

A new focus on the spice industry

Legacy German manufacturer and trader **Kräuter Mix GmbH** is setting its sight on expanding into the spice industry, broadening its range of conventional and organic products.

German-based Kräuter Mix GmbH, a leading manufacturer and trading company for herbs and spices, is a family business with more than 100 years of history and is an organic pioneer from the outset. Now, the company sees great potential in the spices market and is seeking to continue its growth trajectory in the segment. As such, it is both increasing its sales volumes and adding additional products to its range, with new suppliers for the cultivation of spices from both conventional and certified organic production. Nutmeg, pepper, ginger, turmeric root and cinnamon, which were already being sourced from the tropics, are now to be supplemented by mace, cloves and cardamom. Current bestsellers are ginger, juniper berries, white pepper and aromatic herbs like thyme and oregano.

Raw materials procured from across the globe are sent to Kräuter Mix for industrial processing and refinement. The company is home to more than 30 different production facilities for cutting, cleaning and mixing products, germ reduction and grinding or colour sorting. Certain spices, including pepper, coriander, nutmeg, ginger and cardamon, also require a gentle milling process to maintain their quality. As such, alongside conventional grinding, Kräuter Mix also relies on the tried-and-tested process of cold grinding with nitrogen to prevent the volatilisation of essential oils and other seasoning ingredients, as cooling the product to extremely low temperatures reduces frictional heat in the mill. The company also has five production lines dedicated to producing powdered products that can be sieved to different degrees of fineness depending on customer requirements.



Kräuter Mix GmbH provides spices and spice blends, culinary herbs, dried vegetables, mushrooms, fruit and herbal teas.

What began in 1919 as a small herb business is today an internationally active, family-run company with 500 employees that specialises in a number of product groups, namely spices and spice blends, culinary herbs, dried vegetables, mushrooms, fruit and herbal teas. The product range also includes herbal source materials, phytopharmaceutical active ingredients, medicinal herbs and medicinal teas. Last year, the company's sales totalled €145m (\$154m). In terms of organic-quality produce, the company offers 150 different article groups accounting for over 10% of its sales, thanks to solid growth rates and high demand. In fact, Kräuter Mix has a long tradition of organic produce: back in the 1980s, the company was one of the very first in Germany to sell organic food products.

The company is proud to support some 2,000 customers around the globe across the food, tea, extracts, spirits and phytopharmaceutical sectors. It also has a growing number of customers in the pet food and animal feed industries, with herb

blends added to quality feeds for horses, cats, dogs and rodents. Today, around 50% of the company's produce is exported to 75 different countries, including Austria, Scandinavia, the Benelux countries, Switzerland, Poland, the Czech Republic and the UK, as well as the US and Australia comprising the company's primary sales markets.

Commitment to sustainability

First established around 20 years ago, the company's department for sustainability management now consists of four employees who travel around the world with the purpose, among other things, of passing on the basics of sustainable wild collection to both suppliers and

the worker-gatherers themselves. The aim is to preserve biodiversity, avoid endangering stocks and harvest materials responsibly. Today's sustainability standards have long been in place at Kräuter Mix. An in-house laboratory with a team of experienced food chemists, pharmacists and other experts, meanwhile, takes care of the chemical-physical analyses as well as identity testing and sensory analysis. Once the internal quality checks are complete, further extensive analyses are carried out in accredited third-party laboratories.

In light of its international activities, the company was also affected by supply difficulties during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, its extensive warehousing – covering an area of ten soccer fields – has helped Kräuter Mix to offset the worst of the crisis and maintain a secure supply for its customers. In the meantime, supply chains have stabilised again and transportation costs have dropped significantly. ●

www.kraeuter-mix.de