



Werner & Mertz and ALPLA expands cooperation

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New ALPLA CEO Philipp Lehner visits Werner & Mertz site in Mainz

At the beginning of the year the two companies achieved a quantum leap in recycling and intend to follow up with further expansion of their cooperation. With that goal in mind, the long-term ALPLA CEO Günther Lehner and his son, the new CEO Philipp Lehner, recently met with Werner & Mertz owner Reinhard Schneider at the site in Mainz.



Werner & Mertz owner Reinhard Schneider (right) talks with ALPLA Chairman Günther Lehner (center) and ALPLA CEO Philipp Lehner about future joint projects in the Recyclate Initiative. Copyright Photo: Werner & Mertz

Jointly pushing the circular economy for plastic

In January Philipp Lehner took over the CEO position at ALPLA from his father Günther Lehner. Together they are visiting the most important partners of the family-owned packaging specialists. Among them is the Mainz-based cleaning products manufacturer Werner & Mertz, which entered into cooperation with ALPLA in 2012 in the Recyclate Initiative to work with other



partners on high-quality processing and reuse of recyclate obtained from the Yellow Bag. In the years since then the Recyclate Initiative has accomplished quite a lot. In 2014 the first bottle of 100% used plastic with a share of 20% from the Yellow Bag was brought to market and just a few months ago the share was increased to 50% in an achievement unmatched in the industry. Today Werner & Mertz is recognized as a Best Practice example for sustainable packaging and ALPLA as the world's largest manufacturer of bottles made from recyclate from the Yellow Bag.

"As owner-managed family companies, we have in common the option of engaging in long-term initiatives, unencumbered by concerns of shareholder values and quarterly reports. We are free to develop an integrally sustainable circular economy. I'm pleased to continue on this path with Philipp Lehner," said Schneider.

Philipp Lehner added, "Our many years of cooperation in the use of recycled plastic have led to packaging solutions that serve as role models in establishing closed product cycles from bottle to bottle. I look forward to advancing our companies' Recycling Initiative in the future and to being a pioneer in this area."

Together they set a world record

Their shared success story began in 1995 when ALPLA started producing packaging for Werner & Mertz on the company premises in the Ingelheimer Aue. In May 2019 the on-site production became in-house production. Together Schneider and Günther Lehner dedicated the new Production Center, which houses the largest 100% recyclate bottle production in the world on the ground floor. That's where ALPLA manufactures the bottles that are then filled with Frosch brand products on the second floor. Savings are realized in transportation with everything under one roof and in production through the use of recyclate instead of crude oil for virgin plastic. As a result, CO2 emissions are minimized. To date more than 489 million bottles made from 100% post-consumer recyclate have been produced – a world record!

Joint vocational training at Mainz site in the future

The two companies want to work more closely not just physically on the same site but in vocational training too. Starting next year, ALPLA wants to form a training partnership with Werner & Mertz for the purpose of training mechatronics technicians at the Mainz site. "We would be pleased to have our two companies cooperate on mechatronics vocational training. We could learn even more from each other, improve our program content, create networks and make better use of interfaces. It would be a win-win situation for both sides," said Werner & Mertz Trainer Björn Frederik Knack.

In addition, plans are being made at the second Werner & Mertz production site in Hallein/Austria, where ALPLA, whose origins are in Austria, will set up its own bottle production.

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