

For immediate release

Blue-Sky Thinking at Koehler Paper and HERMA with the Launch of the World's First Environmentally Friendly Thermal Adhesive Material for Labels

- **Koehler Paper introduces bluish Blue4est® Pro label to the market**
- **New addition to the Blue4est® range: In addition to the sustainable Blue4est® POS till receipt, the Blue4est® Pro paper is now available for labels**
- **HERMA and Koehler Paper are launching the world's first sustainable thermal adhesive material for labels, which is produced without chemical developers and is also approved for direct contact with food**

Oberkirch, Germany, 04/11/2022 – Koehler Paper, a Koehler Group company, announces the launch of its new product Blue4est® Pro in the Thermal Paper division. Blue4est® Pro is a paper-based label material that is also known as facestock. It is being used for the new generation of environmentally friendly labels because it is produced without chemical developers. This means that it can be disposed of as wastepaper and is also approved for direct contact with food. As with the Blue4est® POS till receipt, the Blue4est® Pro self-adhesive label can be instantly recognized by consumers as environmentally friendly by its blue color.

Together, Blue4est® Pro and Hermatherm Nature (900) Represent the New Generation of Environmentally Friendly Labels

The partnership between Koehler Paper and HERMA has given rise to the world's first, and as yet only, thermal adhesive material without chemical developers. This is yet another example of outstanding development work by the Koehler Innovation & Technology division of the Koehler Group at the headquarters in Oberkirch, Germany. It is some years ago now that Koehler Paper, the world market leader in the field of thermal paper, first invested in the development of an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional thermal paper: the blue Blue4est® POS till receipt paper. "We are pleased to now be expanding our environmentally friendly Blue4est® product portfolio with Blue4est® Pro for self-adhesive labels. This brings us one step closer to our vision of a "Blue Market," a supermarket that only uses environmentally friendly blue till receipts and labels," says Sebastian Früh, Deputy Director Thermal Paper Division at Koehler Paper, adding: "Our excellent collaboration with the family-owned company HERMA proved extremely fruitful." The labels can initially be used for fruit and vegetable scales. Further applications will follow soon.

Safe for Direct Contact with Food Due to the Lack of Chemical Developers

As with the Blue4est® till receipt, Blue4est® Pro is produced entirely without developer chemicals, which is why it is also approved for direct contact with food. It is based on the same Blue4est® principle as the blue till receipt from Koehler Paper. It has been used in retail as an environmentally friendly alternative

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for some time. With Blue4est[®], the text is not produced through a chemical reaction to heat but instead it uses a purely physical reaction. An opaque functional layer on the paper becomes transparent when subjected to heat, which results in the black layer below becoming visible. Moreover, Blue4est[®] Pro features an additional layer that protects the paper from mechanical damage for use as a self-adhesive label. Compared to current conventional thermal papers, Blue4est[®] is not only particularly friendly to the environment, but the printed image is also extremely resistant to environmental influences such as sunlight and moisture. Where printouts are stored in normal storage conditions, they remain legible for more than 35 years.

Everything Points to the Color Blue at HERMA

HERMAtherm nature (900) is the product name of the world's only thermal adhesive material for labels from HERMA, which was developed in close partnership with Koehler Paper. It is approved for direct contact with food as HERMAtherm nature (900) is guaranteed to be free of all chemical developers for the printed image. Labels produced on this basis can be used in all current thermal printers without any problems. Another advantage is that the 62Dps multi-layer permanent adhesive used by HERMA shows extremely low tendency for migration and is also approved for direct contact with dry, moist, and greasy foods. Despite its low tendency for migration, the multi-layer technology means that the permanent adhesive demonstrates excellent adhesion, even in cool environments. "Based on our experiences with the coating and cutting process, HERMAtherm nature (900) is just as straightforward in terms of its handling as conventional thermal adhesive materials," says HERMA Head of Development Dr. Nicole Metzler. Despite the colors and the associated lower contrast, there were no barcode reading errors in a large-scale application test under real conditions. Corresponding labels went through without any issues at all.



Figure 1: Koehler Paper and HERMA launch the world's first sustainable thermal adhesive material for labels.



Figure 2: The Blue4est® Pro for self-adhesive labels expand the environmentally friendly Blue4est® product portfolio.

More about the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run to this day. The Group's core area of business is the development and production of high-quality, specialty paper, including thermal paper, playing card board, drink coasters, fine paper, carbonless paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation paper, and, since 2019, innovative specialty paper for the packaging industry, too. In Germany, the Koehler Group, with its around 2,500 employees, has five production sites, as well as three more in the USA. The Group operates on an international level, with an export ratio of 70% in 2021 and annual revenue of about 950 million euro.

As an energy-intensive enterprise, Koehler invests with its unit Koehler Renewable Energy in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydroelectric power, photovoltaics, and biomass. The Koehler Group has committed itself to producing more energy from renewable sources than is needed for paper production by 2030.

With the business unit Koehler Innovative Solutions, Koehler is also developing new business areas that are outside its core business of specialty paper production and energy generation.

More information is available here: <https://www.koehler.com>

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