



Press release - confidential



Truly good chocolate

100 percent sustainable: As of now Ritter Sport sources exclusively certified sustainable cocoa

Waldenbuch / Cologne, 26 January 2018. – Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is the first major chocolate bar manufacturer to switch to sourcing the cocoa for its entire assortment completely from certified sustainable cocoa, effective as of now.

This means that for every bar of Ritter Sport chocolate that leaves the Waldenbuch production site in southern Germany, the company sources only cocoa that has been cultivated and processed under sustainable conditions. This helps protect natural resources, as well as ensuring fairer pay for farmers and other people who work in the cultivation of cacao.

A milestone for the company and the German confectionary industry

“Our mission is to produce truly good chocolate. That applies not just to our uncompromising philosophy of quality, but particularly to ecological and social relations along the entire value chain, and consequently above all in the cultivation of cacao,” Andreas Ronken, CEO at Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG, explains. “Ritter Sport is synonymous with enjoyment, and in our times true enjoyment means not wanting it at the expense of others.” As Ronken says, the switch to 100 percent certified sustainably sourced cocoa is a milestone for the company, and for the entire industry. Current statistics show that the amount of sustainably sourced cocoa in confectionary sold in Germany is around 45 percent.¹

This move means that the traditional family-owned business, which received the German Sustainability Award at the end of last year, has achieved the most important target in its sustainability strategy much earlier than originally expected. Apart from the improved assortment of products in the global market, Ritter Sport attributes its fast-track transition to exclusively certified sustainable cocoa to its own direct sourcing strategy. The family-

¹ Association of the German Confectionary Industry, 23.01.2018.



owned company has been successfully implementing this strategy in Nicaragua for almost 30 years already. In the meantime, in collaboration with various partners, the company has been able to establish direct supply contacts with farmers and cooperatives in other regions of the world as well.

Switching entirely to certified sustainably sourced cocoa was the first important milestone along the way to achieving the greatest possible transparency. The company will continue to develop its cocoa-sourcing strategy and expand its direct supplies. Furthermore, its own plantation, El Cacao, is geared to supply around 30 percent of the cocoa mass the company requires. Overall, the medium-sized family-owned company invests around eleven million euros annually in sourcing sustainable cocoa.

Strong international growth

Ritter Sport has recorded growth not just on its company-owned cacao plantation, but most significantly also in its international business, as reported by the company ahead of the ISM confectionary trade fair in Cologne, which begins on Sunday.

Although the German chocolate bar market as a whole declined slightly in 2017, the strength of the export business, with a two-digit plus (12 percent), contributed to a growth of around 2.5 percent. For 2017, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is anticipating a total revenue of around 482 million euros (2016: 470 million euros). Meanwhile, Ritter Sport lost ground slightly in the highly competitive 100-gramme chocolate bar market in Germany (value 2017: 21.9 %, 2016: 22.6 %; volume 2017: 20.6 %, 2016: 21.6 percent, IRi). Excluding the share of hard discounts, whose promotional pricing had a significant influence on the share of the market in Germany, Ritter has achieved a plus of around 0.5 percent in the food retail industry. The company was also able to report a very positive development in the travel retail business.

Due to the large array of new products, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG sees itself well positioned for 2018 and anticipates further growth for the coming year.



About Ritter Sport

Founded in 1912, the medium-sized, family-owned company today boasts around 1,500 employees and recorded a revenue of 482 million euros in 2017. Ritter Sport received the 2018 German Sustainability Award for its sustainable organisation of the entire value chain and is meanwhile the first major chocolate bar manufacturer to source only certified sustainable cocoa for its entire assortment. Every day, more than three million colourfully packed chocolate bars leave the Waldenbuch factory in southern Germany for export to more than 100 countries throughout the world.

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