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Spotlight on Sustainability: Chocolate Start-up nucao Is among the First to Rely on Koehler Paper's Chocolate Primary Paper Packaging

- **Ambitious chocolate start-up packages products exclusively in sustainable packaging**
- **Innovative barrier paper “Koehler NexPlus® Advanced” meets the demand for sustainable primary packaging for the food industry**
- **Switching from plastic to paper packaging does not require any significant investment**

Oberkirch/Germany, January 23, 2023 - Leipzig-based chocolate start-up nucao is shaking up the chocolate market. Founded in 2016, the company is currently leading the way when it comes to sustainable chocolate. nucao is the first chocolate manufacturer in the market to embrace primary packaging made from paper and has been using it for its chocolate products “nucao fruits” and “nucao nuts” since the end of 2022. The flexible packaging paper Koehler NexPlus® Advanced from Koehler Paper has an excellent oxygen, mineral oil, and grease barrier, which is necessary for applications where there is direct contact with chocolate and nuts. Making this switch enables nucao to meet a key consumer demand for greater sustainability and to lead the way in the chocolate market with how it chooses to package its products.

nucao Relies on Sustainable Products and Sustainable Packaging

nucao's products are vegan and they are made using organic ingredients and fair trade, ecologically cultivated cocoa. Their packaging is also environmentally friendly. Every product sold helps to support reforestation projects in Nepal and Madagascar. The B Corp-certified start-up donates 3% of its revenue to its reforestation partner Eden Reforestation Projects. 14 million trees have been planted to date. This young company is setting new standards in the chocolate market.

Its mission to make chocolate as sustainable as possible has also led to it choosing sustainable packaging solutions. The new chocolate-coated fruit and nut products have been packaged in flexible packaging paper from Koehler Paper since the end of 2022, making nucao the first supplier in the chocolate market to use primary packaging that is exclusively made of paper. Christoph Wachter, Head of the Flexible Packaging Paper division at Koehler Paper, says: “We are delighted that nucao is relying on our innovative barrier paper for its chocolate-coated fruit and nut products and that nucao is leading the way in its market with this move.” Koehler Paper presented its initial mock-ups for a 100 g chocolate bar using its innovative new product at the industry trade fair FachPack in Nuremberg, Germany, in late September 2022.

Koehler NexPlus® Advanced is Setting New Standards

In early 2021, Koehler Paper launched new secondary packaging on the market with Koehler NexPlus® Seal, which has since been used by numerous brand owners. The latest innovation from Koehler, NexPlus® Advanced, is an evolution of the Koehler Paper's barrier concept, with the aim of replacing plastic as a packaging material where appropriate. Koehler NexPlus® Advanced's oxygen, mineral oil, and grease barrier makes it ideal for direct contact with food. It also has outstanding printing properties in gravure, flexographic, and digital printing, which is important when it comes to product communication with the end consumer. Compared to traditional plastic packaging, flexible paper packaging reduces the CO₂ footprint significantly and also provides a positive image transfer to the product and company brand.

The Koehler NexPlus® Advanced packaging used for nucao "Fruits & Nuts" means it is 100% made from paper and can be placed in the paper recycling after use. The recycling process for paper is well established in Europe, which is why multiple reuse of the paper fibers is guaranteed in keeping with the concept of a circular economy.

Brand Owners and Packing Companies Can Switch to Paper Packaging Without Significant Investments

Consumer demand for greater sustainability in consumer products is unequivocal. According to studies and surveys, the majority of consumers in Europe prefer to buy food in packaging that contains little to no plastic. Many of them are willing to pay a higher price for the privilege. Mathias Schwarz, Sustainable Packaging Engineer at nucao, describes the qualification process that Koehler NexPlus® Advanced went through for use at nucao as follows: "We opted for Koehler NexPlus® Advanced 75 g after extensive tests. In addition to product protection, which was assessed using storage tests with a subsequent sensory analysis, the fact that the paper could be recycled in the paper recycling was an important factor. Another important point for us was its rating of 19 out of a possible 20 points from the environment service provider Interseroh."

Brand-name manufacturers and packing companies looking to change to recyclable paper packaging often have to absorb significant investment costs. Christoph Wachter adds: "In many cases, you simply need to adjust a few parameters on existing packaging machinery to optimize the sealing temperatures or sealing times, for instance. But these are all straightforward measures."



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About the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run from that moment to the present day. The group's core business activity lies in the development and production of high-quality specialty paper. This includes—among others—thermal paper, playing card board, drinks coasters, fine paper, carbonless paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation papers, and also innovative specialty papers for the packaging industry since 2019. In Germany, the Koehler Group employs around 2,500 people across five production sites, with three additional sites in the USA. The group operates internationally, with an export share of 70% in 2021, and brings in an annual turnover of around 1 billion euros.

As an energy-intensive company, Koehler invests in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydropower, photovoltaics, and biomass with its Koehler Renewable Energy business unit. The Koehler Group has set a goal of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations.

In addition, with its Koehler Innovative Solutions business unit, Koehler is dedicated to developing new business areas outside of special paper production and energy production.

Find more information at: <https://www.koehler.com>

About nucao

Leipzig-based chocolate start-up nucao is shaking up the chocolate market. Founded in 2016 by three industrial engineers, the purpose-driven company is now a pioneer for outrageously delicious and sustainable chocolate. All their products are vegan, packed full of organic ingredients and fair trade, ecologically cultivated cocoa, and packaged in an environmentally friendly way in cellulose film or paper that can be composted at home. With this approach, the young company is not just setting new standards in the chocolate market but also showing that businesses that have a positive impact on the world are no longer a thing of fiction. As part of its mission, the B Corp-certified start-up supports reforestation projects in partnership with Eden Reforestation Projects and has helped to plant just under 14 million trees through this scheme to date. The goal: 1 billion trees #chocinglygood



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