey Mannheim

**10 x DOC cheese planer:**

Kerstin Seidel Oldenburg  
Alina Koppe Bremen  
Martina Fritsch Osnabrück  
Vanessa Behrens Scheeßel  
Martin Spiering Edewecht  
Norbert Witschen Haselünne  
Wilfried Haß Friedland  
Franz Dreesmann Neubörger  
Wilhelm Büning Gescher  
Mathias Klasen Malchin

**10 x MILRAM Umbrella:**

Inka Blanken Hechthausen  
Harald Garbe Everswinkel  
Jacob Rohwer Nindorf  
Ute Kaper Edewecht  
Niek Rotteveel Emmen (NL)  
Rolf Ellens Beilen (NL)  
Franz Bövers Hepstedt  
Anna-Maria Reinke Burg Stargard  
Mario Klus Lingen  
Heike Logemann Olvelgönne

**10 x MILRAM Wall clock:**

Andreas Oldenburg Zeven  
Frank Meiners Farven  
Frank Palluch Bremervörde  
Hildegard Brinkmann Zeven  
Diana Gertje Bersenbrück  
Tobias Hüttel Kalbe  
Johannes Jahnke Neubrandenburg  
Lisa Schabacker Waldkappel  
Manfred Schöbe Erfurt  
Andreas Belitz Rhade

**RECIPE**



**Ingredients for 2-3 people**

- 12 Conchiglie (pasta shells)
- 1 medium-sized onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 tin of cherry tomatoes (400 g)
- 200 g tomato puree
- Salt and pepper
- 1 bunch of wild garlic or fresh herbs, eg parsley, basil, oregano or whatever is in season
- 1 organic lemon
- 250 g MILRAM sour cream

**1 pack of MILRAM'S special grated cheese for baking**

Preparation time: 50 minutes

## Easy Cheesy: Pasta-Perfection

### BAKED PASTA SHELLS WITH WILD GARLIC AND CHERRY TOMATOES

There's more to baked pasta than lasagne. Try our tasty recipe – MILRAM pasta shells, bursting with flavor.

Large and delicious, stuffed Conchiglie are something special! The pasta shells recipe is a highlight of Mediterranean cuisine that's guaranteed to delight everyone around the table. The filling is the heart of the dish: an irresistible combination of sour cream, tangy wild garlic and a refreshing touch of lemon. Baked in a tasty cherry tomato sauce, the dish is crowned with a crispy topping thanks to MILRAM's new rich and tasty grated cheese mix.

*Yummy-Crunchy!*

Here's how to make it, in around 50 minutes.

- Step 1:** Cook the pasta shells until they are al dente, drain them, rinse in cold water then drain again. Peel and finely slice the garlic and onion.
- Step 2:** Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and fry the onion and garlic on medium heat for five minutes then add the tomatoes and tomato puree, salt and pepper. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Preheat the oven, upper and lower heat, to 200° C.
- Step 3:** Wash and dry the herbs, and chop them finely. Zest and juice the lemon. Put the MILRAM sour cream in a bowl and mix in the herbs and the grated lemon rind. Add salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste.

- Step 4:** Put the tomato sauce in the baking dish and spread it evenly. Fill the pasta shells with the sour cream then place them facing upwards in the baking dish. Sprinkle grated cheese on top then bake in the center of the oven for 25 minutes until golden brown.

**LINK**

Explore more recipes at: [www.milram.de](http://www.milram.de)

**Dear Readers:**

**PHOTO CONTEST!** Send us a picture

We feature the best pictures sent to us by DMK readers at the beginning of the magazine. Send us your favorite photo and tell us who and what is in the picture. We would also love to hear why you like the image and what it means to you. Save a special moment (you can find an example on p. 6-7). Whether it's an artistic still life, a lively group shot or a moment of joy – your creativity knows no limits!

Only employees and cooperative members of the DMK Group are eligible to participate.

**Here's how:**

**Email your picture to:**  
milchwelt@dmk.de with "Reader photo" in the subject line.

**Important:**

- Please include your first name and surname, address, job title and DMK location!
- The picture has to be high resolution and in landscape format
- No photo collages please!

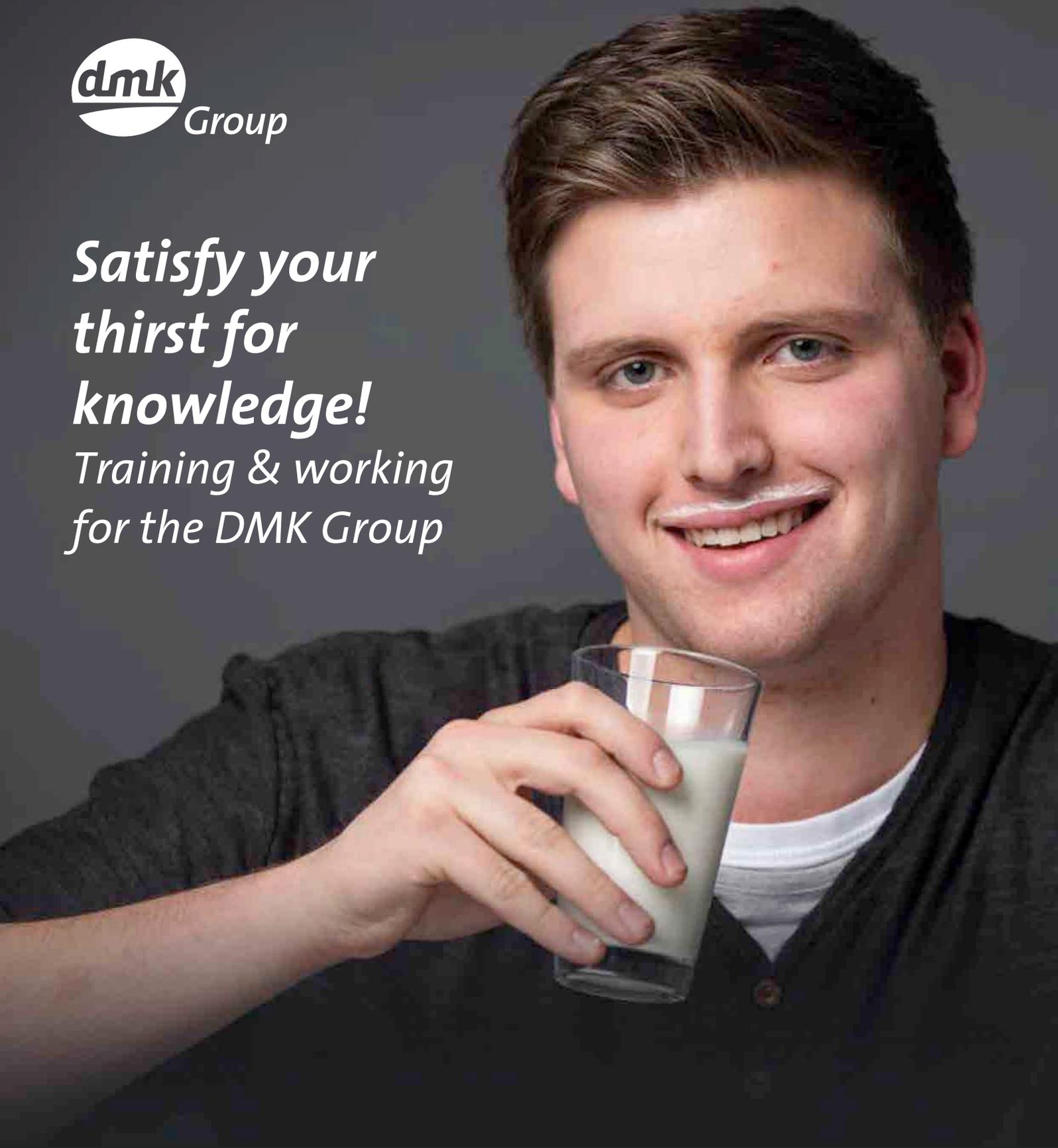
**Deadline for entries:**  
May 31, 2021



**Timo Door**, Operator Production in Zeven, shared this photograph with us. He walks this way every morning on his way to work and one day, he just had to stop and capture the sunrise.



*Satisfy your  
thirst for  
knowledge!  
Training & working  
for the DMK Group*



**We are looking for trainees in the following fields:** Milk Technologists, Milk Industry Lab Technicians, Mechatronics Technicians, Industrial Mechanics, Electronics Technicians for Industrial Engineering, Machine and Systems Operators, Food Technology Specialists, Digitization Management Specialists, Professional Drivers – Milk Tanker

**Apply at: [www.dmk.de/milchbart](http://www.dmk.de/milchbart)**

