

**RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT**



**RESPONSIBILITY FOR  
OUR EMPLOYEES**



**RESPONSIBILITY  
IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN**



**RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

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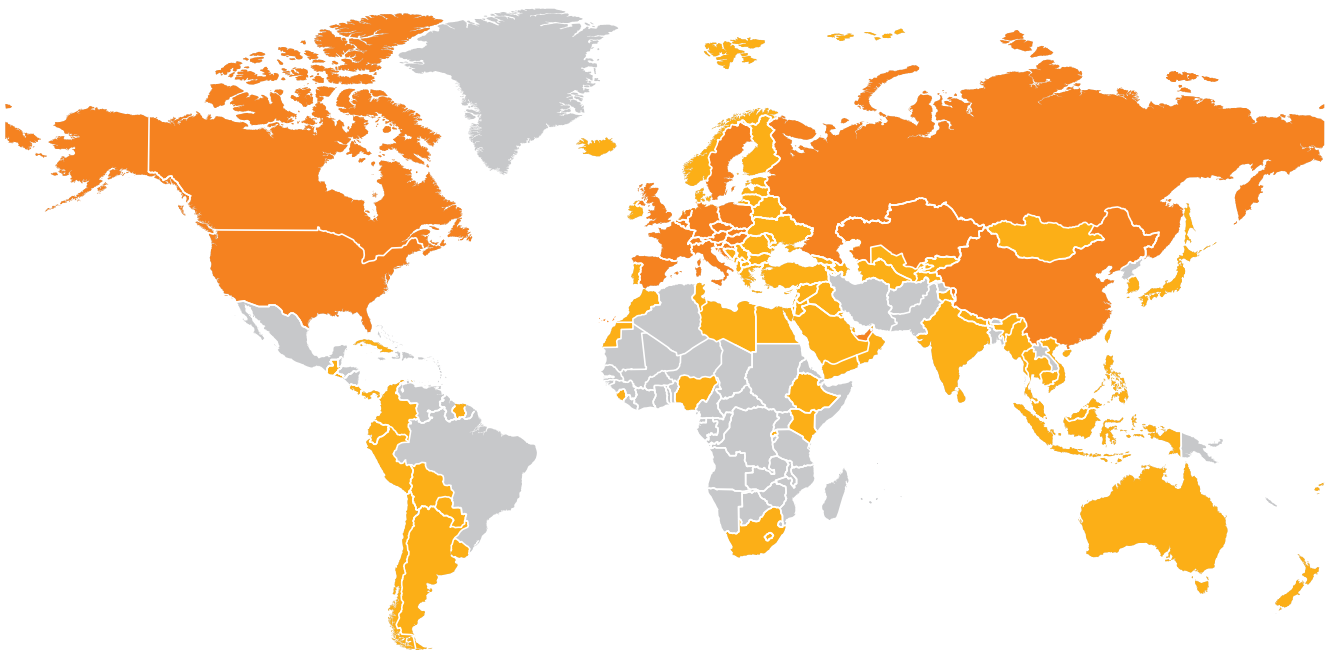
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## STORCK WORLDWIDE

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■ Distribution countries ■ Countries with sales organisations



*Data and facts for this report are collected from the four German locations with production plants and administration. In conjunction with the marketing and national sales organisations, these represent Storck's main economic activities. In addition, 22 sales organisations operate worldwide.*

# Foreword by the Management Board

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Our family confectionery company, which was founded more than 120 years ago in Werther (Westphalia) is now under successful management in the fourth generation. Sustainable action and a focus on future generations have been an integral part of our corporate philosophy since the company's founding.

"The principle of responsibility is the basis and starting point of our work." This quote from our sustainability policy is our guiding principle – and accordingly, the principle also plays a central role in this sustainability report: We describe our responsible business practices for the 2023 reporting **year and look at individual dimensions** in detail.

**Responsibility for our employees** has been central to our actions since the company was founded. Offering our staff secure, good jobs is our top priority. As part of the demographic change it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit skilled labour. Employee recruitment and retention are, therefore, increasingly important for a successful and growing company such as Storck. In the year under review, we were able to increase the number of our own trainees to almost 200 and the total number of employees to more than 8,000.

**We assume responsibility in the supply chain** by honouring our human rights and environmental due diligence obligations. One example is cocoa, a key raw material for us. The fact that over 95% of the cocoa we purchase is now certified in accordance with recognised sustainability standards or independently verified according to comparable criteria counts as a great success.

**Responsibility for the environment** is primarily assumed via the careful use of natural resources. As a food producer with a very large vertical range of manufacture, we are dependent on energy. Certified energy management ensures that energy is used efficiently. Detailed recording of our company's CO<sub>2</sub> footprint is also a valuable basis for identifying and exploiting reduction potentials and, therefore, effectively reducing emissions. In that respect, we rely on the ISO 14064-1 standard, which allows external audits and verification of emissions calculations, confirming the accuracy of Storck's greenhouse gas reporting.

Our reporting is geared towards the standards of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

The Sustainability Report 2023 will give you insight into our sustainability strategy and show you which forward-looking goals, current measures and quantifiable successes support the principle of responsibility that guides us.

We wish you a stimulating read.

Achim Westerhoff  
(Managing Director Production & Engineering)  
Berlin, November 2024



# The company

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For more than 120 years, Storck has been operating as an owner-managed family confectionery company with people for people, bringing them pleasure and joy with our varied, high-quality confectionery and chocolate specialities. That is what motivates us to continue to grow responsibly and operate sustainably.

More than 8,000 employees work for the international Storck Group, which also includes the companies Condetta and Waffel Löser, at four German production locations and in 22 international sales organisations. Products are developed, manufactured, marketed and distributed in house.

**> 8,000**

#### **EMPLOYEES**

were employed at Storck in the year under review.

#### **PRODUCTION LOCATIONS**

East Westphalia in north-west Germany is the home of Storck. August Storck, known as Oberwelland, founded the “Werther’sche Zuckerwarenfabrik” in Werther in 1903 and launched the first branded sweet on the market, the “1 PFENNIG RIESEN”. After the Second World War, his son and successor, Hugo

## COMPANY

Oberwelland, built a production facility in Halle (Westphalia) just a few kilometres away from the original factory. It is still pioneering to this day. The plant with continually updated technology currently produces successful

branded products such as “Werther’s Original”, “nimm2”, “RIESEN”, “Toffifee”, “Mamba” and “Dickmann’s”.

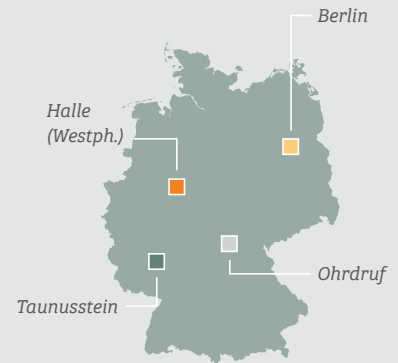
The company headquarters in the German capital Berlin is home to the man-

agement, administration, marketing and sales departments. The plant there has focussed on the production of chocolates such as “merci” since 1967.



### PRODUCTION LOCATIONS

Storck has production locations in:



Storck’s latest confectionery plant is located in Ohrdruf, Thuringia. The location, which was established shortly after reunification, is now a permanent fixture in the region. The ultra-modern production facility specialises in chocolate and wafer variations.

Ohrdruf focuses on cocoa processing and chocolate production. The “Knoppers” and “Knoppers Riegel” brands as well as “merci” specialities are produced at this plant.

Waffel Löser, based in Taunusstein, Hesse, has been part of the Storck Group since 2018. Waffel Löser specialises in the production of flat and shaped wafers. The wafers of the brands “Dickmann’s” and “Knoppers” among others come from Taunusstein. The systems and machines that are required are designed and built in house. Waffel Löser has been systematically integrated in the Storck Group while operating independently.

Condetta GmbH & Co. KG is a Storck Group company that develops and manufactures high-quality powdered compounds imparting taste, colour or consistency to food products at its Halle location. As a professional partner to the food industry with more than 70 years’ experience, Condetta supplies products to more than 50 countries worldwide. The company is integrated in Storck’s administration, energy supply processes, central technology and waste management.

**BRAND WORLD**

The Storck brand world of confectionery and chocolate products is diverse. A selection:



**BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

Storck is a classic family business. An Executive Board, made up of the company owner and four other managing directors from various divisions, consults on fundamental plans, defines strategies and makes key decisions. The four management areas – finance, production, marketing and sales – as well as the chairmanship of the highest supervisory body are made up of proven specialists and managers.

The managing directors work closely with their departments and colleagues in other departments and locations. Decision-making and development processes are short and, for Storck, always mean successful cooperation. The extended management board with senior executives from all company sections meets regularly to report, plan and discuss topics from the respective areas.



**Tradition and modernity:** Traditional buildings stand alongside newly constructed modern architecture at the production location in Halle.

**SUSTAINABILITY AT STORCK**

We are aware that our company is part of a complex system with upstream and downstream effects on people, the environment and the economy. This produces a variety of challenges that we address by way of a long-term sustainability strategy. Our principles are ethically, legally and economically sound behaviour as well as sustainable work and action. In our Code of Conduct, we commit to treating people and the environment responsibly. That means consistently focussing on a holistic long-term strategy over short-term effects.

A key part of this strategy is our sustainability policy, which has been adopted by the Board of August Storck KG as the key management body of the Storck Group and which is supported by all business units. The Managing Director Production & Engineering is generally responsible for implementing the strategy. As part of an e-learning programme that is compulsory for all employees, we communicate the content to the entire workforce. The policy is also available to the public.

The policy not only describes our fundamental approach to sustainability, it also provides specific guidelines for important areas and processes within the company. Our employees, who safeguard economic strength, product quality and a responsible supply chain as well as energy efficiency in manufacturing processes, take priority in respect of sustainability challenges.

A key sentence from the sustainability policy summarises our self-image: “The principle of responsibility is the basis of and starting point for our activities; it guides our actions in all areas.”



**Outstanding product quality** is the benchmark through which we fulfil our responsibility to consumers.

Responsible and, therefore, sustainable behaviour should be visible in all areas of work. We have addressed the topic in line with this guiding principle: Firstly, in a sustainability steering committee, which includes the Managing Director responsible for sustainability, and secondly in working groups with experts from various departments.

About 30 employees from all company sections actively participated in these working groups. Representatives from management and human resources, production and technology, raw materials and packaging, quality assurance, logistics, finance, administration, corporate affairs, data protection, marketing and sales were involved. These working groups analysed the status quo and previous developments in relation to sus-

tainability, and evaluated their materiality, strengths, weaknesses and potential as well as measures and targets.

Periodic working meetings are held in preparation for this report and subsequently to honour the European Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). The Executive Board is regularly informed about plans, measures and results and is involved in consultations and decisions on an ad hoc basis. It bears overall responsibility and decides centrally on strategic sustainability goals as well as measures. In the year under review, activities focussed on human rights in the supply chain and sustainability in the energy sector.



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**INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION ORGANISATIONS**

bring Storck confectionery to markets worldwide.

**In dialogue with stakeholders**

The principle of responsibility, which guides our actions in all areas, also includes the involvement of our relevant stakeholders. We can only manage the impact of our company comprehensively and responsibly if we engage in dialogue with our stakeholders – primarily employees, customers, consumers and suppliers. Society as a whole also has a direct and indirect influence on our company.

As a family business, we feel a particular bond with our employees. They are our most important target group. They are the heart of the company and are at the centre of everything we do. We offer them not only a long-term job – but also the opportunity to engage in dialogue on issues that are important to them and the company.

Our suppliers and customers are directly upstream and downstream of Storck and essential to the company. In our dealings with each other, we focus on long-term relationships and emphasise fair dealings with our business partners. Expertise, consistency and reliability convince our customers. A conditions model for trade customers and clear project and process descriptions in tenders for service providers ensure maximum transparency.

We maintain the connection to our customers via a service-orientated sales and field service right up to the purchasing locations. Furthermore, 22 sales companies in Europe and worldwide ensure that Storck is close to partners and consumers and can react flexibly to regional needs. Our logistics department organises deliveries in a 48-hour service for European retailers.

Consumers drive Storck’s branded products and are, therefore, another key stakeholder group for us. Factory outlets and outlets enable Storck to maintain direct contact between the company and consumers. Our customer service is also in direct dialogue with them: It answers questions and receives concerns and feedback. Complaints are handled

professionally and as quickly as possible by our team of employees. There is also a direct line to consumers via social media channels.

We see ourselves as part of society and therefore contribute indirectly to public discourse with our position and opinion. We use our expertise to contribute to the discussion around economic policy framework conditions in the food industry. These framework conditions apply, for example, to raw materials or the manufacture and marketing of products, as well as freedom of advertising or food information. As a confectionery manufacturer, we consider it our duty to represent our views and justified concerns in conjunction with confectionery and to assert our own expertise politically and

**MEMBERSHIPS**

In addition to being a member of the Federal Association of the German Confectionery Industry (BDSI), Storck is a member of the umbrella organisation of the food industry, Lebensmittelverband Deutschland e.V., and a member of the following associations and institutions:

- Bundesvereinigung Logistik e.V. (BVL)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ernährung e.V. (DGE)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sensorik e.V. (DGSens)
- Deutsches Verpackungsinstitut e.V. (dvi)
- Forstbetriebsgemeinschaft Halle
- Forum Nachhaltiger Kakao e.V.
- Fraunhofer-Institut für Verkehrs- und Infrastruktursysteme (IVI)
- Industrievereinigung für Lebensmitteltechnologie und Verpackung e.V. (IVLV)
- Institut für Qualitätsförderung in der Süßwarenwirtschaft e.V. (IQ.Cologne)
- Markenverband e.V.
- Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)
- Werkfeuerwehrverband Deutschland, Werkfeuerwehrverband NRW, Kreisfeuerwehrverband Gütersloh
- Wirtschaftsvereinigung der Ernährungsindustrie in Berlin und Brandenburg e.V. (WVEB)
- Zentralfachschule der Deutschen Süßwarenwirtschaft e.V. (ZDS)

socially. This is done in particular by contributing our knowledge and opinions via the Federal Association of the German Confectionery Industry (BDSI).

**Key corporate responsibility matters**

Our own economic performance and the stability of the company are crucial to our existence as a family business. Success via sustainably profitable growth not only enables entrepreneurial freedom, it also gives us the opportunity to drive forward selected sustainability issues. Economic issues are, therefore, the basis and an integral part of our understanding of sustainability – as are responsibility for our employees, respect for human rights and issues relating to energy and the environment.

We are encouraged in this understanding by our key stakeholders. The assessment by our stakeholders is incorporated into the sustainability strategy. To that end, direct discussions were held with stakeholder groups and several rounds of talks were held with colleagues who are in dialogue with these groups.

Based on these discussions, the key sustainability issues were identified and prioritised both from the stakeholders' perspective and in terms of their relevance to Storck's business.






In the year under review, we began to expand the content from a single to a double materiality analysis in accordance with the Corporate Sustainability

Reporting Directive (CSRD). We expect this to provide us with even more detailed information – on the one hand about our impact on people and the environment, and on the other about external influences on and risks for our company.

The following overview shows the key topics that we are working on as a company.

**KEY TOPICS**

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 <p><b>SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS</b></p>	 <p><b>PRODUCT QUALITY AND SAFETY</b></p>	 <p><b>RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEES</b></p>
 <p><b>RESPONSIBILITY IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN</b></p>	 <p><b>ENERGY AND CLIMATE PROTECTION</b></p>	 <p><b>RESOURCE WORKING CAPACITY</b></p>
 <p><b>WATER USE</b></p>	 <p><b>WASTE MANAGEMENT</b></p>	 <p><b>ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND STABILITY</b></p>



# Responsible management

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As a traditional family business in its fourth generation, we are aware of our economic and social responsibility. We want to harmonise our responsible actions towards employees, consumers and business partners in line with our goal of economic success.

## **ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND STABILITY**

Sustainable economic success is the basis for the stability of our company and its independence. We have once again managed to secure this success in the year under review: Storck posted above-average growth in its sector and is continuing this solid growth.

Economic success enables us to invest in the future. In the reporting period, we implemented numerous measures, in particular in the areas of construction and energy. These measures ensure sustainable growth and offer our increasingly large workforce long-term prospects.

In the year under review, Storck received financial subsidies totalling 1.2 million euros for relevant investments in future projects.

Storck has made a conscious decision in favour of the four production locations in Germany. We are continually developing these locations and creating a large

number of jobs in the regions along the way: In the year under review, more than 7,450 people in total were employed at the four locations. Companies from various sectors in the local and regional environment also benefit from the orders placed as part of our investment measures.

Construction measures that affect both the buildings and facilities as well as the infrastructure at our production locations constitute a central component of the further development of our company. Relevant investments in the year under review related, in particular, to the expansion of infrastructure capacities, which form the basis for further growth potential.

At the Halle location, this included the expansion of the high-bay warehouse as well as investments in equipment for confectionery production. At the Ohrdruf location, investments were made in production capacities and in additional capacity expansions for semi-finished products and the plant infrastructure.

Numerous investments in our internal infrastructure relieve the burden on the public infrastructure surrounding our production locations: For example, we are continually modernising and expanding our own warehouse capacities at the Halle and Ohrdruf locations. The direct geographical connection of these logistics capacities to our production facilities significantly reduces freight traffic, avoids traffic-related emissions and minimises the burden on the public transport network.

We are also reviewing various options for generating our own energy at our locations. In Halle and Ohrdruf, we have been operating efficient combined heat and power plants for several years, which we use to generate electricity and heat. We also pressed ahead with the expansion of photovoltaic systems in the period under review.

By way of our own drinking water wells at the Halle location, we are helping reduce the burden on the public water network. In addition, we operate our own process water plant here, in which the

water is pre-treated and then pumped into a sewage treatment plant operated for Storck by a service provider. We are not aware of any negative effects of our investments.

Our company maintains a good relationship with the towns and communities in which it is located. This appreciation is mutual: In the respective communities and surroundings, Storck is an important employer with an excellent reputation. Around our production locations, we create significant value for the community with jobs and via trade tax contributions.

Storck has traditionally supported organisations and initiatives close to its home base in Halle, and increasingly at the other major production locations. Since the 1990s, day-care centres and schools in Halle and Ohrdruf have received an annual financial donation for their work with children in the field of music. Care facilities, the food bank, local sports clubs and fire services are also among the institutions we support.



**Sustainable growth** requires structured, long-term planning.

**SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT**



**Storck supports** the Haller Bach-Tage as host annually.

One of the focal points of our long-term sponsorship measures on location is the field of music. For example, our company is active on the board of the music school in Halle and supports it financially. This has also applied to the children’s art school since 2004. Here, children create pictures and sculptures under the guidance of an art teacher.

The “Haller Bach-Tage” festival, which is important for the region, can also be organised annually thanks to Storck’s support: In cooperation with the Johanniskantorei choir of the Protestant parish, the city has organised ten days of music and art at various locations in the Halle area every year since 1964. In that respect, prominent artists from all over the world perform with the Halle Bach Choir. One event in the series traditionally takes place on the Storck factory premises. We not only support the Haller Bach-Tage financially, but

**75**

**REGIONAL PROJECTS**

have been promoted by Storck to date via the “Strong with Storck” initiative in Ohrdruf.

also host a concert – and combine the enjoyment of art with the opportunity to open up our company to visitors from the region.

Storck is a long-term supporter of the “Peter August Böckstiegel Freundeskreis” (“friends of Peter August Böckstiegel”). Peter August Böckstiegel (1889–1951) was one of the most important Westphalian artists of the 20th century. Böckstiegel’s birthplace in Werther-Arrode is now open to the public as a museum. The local industrial monument “Tobiashammer”,

where a large forging symposium is held every year, is of great cultural value to the region around our Ohrdruf location. Storck has been supporting this event, at which international blacksmith artists demonstrate their skills, for about 30 years.

The city of Halle and Storck work hand in hand for the traditional Halle lantern parade: Around St Martin’s Day, several hundred children light up the city centre of Halle with their lanterns. In Ohrdruf, Storck works with the town to organise a similar lantern parade for pupils from local primary schools to mark the opening of the Ohrdruf Christmas market.

The “Strong with Storck” initiative in Ohrdruf supports Storck’s social commitment to employees. Colleagues can apply for financial support for social projects that are particularly close to their hearts. In conjunction with its employees, Storck has now supported more than 75 regional projects in education, social affairs, culture, sports, health, environmental protection and species conservation.

### COMPLIANCE

Thanks to the company's own Code of Conduct, Sustainability Policy and the Human Rights Policy Statement, Storck has three central principles guiding its actions. The topic of data protection has been a particular focus in recent years, as was the protection of human rights in the year under review.

Information about violations of human rights, environmental obligations or breaches of the law can be communicated to us directly via a digital reporting system. This reporting system is open to our employees, suppliers and their employees as well as all third parties who become aware of such a violation in our own business area or in our supply chain or who have a justified suspicion of such a violation. Reports are treated confidentially and can also be made anonymously. The system can be accessed at the following internet address: [storck.integrityline.com](https://storck.integrityline.com). No reports were submitted to the reporting system in the year under review.

### Combatting corruption

Storck takes consistent action against bribery and corruption. The company's own Code of Conduct for all employees specifies that Storck does not offer or grant any unlawful advantages to third parties and furthermore expects business partners not to offer or grant any such advantages to Storck employees or their relatives. Any form of bribery or corruption is prohibited. As a precautionary measure, the rules of procedure stipulate a dual control principle for the signing of contracts and other key documents. In addition, Storck has established a guideline with principles and rules of behaviour on how to deal with gifts and other benefits.

Storck has voluntarily established an auditing department whose audit areas for all locations include corruption risks and which monitors anti-corruption measures. Representatives of this department are trained in anti-corruption. There were no incidents of corruption in the year under review. There were no legal proceedings due to anti-competitive behaviour in the period under review.

### Data protection

Storck takes the protection of personal data very seriously: All of Storck's specialist departments and companies have appointed data protection coordinators who are responsible for the targeted, department-specific implementation of data protection requirements. The coordinators liaise closely with Storck's central data protection competence centre,

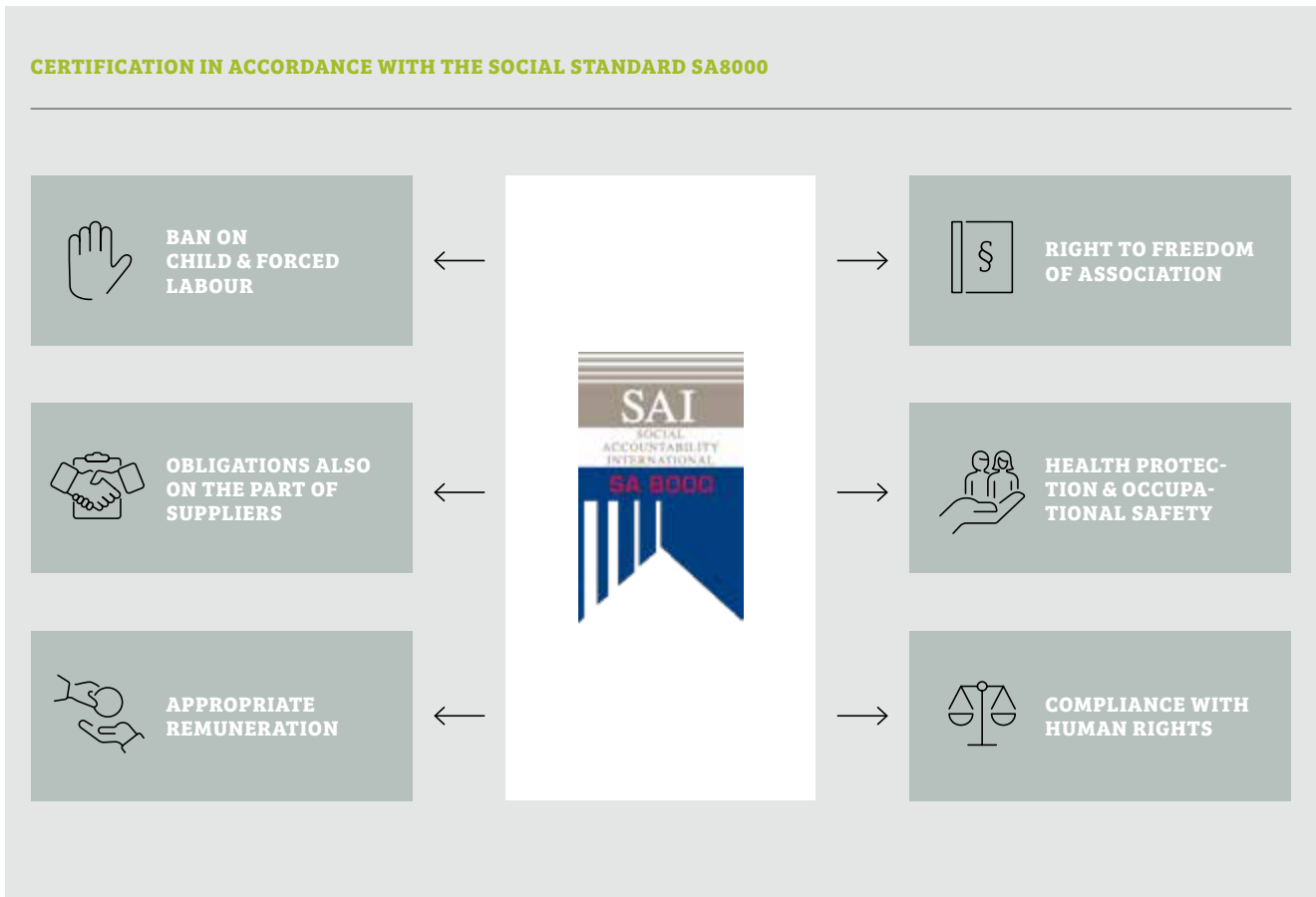
which is headed by the Data Protection Officer of the German Storck companies.

In the period under review, the further development of data protection compliance focussed on intensive employee training, which continually strengthens the understanding of data protection issues and therefore prevents potential breaches.

A binding process has been put in place for reporting data protection incidents. This ensures that incidents are checked and reported in accordance with the law. The management is also directly involved in this process, since we recognise the significant importance of data protection compliance. In the period under review, there was one reportable data protection incident involving a very small amount of data.

***The protection of personal data** has a high priority at Storck.*





The data protection team also consistently documents non-reportable incidents in a database to evaluate existing processing procedures and derive sensible follow-up measures to prevent errors on an ongoing basis.

**Human rights responsibility**

We respect the dignity and personality of individuals, their rights and their need to protect their own interests. In our Human Rights Policy Statement, which is available to the public, we have set out the principles we apply, the measures we have adopted and the standards we follow. Suppliers are assessed for individual risks in accordance with the Act on Corporate Due Diligence Obligations in Supply Chains (LkSG), and appropriate measures are introduced and followed up (see [page 32](#)).

Certification in accordance with the internationally recognised social standard “Social Accountability 8000” (SA8000), to which we committed back in 2010, is a key step towards standardising, verifying and documenting socially responsible action at Storck.

The SA8000 social standard is based on international human rights conventions and articles of the International Labour Organization (ILO). A company certified in accordance with SA8000 is one that demonstrates a socially responsible management system where employee rights, workplace conditions and fundamental human rights are guaranteed. The standard prohibits child labour and forced labour as well as discrimination and harassment. It specifies the minimum requirements for occupational health and safety, promotes freedom of association, working hours restrictions and appropriate remuneration within the

company’s sphere of influence. At Storck we also require our suppliers to comply with the standard or a comparable standard.

We have developed a management system to safeguard these aspects and to ensure reliable monitoring and further development. It includes, inter alia, the provision of annual training on these subjects for all employees. Security personnel employed via service providers also receive comprehensive and regular training on the content of SA8000.

SA8000 certification is valid for three years, and surveillance audits are performed annually. Storck has passed all audits since the initial certification in 2010.

**PRODUCT QUALITY AND FOOD HYGIENE**

We attach prime importance to the quality and safety of our products. Accordingly, employees in all company sections pay close attention to quality and safety as part of a firmly established and well documented quality management system.

**Quality management**

In our German production facilities for confectionery, goods are manufactured, packaged and stored in compliance with all legal requirements applicable in the Federal Republic of Germany and the relevant export countries.

Requirements with binding force apply in terms of quality, hygiene, labelling

and traceability. In this context, we have established a quality management system that is documented in a management manual and meets the requirements of the DIN EN ISO 9001 standard. It is monitored and supported by the Central Quality Assurance department, which draws up specifications and guidelines for the quality assurance of Storck products.



**Finished product inspections** are an integral part of our quality management.

**Right from the development process** we attach great importance to care and precision.



**Every Storck location** has quality departments and company laboratories.

We are constantly improving the system on our own initiative and regularly have Storck certified in accordance with the IFS Food and FSSC 22000 food safety standards. The certifications boost customer confidence in the quality of the products.

The quality assurance process at Storck is conducted in four stages:

**1. Careful selection and inspection of suppliers**

Our high-quality raw materials are purchased according to defined specifications from suppliers that are committed to strict quality controls in accordance with our existing supplier code of conduct.

**2. Incoming goods checks**

Whether cocoa, sugar, glucose syrup, starch, fats, dairy products or dried fruit, we randomly test raw materials for flavour and chemical, physical and



**150,000**

**PRODUCT SAMPLES**

were tested for product quality in the company laboratories in 2023.

microbiological parameters when we receive them.

**3. Strict safety and quality standards in the production process**

High technical standard of our facilities, a hygienically modern production environment and highly qualified employees ensure high-quality products.

**4. Inspection of finished products**

We conduct chemical, microbiological and sensory checks not only of the raw materials, but also of intermediate and end products. In addition, we test for allergens and check the shelf life of the confectionery we produce.

**Internal production laboratories**

The laboratories established at each location check the production results and perform in-process analyses of all production steps. The laboratories are equipped with modern analytical equipment and employ over 40 people with different professions, for example from the fields of food technology, chemistry, biology or nutritional science. This interdisciplinary approach facilitates a particularly high product quality.

One field of activity in quality assurance is sensory analysis. Testing the appearance, smell, taste and texture of food with the human senses is part of quality control, but also of product development and process optimisation.

In the 2023 period under review, approximately 150,000 samples and 250,000 chemical and physical parameters were tested in all three laboratories for continual product control. Furthermore, checks are performed by independent testing institutes and external accredited laboratories.

**Labelling**

All Storck products meet the food law requirements in respect of safety and food fraud protection. All confectionery is labelled in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Storck confectionery advertising focusses on the enjoyment aspect. There is no encouragement to consume large portions or an invitation to buy. The advertising is aimed at adult decision-makers. Children under the age of 14 are not directly addressed.

**Product recalls**

The processes described within our quality management system ensure a high product quality, for which Storck makes a quality promise. The established system is geared towards identifying risks at an early stage and eliminating them as far as possible by way of suitable measures. Despite all the care that is taken, errors can still occur in this large human-led system. Storck follows a defined crisis management protocol in the event that a product needs to be recalled. Storck has not conducted any product recalls in the years spanning the period under review.

**ADDITIONAL SAFETY BY WAY OF RISK ANALYSES**



*In the production process, various monitoring measures have been established.*

At Storck, an HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) concept ensures a high level of food quality and

safety, ruling out unintentional negative influences on food during processing and handling. An interdisciplinary team with representatives from the quality assurance, product development, production, operating technology and logistics departments prepares regular hazard analyses in which all processes are evaluated, and critical control points are implemented. A critical control point (CCP) is a specific test step in the production process by way of which it is possible, and of crucial importance, to prevent risk to food safety. To that end, precautionary measures, such as the integration of a control device, are adopted at the identified process stage.

**CERTIFICATION:**



IFS Food: The International Featured Standard (IFS) for Food is a standard for the standardised inspection of food safety and the quality level of producers.



FSSC 22000: The Food Safety System Certification 22000 is a standard for ensuring food safety in the production of food.

**AWARDS**



Storck regularly receives awards such as those from the German Agricultural Society (DLG) for the quality of its products, which have been tested by experts for years as part of the DLG quality tests. Storck products have received about 300 such awards for the years 2022/2023 alone.



# Responsibility for our employees

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Employees are at the centre of everything we do in the Storck family business. Respect and mutual appreciation are the principles of our family of employees. A close bond is the foundation for everything that makes Storck so special and successful.

## **PERSONNEL POLICY**

Performance, passion and unity are the three values that play a central role at Storck. They are not only the basis for our work culture, they also form the guiding principle of personnel management at our company.

Our managers know that only those who are committed and passionate about their work can inspire their employees. Only those who exemplify collegiality can ensure a pleasant working environment in their own department. Only with all employees on board will Storck be able to continue its success into the future.

Personnel policy is an essential component of corporate development. At Storck, this policy includes customised measures that focus equally on the company's and its employees' requirements.

## EMPLOYEES



During the period under review, we focussed, in particular, on three topics:

- **Leadership/employee retention:** Employee retention has a high priority at Storck. It enables us to achieve a long period of employment within the workforce.
- **Personnel and organisational development:** This is aimed at supporting our employees in all phases of their work and life via suitable further training opportunities.
- **Recruiting:** Meeting the demand for skilled labour, finding new talent and securing jobs are becoming increasingly challenging. We want to remain an attractive employer by offering attractive job opportunities.

### CHALLENGE OF A SKILLED LABOUR SHORTAGE

Our HR policy is aimed at retaining jobs at Storck in the long term, further increasing their number and appointing well-trained employees for these jobs. Given this goal, we are increasingly confronted with the challenges of a changing labour market. To successfully meet these challenges, we created our own recruiter positions in all HR departments during the period under review. This places us in an even better position to establish efficient strategies and new platforms for approaching applicants at the respective locations.

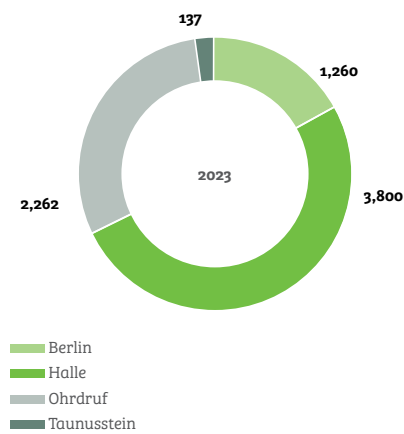
New channels for approaching interested parties were expanded, in particular with regard to the training applicant market. These channels include digital media as well as cooperation with schools in the regions surrounding our production locations. We intensified and further expanded this collaboration in the period under review.

# 1.9%

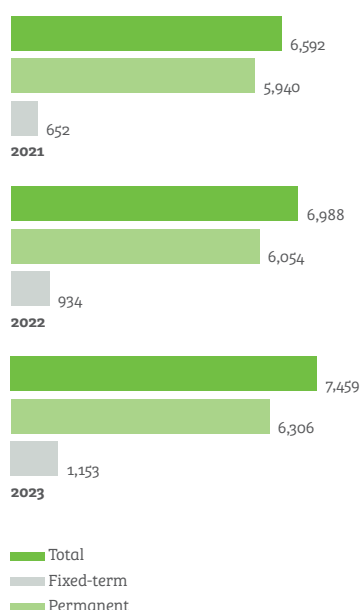
### FLUCTUATION RATE

Across all locations, the fluctuation rate at Storck has been consistently low for decades.

### STAFF SIZE AT THE GERMAN LOCATIONS in number of employees



### PERSONNEL BY CONTRACT TYPE in number of employees



Our internal and external communication as an employer makes an important contribution to efficient employee recruitment and retention. The “Employer Branding” department set up during the period under review develops our employer brand and drives employee recruitment and retention to prevent staff shortages.

### OUR EMPLOYEES

By the end of the period under review, over 8,000 employees worked at our German locations in Berlin, Halle, Ohrdruf and Taunusstein as well as in 22 international sales organisations. The vast majority – 7,459 employees – worked at our four German production locations. These locations form the basis of the data due to their significance for Storck.

### At the production locations

Our largest location is located in Halle (Westphalia) with about 3,800 employees. The Condetta company is also located here. More than 2,200 employees work at the Ohrdruf location in Thuringia. Approximately 1,200 people work at the Berlin location. Our subsidiary, Waffel Löser, in Taunusstein has about 140 employees. In 2023, the headcount increased by a total of 6.7%, in Halle alone by more than 8%. More than 1,000 new employees were recruited in both 2022 and 2023.

Employee turnover at Storck has been consistently low for decades. It was 1.9% in 2023, the year under review. There were no redundancies at Storck that year.

We offer various jobs and apprenticeships in a wide range of professions in both the industrial and commercial sectors. With 46% women and 54% men in the workforce, the gender ratio in the company as a whole remained evenly distributed, as in previous years.

## EMPLOYEES



**The annual employee induction event** sees extensive onboarding.

**Loading the confectionery** is handled by employees in our company's own logistics centres.



**Care and precision** are required at many workstations in production.

**Regular feedback meetings** contribute to employee development.

The vast majority of the workforce (about 85%) has a permanent employment contract. Just under 15% of jobs have fixed-term contracts. These usually result from parental leave replacements and students completing internships or writing their theses at the company.

A short-term increase in orders can be another reason for temporary employment. This occurs due to seasonal order peaks or sales promotion activities, for example. In the case of such temporary deployment of personnel in production, we initially assign full-time and part-time positions based on collective labour agreements, primarily with fixed-term employment contracts.

Furthermore, we do not immediately hire additional staff exclusively on a permanent basis for work with newly developed products. Temporary employment contracts can be made permanent if the product becomes established on the market and long-term employment is foreseeable. For many employees, a fixed-term contract is the start of a long-term employment relationship at Storck. In the year under review, 237 employees – about a quarter of those on fixed-term contracts – were taken on permanently.

### External personnel

We aim to recruit staff with permanent employment contracts across all locations and keep this high proportion consistently high in the long-term.

In the event of fluctuations in specific personnel requirements, in transitional periods when filling vacancies or in the event of specialised requirements, we also make use of the option of employing external personnel in the form of temporary staff for a limited period: On average, 450 such temporary workers were employed at Storck's German production locations in the year under review.

### WORKING AT STORCK

“People are at the centre of everything we do.” This guiding principle summarises the way we think at all levels of our company. With a people-oriented company philosophy, owner Axel Oberwelland is successful in managing the company, now in its fourth generation, responsibly in every respect.

### Welcoming culture

We also communicate Storck’s company philosophy and our culture to all new employees, whom we select not only based on professional criteria but also according to their personality. From the outset, we want to integrate them well into their team and enable them to have a pleasant and successful start. Every year, a two-day induction event is held for new employees, bringing them together at the Halle home base. Various onboarding activities complement this virtually to promote dialogue across locations.

### Active co-determination

All production locations have established their own works councils, which safeguard the co-determination of the workforce. The elected works council members from the production and administration sections represent the interests of the various work areas in the best possible way. The works council informs the workforce about current issues at regular works meetings. Our own youth and trainee representatives represent the interests of our young employees. Thanks to a consistently open and objective approach, cooperation between the employer and the works council is based on trust and characterised by a high level of mutual respect. Regular discussions and meetings – in addition to the legally prescribed times – promote understanding for the respective other position. Management provides the works council with comprehensive and timely information.

The works councils and management conclude collective bargaining agreements in joint negotiations. Such works agreements apply to all non-managerial employees (98% of the total workforce). The works council and HR management use in-house communication to announce all works agreements as soon they have been reached. No later than two weeks after a works agreement is reached, it is made available to all employees via notice boards or the company intranet. The works councils are informed without delay of any changes made by Storck that do not require co-determination.

Employees can view all applicable works agreements, collective labour agreements and other generally applicable regulations at any time. These procedures create a framework for our company in which collective bargaining and freedom of assembly are a matter of course. In the 2023 year under review, a warning strike was held in conjunction with national collective bargaining at the Halle location. Storck provided a suitable area and sanitary facilities for this.

### Open feedback culture

We maintain a culture of open communication: We inform our employees promptly and regularly about the latest news and changes. We have established the employee magazine “Wir von Storck”, which is published in German and English, for internal communications.

Irrespective of age, Storck employees receive an annual appraisal and development plan that takes individual performance and competencies into account. Supervisors and employees discuss the performance appraisal in feedback meetings and decide together on necessary or desired development perspectives. For apprentices, a feedback meeting is held after each change of department. In the industrial sector, performance appraisals are prepared and discussed at least every three years or on an ad hoc basis.

### INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE

Many people have fled to Germany as a result of the war in Ukraine, which began in February 2022. It quickly became clear to our company that we could also contribute to the integration of refugees.

Ten refugees started working in production at the Halle location in July 2022. The integration went so well that we were able to steadily expand capacity in the following months. By the end of 2023, more than 60 refugees were employed at the Halle location.

As in the case of the Ohrdruf location, where twelve refugees from Ukraine started work in the year under review, internally organised language courses and the support of the workforce played a major role in ensuring that the Ukrainian colleagues were able to integrate well into their team and daily production processes.

## EMPLOYEES

### Employee loyalty and solidarity

Storck is characterised by a high level of employee loyalty and solidarity between the company and its employees. The average length of service of 10.6 years speaks for itself. Employees identify with the company, benefit from job security and live collegiality. Such solidarity is also clearly evident at the annual anniversary celebrations.

In 2023, 402 employees celebrated a special anniversary at Storck: They have been loyal to the company for 10, 25 or 40 years. As part of an anniversary celebration, the company owner personally presented them with a gold coin. Those who can look back on 25 or 40 years of employment at Storck also receive four weeks' special leave and a bonus payment.

In 2023, the average retirement age at Storck was 64 years. This retirement age enables our employees to start a new phase of their lives secured by a good pension base. Even after leaving the company, former colleagues remain in contact with their former employer: They are continually integrated at company parties or pensioner get-togethers and follow events at Storck through the employee magazine "Wir von Storck".

### Equal opportunities

Equal opportunities are an integral part of our personnel policy. Neither age and gender nor nationality, religion or lifestyle have any influence on the opportunities at Storck. What counts are performance, passion and cooperation – a path that is open to all.

After all, we are aware that the diversity among our employees characterises our company – and last but not least, the different personalities with their very individual strengths contribute to Storck's outstanding productivity.



# 10.6

### YEARS OF COMPANY SERVICE

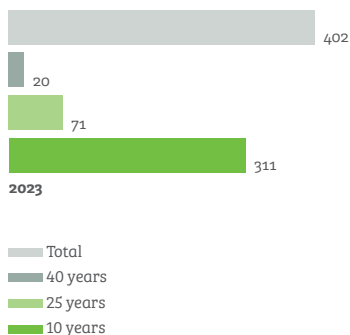
is the average at Storck – illustrating the bond between the employees and the company.

# 94.7%

### OF EMPLOYEES

are covered by the collective bargaining agreement at Storck's German locations.

### ANNIVERSARIES in number of employees



**Employees celebrating anniversaries** receive gold loyalty medals and pins in recognition of their many years of loyalty to Storck.



Discrimination is not tolerated. As part of the certification in accordance with the SA8000 social standard (see page 12), Storck maintains responsible management within the company by respecting every employee's rights and ensuring they can be exercised.

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of women in management positions at Storck. The share of female managers has increased significantly during the last two decades, in particular in administration and marketing. In 2023, one third of management and other roles at Storck not covered by collective bargaining agreement were held by women.

A diverse workforce is employed at the German production locations: At the end of the year under review, 1,148 employees – around 16% – were of foreign nationality. The share depends on the respective population: 16% of Storck employees in Berlin are of non-German nationality, 14% in Halle, about 18% at the Ohrdruf location in Thuringia and some 39% in Taunusstein in Hesse.

We are proud of the strong cohesion and traditionally good cooperation within our departments. Nevertheless, we are aware that there may be cases in which employees feel unfairly treated, harassed or discriminated against. We have, therefore, set up a complaints system as part of the management of issues covered in the SA8000 social standard. As part of this, all incidents reported by directly involved or observing persons are examined and remedial plans are implemented. Although there were individual cases in 2022 and 2023, there were no systematic complaints of discrimination. Solutions were found to the complaints received during clarifying discussions. A warning was issued in one case (2022).

### COMPANY BENEFITS

It is important to us that the work our employees perform for Storck every day in the production halls and administrative buildings be appropriately recognised above and beyond remuneration.

This is achieved by way of collegial, appreciative cooperation in daily work as well as a variety of company benefits that we offer our employees in addition to above-tariff pay. Examples include our Storck employee participation scheme, various pension schemes and a range of mobility options.

These benefits are not limited to our full-time employees: Part-time employees can also take advantage of the various additional benefits in proportion to their working hours.

### Payment above the collective bargaining agreement

Storck applies the collective agreement for the confectionery industry at all German locations, but at all times pays above the collectively agreed rate. This approach is in line with our remuneration strategy, which aims to provide attractive pay. We arrange for the remuneration to be reviewed by a service partner on an annual and ad hoc basis.

All collectively agreed salaries are above the statutory minimum wage threshold. The remuneration paid in 2023 was significantly higher than the salary agreed by collective bargaining, including in the lowest pay scale group in the industrial sector, thanks to productivity bonuses and other allowances. In addition, employees receive benefits such as an annual Christmas bonus (100% of the collective bargaining rate), holiday pay, savings in long-term deposit accounts and overtime pay as well as capital-forming benefits.

### COMPANY BENEFITS IN ADDITION TO SALARY

- Storck employee participation scheme
- Loyalty bonus or profit sharing (calculated according to annual sales results)
- Company pension scheme
- Health promotion
- Rewards and remuneration for relevant ideas
- Benefits for special events (weddings, births, anniversaries)
- Confectionery gifts for Christmas, birthdays and summer holidays
- Regular company parties
- Subsidised meals in company restaurants
- Staff sale of goods
- Travel allowance for local public transport
- Job bike leasing



**Regular company parties** are a tradition at Storck.

The collective agreement does not contain any gender-specific groupings. The basic remuneration in the respective wage groups is 100% identical.

Nevertheless, there are also differences in pay between men and women at our company. There can be various reasons for these differences. Remuneration differences result from the respective ca-

reer choices, job content and full-time or part-time work. Women, and mothers in particular, request more part-time jobs than men. It is only due to such differences that the average total remuneration for women in our company is just under 10% lower than for men.

## EMPLOYEES

### Employee participation

Storck took on a pioneering role in the industry with the introduction of employee share ownership in 1978. Since then, employee share ownership has reinforced the idea of the “Storck family”, in which employees and employers feel equally committed to the company. Neue Storck-Mitarbeiter-Beteiligung GmbH holds a silent partnership in August Storck KG and participates in its results.

Employees can participate in the company's success by purchasing shares in the holding company. Storck grants its employees the first share certificates as a gift when they join the company. Participation is not only financially rewarding: It is aimed at promoting entrepreneurial thinking among employees and their identification with the company.

### Company old-age pension scheme

Company social benefits are generally available to all employees. One exception is individual pension benefits, which are only available to permanent employees. For example, employees with a permanent employment contract benefit from the company pension scheme, which Storck co-finances for them. In addition, employees are given flexible options to support their own pension provision and, therefore, build up long-term financial security. Deferred compensation in various contract variants can also be combined with the payment by Storck of capital-forming benefits. Internal advice on company pension schemes offers employees early guidance in planning the new stage of their lives.

### Company social work

Private and professional problems can affect any of us. Whether a disagreement at work, family worries, addiction or debt: Anyone who needs help receives support from Storck in finding trained contact persons who provide confidential and professional advice and help find solutions.

This “company social service” grew out of our care for our employees and is available to all. It is a voluntary service provided by our company that extends beyond the scope defined in the collective bargaining agreement and company agreements. Company social work is based on the approach of “helping others help themselves”, so that employees can tackle and solve their problems under their own steam and responsibility.



**Company mobility programme:** *Cycle to work on a job bike.*

**Journeys on local public transport** are subsidised by Storck with a 50% subsidy for job tickets and the Deutschlandticket

## EMPLOYEES



# 334

EMPLOYEES

took parental leave in the year under review. 315 returned to work.

One issue that is relevant today, for example, is relatives' need for care, which often presents affected families with major challenges. All Storck employees receive individual and free counselling and training from care experts, if required, in cooperation with an independent company for care counselling and training. This ensures those affected by challenging life situations, receive help in reconciling work and care.

### Mobility

We have been supporting our employees in using public transport to get to work for many years. This can be a good alternative to travelling by car.

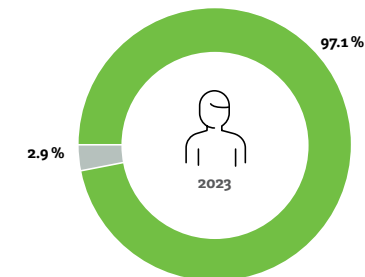
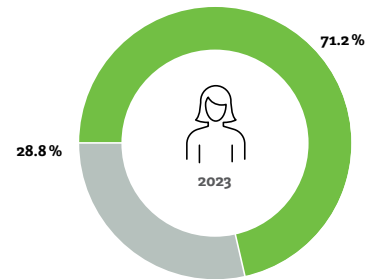
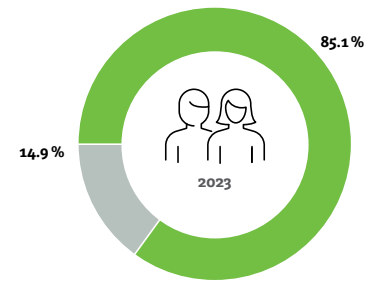
### Job tickets and company buses

We subsidise job tickets or the Deutschlandticket for local public transport with an allowance of 50%. Company buses are also used at the Halle site to pick up employees from different locations and bring them back, timed to coincide with shift times.

### Bicycle leasing for all

In 2016, Storck introduced a bicycle leasing system for all employees. Our colleagues at all hierarchical levels and from all departments, from production to management, can lease job bikes at favourable tax rates with employer support. This scheme is designed to motivate employees to cycle to work. Cycling has two positive effects: Firstly, it promotes physical activity, and secondly, it protects the environment. This subsidised scheme has been very successful – almost 4,000 bikes have been leased since it was launched.

### PERSONNEL BY TYPE OF CONTRACT AND GENDER in%



Full-time  
Part-time

### Reconciling work and family life

Work-life balance was a topic at Storck long before it was discussed in the public discourse. The company introduced shift times that were adapted to the needs of families as early as the end of the 1950s. Today, we offer flexible working time models so that our employees can better reconcile family and career.

We want to provide employees on parental leave with the best possible support when they return to work. Depending on the requirements and possibilities at the respective location, the HR department also finds individual solutions to make everyday life easier for parents and help them to continue working. Flexitime and flexible part-time and home office arrangements play a part in this.



**Storck supports daycare centres** in the immediate vicinity of the production locations.

In the 2023 year under review, 334 Storck employees took parental leave. At 94%, the return rate is encouragingly high: Apart from a few exceptional cases, people returned to their jobs at Storck after parental leave.



**Precision required:** this is particularly true in the technical training professions.

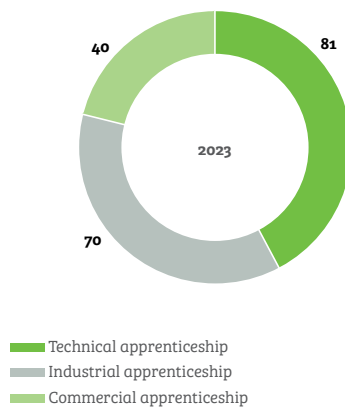
**APPRENTICESHIPS**

In our view, sound professional training at the start of a professional career is even more valuable if it focusses on personal development and promoting potential. This is exactly what we offer young people with a variety of interesting apprenticeships.

From mechatronics technicians for refrigeration technology to food technology specialists and warehouse specialists to IT specialists for system integration, there are numerous apprenticeships to choose from. Storck also support bachelor's degree programmes in food technology, business administration and digital logistics as part of its dual study programme.

**APPRENTICES BY APPRENTICESHIP**

**AREAS** in number of employees



Storck employed a total of 191 apprentices in the year under review: 95 in Halle, 72 in Ohrdruf and 24 in Berlin. In 2022 alone, 68 people started their vocational training or a bachelor's degree with us as part of a dual study programme. In the year under review, there were 60 people. In recent years, the number of apprenticeship places for prospective confectionery technologists and technical professions, in particular, has increased. In the commercial sector, on the other hand, dual study programmes are becoming increasingly important.

Training at Storck is holistic: We not only want to provide our apprentices with technical training, but also support them in their personal development. In addition to their regular training, they receive training in work techniques, communication and time management

### AWARD

The independent market research company Trendence once again awarded us a seal of approval for the high quality of our apprenticeship and training programmes in the reporting year.



### ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME



**Janina** successfully participated in the Erasmus+ programme.

Our apprentices and dual students can look beyond national borders: At the Halle location, they can take part in the Erasmus+ programme and complete an

internship of up to 10 weeks abroad at one of our national companies.

Janina spent ten weeks at Storck's Belgian sales company during her dual study programme in business administration: "The opportunity to complete an internship abroad was one of the reasons why I applied to Storck. In Belgium, my tasks included processing orders and liaising with customers from Belgium, Luxembourg and France. I not only got to know the Belgian working world, but also the cultural advantages, which are not limited to tasty fries and waffles. My stay abroad allowed me to develop personally and expand my knowledge in many directions."

### THE "JOB DIALOGUE" PROJECT

When he retired, a Storck employee had the idea of passing on his knowledge as the former manager of the mechanical workshop to young people. This resulted in the "Job Dialogue" project more than 20 years ago. With financial support from the city of Halle as well as machines, tools and materials from Storck, volunteer mentors, including former company employees, share their valuable wealth of experience. They prepare trainees for a career in the metalworking industry as part of a 120-hour course. Many of the participants are later placed in an apprenticeship.

### SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TALENTED INDIVIDUALS



**Through scholarships,** Storck supports young employees from the company.

We attach importance to supporting and promoting trainees and students. Storck is a partner in the Deutschlandstipendium network and supports a total of 20 particularly talented and committed students at the Halle and Ohrdruf locations. Thanks to the support from a network made up of the federal government, private sponsors and companies, the students can concentrate fully on their education. In addition to the Deutschlandstipendium, Storck awards social scholarships via the OWL Study Fund to students whose financial or personal situation jeopardises their studies.

Wir fördern das

**Deutschland  
STIPENDIUM**



**Assignments in the field** are an integral part of the Sales Apprenticeship programme.

**Personnel and organisational development** creates a wide range of offers for employee development.

as well as presentation techniques and professional behaviour. We adapt the seminar programme in line with the needs of the respective training occupations.

It is not just our apprentices' direct colleagues who help them get off to the best possible start in their careers. Onboarding is also very important across all departments: For example, during the induction days at the Halle location, activities focus on experiential education, getting to know each other better and building and expanding the network.

From a business perspective, training is an important factor in achieving sustainable and profitable growth. That is why we discuss early with apprentices whether they want to stay on at Storck and find individual solutions to best cater to their specific talents and concerns. Ultimately, we aim to keep talented, professionally and personally convincing staff and retain them for the future.

### TOMORROW'S APPRENTICES

In its search for talent, Storck inspires many young people to take up commercial, technical and scientific professions. At our Halle location, for example, we cooperate with schools in the region to implement practical learning projects. One example of this local commitment is our co-operation with the "Sugar Project". In chemistry lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to combine theoretical knowledge with practical content in Storck's laboratories and by gaining an insight into production processes. During the past 20 years, this project has given numerous pupils a very practical impression of the occupational fields and work processes in confectionery production.

### CROSS-MENTORING OWL

Our company has been involved in the Cross-Mentoring OWL support programme for young female managers since 2012. The programme is geared towards the personal and professional development of young female employees. As part of the cross-company programme, young female employees with potential are supported by mentors from other companies for a period of one year. At the same time, experienced managers from Storck act as mentors, sharing their knowledge and experience with talented young women from other companies. Both sides gain new insights for their everyday professional lives and build networks.

## EMPLOYEES

### Trainee programme

Through our trainee programme we offer young talents a well-supported start to their professional careers after graduation. The programme begins when trainees join the company with a permanent contract. They are involved in projects from day one and grow into responsible tasks.

In 2023, the year under review, 36 trainees were employed at the locations. The respective programmes are based in different specialist areas, such as marketing and sales, logistics or finance and controlling. In addition to teaching specialist content, Storck provides the trainees with supporting seminars and compulsory training modules in areas such as communication, presentation techniques and time management. Personal mentors are on hand to support the trainees throughout the programme. This is a proven and successful approach for both the young trainees and our company.

### FURTHER TRAINING

The ongoing professional development of our employees is a key component of our corporate strategy. Irrespective of the position and role of our employees, we identify individual strengths and development potential and use these to identify development activities they might benefit from.

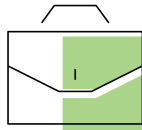
In 2022, the Human Resources and Organisational Development department set up decentralised teams at the Berlin, Halle and Ohrdruf site. These teams are available directly on location as a point of contact for employees in the event of a specific requirement. They also act as cross-location topic managers for programmes that focus on subject such as increasing digitalisation and transformation events, as well as demographic change and the shortage of skilled workers.



# 19

### APPRENTICESHIP TRADES

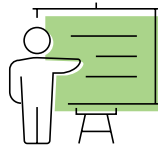
study programmes are offered by Storck at its locations in Germany.



# > 2,000

### SEMINARS

were attended by our employees in the 2023 year under review.

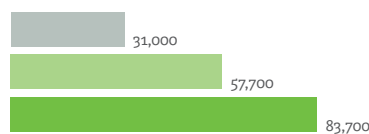


# 75%

### OF MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

were filled by employees from within the company during the period under review.

### TRAINING HOURS OF EMPLOYEES



2021  
2022  
2023

In the year under review, we once again significantly increased the range of further training opportunities. Numerous programmes are developed in close collaboration with managers and are individually tailored to the participants. For example, a potential development programme was set up for the production and technology section, which prepares junior managers for their future management role. We provide training ourselves and also draw on a pool of qualified external coaches and trainers that we have built up.

In 2023, one particular focus of development activities was cross-border collaboration within our company. New training needs were identified in this regard and initial implementation measures were set up. For example, we developed the “Successful intercultural collaboration” training course for national and international colleagues to strengthen successful collaboration.

Various seminars on general topics are offered on the in-house “Storck Lernwelt” training portal. Some of these are mandatory for certain groups of employees, but most are voluntary professional training opportunities. Virtual training courses are combined effectively with traditional face-to-face learning concepts. In the year under review, our experts optimised the e-learning courses in particular – both in terms of content related to the relevant learning objectives and in terms of language and technology, to ensure that the courses fit the target group and allow barrier-free participation. In dialogue with employees, we evaluate the quality of the training courses via feedback forms to identify further needs.



**> 200**

**SAFETY OFFICERS**

help the company establish safe and healthy workplaces.

**OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY**

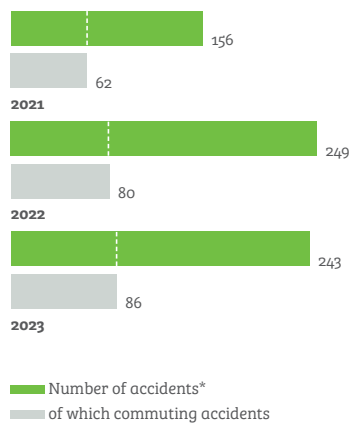
“Safety first” – this principle is particularly important in a manufacturing company such as Storck. We have established an occupational safety management system that is based on detailed monitoring and takes the form of systematic occupational safety measures. Trained occupational safety specialists at all locations and more than 200 safety officers from various departments with in production and administration play an important role. They are permanent members of the location-specific health and safety committees, which meet several times a year. They include the plant supervisors as the location’s health and safety officers, occupational health management coordinators and members of the works council.

**Measures**

The occupational health and safety experts conduct safety inspections and workplace-related risk analyses in all Storck sections. They pool their findings in a digital system for risk assessment, which was standardised and expanded across all locations in the period under review. The respective occupational health and safety committee develops preventative measures for the identified potential hazards and monitors their implementation.

Even small changes often make a difference, such as optimising the routes of pallet vehicles within the production halls to reduce crossing traffic. Sometimes, however, it is also the major conversion of a machine or the technical optimisation of a system that enables us to achieve the desired level of safety. Storck continually invests to ensure and improve safety in the workplace and on the company premises. Numerous measures – such as noise reduction programmes or fall protection in production – are designed not only to prevent accidents and injuries, but also to protect health.

**ACCIDENTS**



\*Accidents with a lost time > 3 days

Optimising occupational safety includes instructing and regularly training our employees on safety and health issues. This includes compulsory basic training on general topics such as fire safety but also workplace-specific training such as training on the safe operation of forklift trucks and aerial work platforms or the handling of hazardous goods. Furthermore, at Storck we train first-aiders and evacuation assistants.

**Monitoring**

Among other ways, we monitor the effectiveness of our precautionary measures in detailed accident statistics, where our safety experts document all workplace accidents, their causes and consequences. They record accidents with and without lost time as well as commuting accidents separately. We document injuries that require first aid as well as minor injuries, such as paper cuts. The sickness rate in the year under review was 9.5%. It includes illness, treatment at health resorts and absence due to accidents at work and on the way to work. Thanks to strong preventative measures, there is no exceptional risk of work-related illness.

We were able to keep the number of accidents and injuries consistently low in the period under review despite the increasing number of employees. There were no fatal accidents at Storck in the year under review. In addition to actual accidents and injuries, we also analyse the exact causes of “near misses” in order to take preventative action. In conjunction with the personal responsibility of each employee, these preventive adjustments result in a high level of occupational safety at Storck.

**TRANSPARENCY AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION**

In the year under review, we re-organised the location-specific information pages on occupational safety on the Storck intranet. Central information is clearly presented and laws and framework conditions regarding occupational health and safety that need to be posted are published. Employees can find all relevant contacts here – for example, to make their own suggestions for improvement directly.

## EMPLOYEES



**Customised hearing protection** is extremely important in the production environment.

**Fire drills** are conducted regularly at our locations.

**Belt and rope systems** secure employees in the goods receiving area.





**Bright, modern and professionally equipped:**  
*Two new treatment rooms were established at the Ohrdruf location in the year under review.*

### Health promotion

Both working in production and at a desk can cause physical strain. As part of work situation analyses, our OHM teams work with occupational physicians to examine the respective strain and possible hazards at the workplaces. From the analyses, the experts derive appropriate optimisation proposals that take into account and protect the employees' strengths.

Knowing that exercise in everyday life promotes health, we motivate our employees to do exercises at the workplace, group gymnastics or training sessions on mobile back trainers. Employees with orthopaedic complaints or other illnesses receive special support to enable them to continue working. The various programmes are provided professionally by occupational health staff or external cooperation partners such as physiotherapists. For example, two therapists from an external partner work at the Ohrdruf location five days a week during core working hours. New, modern premises were established in the year under review for their extensive range of services: The physiotherapy department now comprises two closed treatment rooms, a multifunctional room for courses as well as changing rooms and sanitary facilities.

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Occupational health management (OHM) is a firmly established department at the production locations in Berlin, Halle and Ohrdruf, with particular responsibility for health promotion, occupational medicine and counselling. OHM is directly affiliated to the respective plant management and, depending on the location, is handled by either a dedicated OHM team or individual coordinators. There is close coordination between those responsible for OHM at the various locations, as well as with the other health stakeholders. This includes, for example, occupational safety and the area of company integration management (CIM).

Together, our experts define the key areas and systematically ensure healthy workplaces. The resulting measures are adapted in line with the individual locations and deliberately differ to cover the respective requirements.

### Occupational health services

Storck employs a company doctor at each production location who performs occupational medical examinations and consultations in accordance with government and trade association regulations. The occupational physicians offer employees personal appointments as part of a consultation hour, but are also available to provide advice during tours directly at the workplace. In addition to the aforementioned preventive and aptitude tests, all employees can take advantage of free health measures: These include hearing and eye tests, vaccination and individual medical consultations.

Numerous counselling and coaching services are provided by the OHM managers at the locations themselves. There are also medical programmes such as health days on diabetes, bowel cancer prevention and vein screening, which are very popular and have a lasting effect on the workforce.

### Active participation

An OHM steering committee meets quarterly at the Halle and Berlin locations to critically discuss the health programmes. Participants include the local works councils and the representative body for severely disabled employees.

Furthermore, health circles in individual production departments aim to gather suggestions and concerns from employees directly on location, discuss potential stresses and hazards in work processes and jointly develop practical improvements.

### COACHING SESSIONS ON “HEALTHY LEADERSHIP”

Managers bear a special responsibility for the well-being of our employees. We offer them coaching on healthy leadership and embed the topic of “Healthy leadership” in all areas of the company.



### HEALTH-PROMOTING PROGRAMMES FOR EMPLOYEES

- Back training
- Individual guidance and “first-aid” from physiotherapists (e.g. with Physio-Tape)
- Lunchtime exercise classes and “5AKTIV” exercise programmes
- Financially supported health and fitness programmes for leisure time
- Company football team and beach volleyball tournament
- Running clubs
- “Tour de Storck” by bike
- Job bike leasing

### FIT AT WORK AND IN EVERYDAY LIFE



**Beach volleyball in the best weather:** An internal beach volleyball tournament is held annually in Berlin.

On the intranet, employees can choose from a range of external sports programmes at reasonable prices. Committed colleagues have also set up their own activities and organise running groups, football and volleyball matches or cycling tours. Storck teams regularly take part in company runs at the respective locations.



**Sport brings people together:** The traditional “Tour de Storck” takes place annually between the production locations.



# Responsibility in the supply chain

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Our chocolates, chocolate specialities and confectionery are made from high-quality ingredients – including sugar, cocoa, dairy products and hazelnuts. We attach great importance to responsible procurement when purchasing these agricultural raw materials, as well as technical materials, packaging and services.

## **SUPPLIER RELATIONS**

Safe and socially responsible supply chains are a central requirement of our procurement strategy, which we use to expand the transparency and traceability of supply chains right back to their origin. One central tool in this process are healthy and reliable relationships with our suppliers, so that we can en-

sure human rights and environmental due diligence. Our Code of Conduct provides both our own employees and business partners with guidelines for responsible behaviour. We select our contractual partners carefully and consciously maintain long-term supplier relationships. Our business relationships with suppliers are based on our Supplier

Code of Conduct and the requirements of the international social standard Social Accountability 8000 (SA8000), in accordance with which we are certified.

The Storck Supplier Code of Conduct defines the non-negotiable minimum standards that our suppliers, service providers and their suppliers must re-

spect and comply with in all business transactions with Storck. It is based on Germany's Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG), which applies to entrepreneurial enterprises, the laws applicable in the respective countries and internationally recognised conventions such as those of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Civil Pact and UN Social Pact, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child and on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The requirements of the SA8000 social standard form an additional basis.

As part of quality and social audits, we monitor and document compliance with social principles, but also any potential misconduct by suppliers. This applies to Storck's direct business partners. In the case of raw materials from countries outside the EU – such as hazelnuts or cocoa – these are mainly exporters or traders. The upstream suppliers at origin are also included. All supplier audits conducted by Storck during the period under review were successfully passed. No significant negative social or environmental impacts were identified. Storck is also not aware of any violations of the rights of indigenous peoples. Storck has audit procedures, remediation plans and control measures in place to respond quickly to any incidents which might arise.

In total, August Storck KG actively worked with about 3,000 suppliers in the year under review, 300 of which were new. The majority of suppliers come from Europe, two thirds from Germany. More than 90% of technical materials, services and packaging materials are purchased in Germany and almost 100% in Europe. While 93% of Condetta's suppliers come from the EU (of which about two thirds are from Germany), Waffel Löser works with

100% suppliers from the EU. Almost 97% of these are from Germany.

### PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

As an international food producer with complex supply chains, we are aware that our activities are also associated with the risk that human rights and environmental standards might be jeopardised or even violated within the supply chain. We want to ensure that human rights and environmental standards are respected. We, therefore, aim to recognise such risks at an early stage, prevent violations and respond appropriately in the event of a violation.

In the year under review, we established a comprehensive risk management system for product groups and suppliers. It is based on a risk analysis that we conduct to honour our due diligence obligations. We use an analysis tool to determine the human rights and environmental risks of our business activities as relevant to business relationships with direct suppliers. The result of this

analysis determines how we deal with the supplier and the measures required: The higher a supplier's risk assessment, the more far-reaching the requirements and checks. For example, these checks include social audits, which we conduct depending on the risk. Third-party social audits are also used, such as the SMETA audit by Sedex, an international platform for social and environmental sustainability. The results are reviewed, potential non-conformities from the audits are assessed and appropriate measures are requested from the suppliers.

Management members are responsible for implementing the standards set out in our management handbook. In addition, a human rights officer has been appointed as a central and overarching authority to monitor risk management for honouring human rights due diligence obligations throughout the company, ensure compliance with obligations and targets and report regularly and as required to the management.

*Cocoa is one of Storck's key raw materials.*





# 95%

### OF THE COCOA PURCHASED

in the year under review was certified or verified in accordance with sustainability standards.

The purchasing department plays a special role in minimising human rights risks and environmental risks in our supply chain. It is responsible for selecting suppliers, organising business relationships and monitoring compliance with human rights and environmental standards among our direct suppliers. For this reason, we have also appointed a risk management officer overseeing of procurement and created a new department within purchasing during the period under review as a central unit for the implementation of the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG). Storck has prepared a detailed LkSG report for the 2023 year under review.

### KEY RAW MATERIALS

Sustainable procurement is of great importance for our raw material purchasing. Suppliers are ranked according to documented sustainability criteria which exert a risk-based influence on purchasing decisions. All raw material suppliers are subject to a compulsory review process in which the quality of the products and social aspects are assessed.

In the year under review, we required about 480,000 tonnes of agricultural raw materials and packaging materials (see [page 55](#)) for production. The total quantity of materials that we use to manufacture and package our products also includes auxiliary and operating materials. However, these only account for less than 0.1% of total raw material purchases. About 96% of the total purchasing volume of these raw materials and packaging materials are renewable, renewable raw materials or materials based on renewable raw materials.

### REPORTING SYSTEM: [STORCK.INTEGRIITYLINE.COM](https://www.storck.com/integrityline)

We have put in place a digital reporting system via which information about violations of human rights or environmental obligations can be communicated in a low-threshold and confidential manner. The reporting system is open to anyone who becomes aware of such a violation in our own business area or in our supply chain or has a reasonable suspicion of such a violation.

### DEFORESTATION

Abusive deforestation and the destruction of other important ecosystems should be stopped.

Our goal: In 2025, 100% of the cocoa we source will be deforestation-free in accordance with the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

We are able to procure many of the key raw materials required for the production of our products in Germany or in the European Union in accordance with European standards. This largely applies to sugar and syrups, dairy products, eggs and starch. In total, more than 80% of all raw materials came from the EU in the period under review.

Flours are the main raw materials used by Waffelfabrik Löser. They account for more than 90% of raw material purchases and are sourced exclusively and directly from mills in Germany.

### Cocoa

Cocoa is a key raw material for Storck as a chocolate manufacturer. We use cocoa from growing regions in Africa, South and Central America. In these countries, cocoa cultivation can pose risks in respect of human rights. We, therefore, use suppliers with their own sustainability programmes, in particular for cocoa. For about 62% of our cocoa purchasing volume, we source the raw material from European suppliers who obtain their goods from cooperatives and the farmers organised there or from an intermediary in the country of origin. Another important supplier is the company RISTOKCACAO from Ecuador that Storck operates jointly with a partner.

We continually work to achieve full traceability. For example, the cocoa supply chain in the West African producing countries has been converted to traceable cocoa. Our goal is for 100% of cocoa beans to be traceable back to a polygonally mapped farm by the end of 2030. The individual quantities of cocoa purchased can then be traced back to the cooperative of origin.

## SUPPLY CHAIN



**Agricultural raw materials** make up by far the largest part of our total purchasing volume. Cocoa is one of the key raw materials.



In 2023, we have achieved 100 % of this target for West Africa and 75 % worldwide. To that end, we have supported corresponding projects with cooperatives at the origin stage.

### Certified cocoa

We are increasingly sourcing cocoa that is certified or independently verified according to recognised sustainability standards. The certification honours cocoa farming conducted in a socially responsible and environmentally friendly manner. Social abuses such as child labour are prohibited. We have set ourselves the goal of, by 2030, only sourcing cocoa that is certified in accordance with the two sustainability standards Rainforest Alliance or Fairtrade or that has been independently verified according to third-party audits whose content is based on the requirements of the international standards. In the year

under review, more than 95% of the cocoa we purchased was already certified or verified accordingly. In addition, we achieved our interim goal of purchasing 100% certified or verified cocoa and cocoa products from Africa.

### Own cocoa farms

Since 2015, Storck has been working with a local partner to grow its own cocoa in the Dominican Republic. Here, the farm La Margarita with 23 hectares was initially established on pastureland, followed later by La Magdalena with about 1,600 hectares. Cocoa plants and shade trees were planted on suitable areas following appropriate soil cultivation. In total, this entails more than 1.4 million trees. The farms, which are audited in accordance with the Sedex social standard and regularly inspected, permanently employ 46 people.

About one fifth of the raw cocoa required is supplied by RISTOKCACAO from Ecuador, a company that Storck has been operating with a local partner since 2009. The RISTOKCACAO fermentation centre is located in the middle of the cocoa-growing region and is used for further processing in the form of qualified fermentation and drying as well as for advising supplying farmers. Here, about 70 employees process the freshly harvested, traceable fine-flavoured cocoa, which is supplied directly from farms in the surrounding area. The criteria of the SA8000 social standard are also applied here.

As part of the fermentation and drying process, research is conducted into how the flavour and quality of cocoa beans can be further improved by making changes to key processing steps.



**In regular training sessions,** RISTOKCACAO specialists advise farmers on practical issues relating to cocoa cultivation.

**The cocoa beans are processed in the drying and fermentation buildings** before being transported to Germany.

In addition, ten agricultural specialists work in the field. They advise the cocoa farmers on their farms on good agricultural practices, soil management and fertilisation, social and environmental issues, as well as certification and the establishment of farmer cooperatives.

RISTOKCACAO and about 1,950 farmers who now supply the company are certified in accordance with the Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade standards. Premiums paid for certified cocoa are payments made to the individual farmers in addition to the actual cocoa price. They can invest the premiums directly in their own cultivation or in the infrastructure of cooperatives.

Even if setting up our own farms entails a high level of investment at the outset, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages: We can better influence both the quality of our own cocoa and the ecological and social conditions on location. It is also important to strengthen the security of supply by having our own supply chain.

### Cooperation projects at the origin stage

We support various projects in African countries of origin of cocoa via cooperation with direct suppliers. These partnerships and collaborations enable us to implement projects in countries where we are not active ourselves. Activities focus, in particular, on combating and preventing child labour. The central challenge of the complex supply chain stages can be handled more effectively by local project partners. We have set ourselves the goal of supporting the introduction of CLMRS (Child Labour Monitoring & Remediation System) in all our projects by 2030. The systems are aimed at preventing, analysing and avoiding child labour cases.

We conduct projects with partners in the cocoa's countries of origin, which have different focuses: In Ghana, Storck purchases cocoa from a cooperative via a supplier at a price that includes additional premiums as well as reserves to finance projects for the village community. These reserves are linked to the realisation of social projects in health and education. For example, the funds have contributed to the construction of three local primary schools, the third of which was officially opened during the reporting period. Drinking water wells and sanitary facilities have also been built with the help of the premiums.

Another building block in the support of local cocoa farmers and cooperatives is the promotion of projects in Côte d'Ivoire with the Climate-Smart Agriculture approach

for the sustainable reorganisation of agricultural systems. The main objectives here are

- **A sustainable increase** in agricultural productivity and the income of farming families from the cultivation of crops
- **Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions**
- **Strengthening the resilience** of food systems to climate change

By purchasing cocoa beans from various cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire, we are helping to empower smallholder farmers. These funds are used to organise training courses, provide tools and support social projects in the communities. Storck also promotes measures for biodiversity, forest protection, use of fertilisers and

### PRO-PLANTEURS PROJECT



We are involved in the implementation of the PRO-PLANTEURS sustainability project in Côte d'Ivoire with the German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa. The project was initiated in 2015 with the Ivorian government to improve the living conditions of cocoa farmers and their families and increase their income. About 30,000 family farms and cooperatives are being professionalised via the project. The project focuses on practical educational work for sustainable

cultivation practices and the further development of farmer cooperatives to reinforce the farmers' organisation and skills. In this respect, effective training is provided on resource-friendly cocoa farming, economic management as well as improving the farmers' own diet. Other local partners are well-known organisations with many years of experience in development work. PRO-PLANTEURS is also involved in conducting scientific studies on the specific situation and needs of farmers. The project currently focuses on supporting cocoa farmers to secure a living income.



**100%**

**OF OUR PALM OIL REQUIREMENTS**

have been certified in accordance with the RSPO standard since 2015.

**Palm oil**

Palm oil is an important raw material for food production. We do not need palm oil for our chocolate itself, but for its fillings, for example. For us, it is important that social and ecological aspects be taken into account when growing oil palms and harvesting the fruit, and that slash-and-burn farming and social abuses on plantations be prevented.

Storck has been using palm oil that is certified in accordance with the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) standard since 2011. In 2012, Storck itself received RSPO certification as a company. The criteria include human rights and environmental issues such as biodiversity, pesticide use and peatland conservation. As an RSPO member, Storck has committed publicly to increasing the volume of RSPO-certified palm oil each year and to using only sustainably produced palm oil from 2015 onwards. We have managed to comply with this voluntary obligation. Our suppliers are also scrutinised by RSPO based on ecological and social criteria. There have not been any relevant negative results for any of these suppliers.

We have been supporting small farmers in Central America for about five years as part of a project in which farmers receive training and are introduced to certification standards, for example. The project aims to enable Latin American palm oil producers to sustainably produce palm oil.



*In Ghana, three primary schools have now been built with the help of premium funds.*

application of agroforestry systems. We have set ourselves the goal of establishing agroforestry systems in 100% of our cocoa projects in Africa by the end of 2030 in collaboration with local cooperatives and farmers.

Storck collaborates with the Federal Association of the German Confectionery Industry (BDSI) in numerous activities to improve working conditions in the cocoa-growing regions. Compared to individual activities on their own, this harmonised approach via sector associations and large networks featuring

parties from supply chains, government and NGOs provides greater opportunities to improve the working and living conditions in these farming regions in a sustainable manner. For example, Storck is one of the initiative partners of the Sustainable Cocoa Forum, in which the German government, companies in the confectionery industry and food trade, standard-setting associations (e.g. Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade) and non-governmental organisations work together to promote sustainability in cocoa cultivation and improve working and living conditions.

### Hazelnuts

Hazelnuts are an important raw material for Storck. Good nut quality and the way they are farmed, when considered from an agricultural, ecological and social perspective, are essential. We largely source hazelnut kernels from farms in Turkey, the world's largest producing country. We have also set up our own cultivation facility in Chile. This secures the supply of this important raw material and increases our influence on sustainable cultivation. We perform the roasting step, which is important for quality, at our own factory.

Turkey is a signatory to the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions on forced labour and the worst forms of child labour. Child labour is prohibited in Turkey. Schooling is compulsory until the age of 15 – working is prohibited up to this age. Nevertheless, there is a structural risk in the Black Sea regions where the hazelnuts are grown.

Storck does not tolerate child labour. We obtain our nuts from contractual partners who undertake to supply specific quality levels and comply with defined social standards. In recent years, we have also focussed on relationships with upstream suppliers to pass on the high quality standards and social requirements in the supply chain. All of the Storck Group's hazelnut suppliers have now undergone a SMETA audit at their production locations, which was passed without any anomalies. This audit, conducted by Sedex, reviews companies worldwide for compliance with human rights and environmental requirements. In addition, we conduct social audits of our suppliers ourselves as part of regular inspections in accordance with the SA8000 standard.

### ELIMINATION OF THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR IN SEASONAL AGRICULTURE IN HAZELNUT HARVESTING IN TURKEY

The European confectionery association CAOBISCO and companies in the confectionery industry are implementing a large-scale project against child labour with the International Labour Organization (ILO). This project, which has been running for 13 years, aims to support migrant workers and their families in such a way that their children's education is promoted and child labour is prevented. Storck's support was reconfirmed in the year under review for a further three years. The many years of relevant financial support enable the project to be implemented in the regions of Ordu, Düzce, Sakarya and Sanliurfa on the Black Sea coast. Teachers and social workers provide school lessons, offer sports and play programmes, provide individual counselling and impart knowledge on hygiene, health and social aspects. In addition, the responsibility of farmers and foremen on farms is strengthened. The experience gained is to be incorporated as a best-practice model into the Turkish government's preventive measures against child labour on a permanent basis.

In Chile, Storck has worked hard to establish its own additional supply chain. Four plantations with about 840,000 hazelnut bushes ensure a harvest that is seasonally delayed compared to Turkey, therefore ensuring a better supply throughout the year.

From commercial employees and agricultural engineers to irrigation specialists and agricultural workers, 74 employees are responsible for the management and administration of the farms. Agricultural managers from Storck supervise the local employees, plant management, harvest planning and export processes.

#### Other key raw materials

We source almost 100% of our key raw material, sugar, as beet sugar from the EU. Of this, 90% is from Germany, with the remainder coming from the Netherlands, France and Poland. The sugar beets are purchased from local beet farmers in the region via our suppliers. Sugar beet production is conducted un-

der contract farming arrangements subject to high quality standards. Our sugar suppliers are members of the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) or Sedex sustainability platforms and are committed to sustainability – particularly with regard to the use of fertilisers, protection of ground and surface water, preservation of soil quality and biodiversity, reduction of storage losses and reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. During sugar production, we ensure that the beet is fully utilised.

Storck processes milk products for numerous confectionery products. 94% of the milk used comes from Germany, with the remainder coming from France and the Netherlands. This regional sourcing ensures that the raw material milk is at all times delivered fresh and in high quality for processing in the dairy. Our suppliers meet the high legal requirements in the respective countries and also pursue their own sustainability programmes.



# Responsibility for the environment

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Our business activities are inextricably linked to the responsible use of nature, energy, water and waste. We continually invest in building technology and modern facilities and optimise processes on our way to producing confectionery in the most environmentally friendly manner possible.

## **CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Storck is a confectionery company with an extremely high level of vertical integration: We produce our own chocolates starting from the cocoa bean, we roast our own nuts and almonds, and we make our own fillings for chocolate specialities at our locations. Our speciality

sweets are produced entirely within our company, from cooking the raw mass to moulding or embossing. Packaging and parts of the downstream value chain, such as storage and logistics, are also integrated in our production locations. For this reason, we need appropriate space and energy for production, storage and office buildings. We had the

foresight to acquire future-proof areas even when these locations were being set up.

At Storck, we consciously show consideration for nature and, in particular, for protected habitats: According to the “World Database on Protected Areas”, none of our locations includes or

affects protected areas or areas with high biodiversity.

Our largest location in Halle (Westphalia) is about 44 hectares in size. It is located near protected areas and borders on areas with high biodiversity. Storck ensures that there is no direct impact on these areas as a result of commercial operations. There are no threatened animal or vegetable species on the Red List of Threatened Species of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).

Storck owns a large forest area totaling about 122 hectares at the Halle location. The company's own forestry department manages the forest area properly and, therefore, contributes to the preservation of the existing flora and fauna as well as biodiversity. Within these forest areas, there is a section of about 13 hectares that is part of the "Tatenhauser Wald bei Halle" protected area and fulfils the European Union's Fauna-Flora-Habitat Directive (FFH Directive). The protected area was only designated as such many years after the location was developed and is also separated geographically from the plant location by a federal motorway.

In the course of the motorway construction, a wildlife overpass was built as a crossing aid for bats and birds worthy of protection. This corridor borders on our plant location that has existed for many decades. By involving the relevant authorities, the public and nature conservation organisations, we were able to define measures to prevent possible indirect influences of our company on the function of the overpass. Storck has implemented protective measures, such as the avoidance of light emissions, the creation of natural green strips and the preservation of a flight corridor in a neighbouring wooded area. Regular monitoring will also ensure functionality in the future.

The Ruthebach flows across the factory premises at the Halle location. Storck ensures that no waste water or other harmful substances enter the stream and has adopted extensive water protection measures. Appropriate water barriers are in place for hazardous situations such as the inflow of extinguishing water. Furthermore, the plant fire service personnel are trained in water protection.

The Laibach flows directly next to the plant location and was given a new stream bed and lengthened in the course of Storck's expansion in 2022. The comprehensive ecological enhancement of the stream was part of the construction compensation measures, which also included new plantings in the local area surrounding the location.

At our Thuringia location in Ohrdruf, the plant site, which is far removed from

protected areas, covers an area of 38 hectares. About 1,500 trees and 500 shrubs of native species are planted on about 75,000 m<sup>2</sup> of extensively maintained lawns. Due to the location of the Ohrdruf factory premises in an industrial estate, there is no detrimental industrial impact on the surrounding nature.

The Waffel Löser location in Taunusstein is 3.5 hectares in size and borders on a wooded area that is not affected by Storck's operations. Our factory location in Berlin is also 3.5 hectares in size. It is urban in character and does not border directly on woodland or water areas.

Overall, Storck's business activities are not known to have any significant impact on the biodiversity of neighbouring forest areas, the FFH conservation area in Halle or surface waters.

***The renaturalisation measures have significantly increased the ecological value of the Laibach in Halle as a habitat for plants and animals.***



**THE STORK FOUNDATION**

The Storck family’s foundation “The Stork Foundation – Storks for our Children” has been committed to the sustainable protection and improvement of stork habitats for more than 30 years. In the 1990s, the foundation, therefore, began acquiring fallow land in the Drömling region on the border between Lower Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt and renaturalising it so that storks can find good living conditions here. Results are positive: the number of breeding pairs has doubled to almost 60. The Drömling region was declared one of the 17 UNESCO biosphere reserves in Germany in 2023. The Sudewiesen foundation project in the Elbe floodplain in the district of Lüneburg has also been in existence since 1994. Today, the semi-open heath and pools additionally form a pasture for horses and cattle. The animals keep the areas open and, therefore, create an ideal habitat for storks. Artificial pools provide a habitat for insects and amphibians and food for the storks.



**In the Drömling and Sudewiesen project regions** the stork population has grown significantly.

In the meantime, the Stork Foundation has financed more than 1,000 hectares of land in the Sudewiesen and Drömling Nature Park for nature conservation and established numerous wet meadows.

**ENERGY**

The use of energy and the associated emissions pose challenges for Storck as a manufacturing company. We are aware that dwindling resources, climate and environmental changes and rising energy prices require appropriate measures. For Storck, this means that we aim to increase efficiency to reduce emissions in real terms. With this goal in mind, our energy experts are working hard to make energy utilisation more resource-efficient and regenerative.

**Energy management**

Back in 2012, we established a certified energy management system at Storck in accordance with the ISO 50001 standard, which was reconfirmed by an external independent auditing organisation in the current reporting period. With our energy policy, we are committed to cross-location energy management and the efficient use of energy, which is constantly optimised.

This energy policy includes careful analyses and detailed monitoring, precise investigations into possible energy-saving measures, the best possible optimisation of processes and the promotion of technical innovations. Since 2012 alone, we have invested over 45 million euros in more than 500 measures to reduce energy consumption, improve energy efficiency and utilise renewable energies.

One of the main pillars of our energy strategy is cross-location energy management, which is a permanent fixture in the company. A thirteen-strong energy team and an energy manager are responsible, alongside specialist departments, for monitoring and controlling energy consumption and implementing efficiency measures.

**COMPANY-OWNED FOREST AREAS**



Storck contributes to the binding of CO<sub>2</sub>e by maintaining its own mixed forest areas in the direct vicinity of our largest production location in Halle: Various native tree species such as beech, oak, maple, spruce and pine form a forest area of about 120 hectares.

**Employees from the company’s own forestry department** ensure that the forest areas are maintained properly and sustainably.



# > 500

### OPTIMISATION MEASURES

have been successfully implemented to increase energy efficiency and in-house generation since 2012.

# 37%

### OF OUR ELECTRICITY REQUIREMENT

was covered by self-generated electricity in the year under review.



Energy management at Storck is certified in accordance with the ISO 50001 standard.

Our energy management experts measure and document energy consumption at set intervals. Energy data are documented in a central database for continuous consumption monitoring. This energy data forms a solid basis on which to identify and utilise potential for reducing energy consumption and therefore sustainably increasing energy efficiency.

In that respect, we also actively involve our employees: We want to raise their awareness of the careful use of energy. For this reason, Storck organises training courses on energy management for all employees. In addition, Storck uses a suggestion scheme to motivate employees to reflect on processes in all areas of the company and make specific recommendations for optimisation.

### Energy targets

At Storck, we undertake a large proportion of the production steps ourselves and therefore require significantly more energy than would be the case if we purchased finished primary products. This makes our efforts to identify and utilise potential savings all the greater. In that respect, our targets are:

- By 2030, primary energy consumption from fossil fuels is to be reduced by at least 45% per tonne of finished goods compared to the base year 2008. In the period under review, we were able to increase this reduction from 13% to 25%.
- By 2030, more than 50% of electricity consumption is to be covered by self-generated electricity. At the end of the year under review, the proportion of electricity generated in house was 37%.
- The use of renewable energies, such as photovoltaic systems, is increasing and is to be further expanded.

For the monitoring of reduction targets, we refer to the year 2008 to compare the key performance indicators over time. In the year under review, we increased the target for primary energy consumption from 30% to 45%. Our successful energy management and the use of modern technologies have enabled us to set a more ambitious reduction target.

### Energy consumption

To compare the energy consumption for the changing production volume over time, we present consumption in relation to the production volume of the corresponding year. An intensity figure, which shows the energy consumed in MWh per tonne of finished goods, applies as a reference value for our energy consumption.

During the period under review, we were able to continually reduce this energy intensity indicator, which shows Storck's total energy consumption.



**On the factory premises in Ohrdruf**, Storck has installed a photovoltaic system with an area of more than 16,000 square metres.

WHAT DO WE NEED ENERGY FOR?



**MACHINES AND SYSTEMS**

More than a third of our electricity requirements are accounted for by the continuous operation of machines and systems. We also require thermal energy for manufacturing processes, cooking, roasting and conching.



**AIR CONDITIONING AND REFRIGERATION**

Year-round air conditioning of our production halls and warehouses is essential. The quality of sugar confectionery and chocolate products is heavily dependent on climatic conditions. Thanks to the right air conditioning, we prevent any impairment in the quality of our products. We use both electrical and thermal energy for cooling and heating.



**COMPRESSED AIR**

We require compressed air in almost all areas of our company: From the delivery of raw materials to production and the packaging of goods. The generation of compressed air is associated with a high demand for electrical energy.

IMPLEMENTED MEASURES

Storck's energy efficiency measures are diverse and affect various areas, particularly in production. Specific information from the workforce and the ongoing analysis of consumption figures reveal potential savings from which we derive suitable measures. Examples of measures implemented in the reporting period include:

- Demand-optimised control of machines and systems – for example on agitators, conveyor belts and cooling units
- Installation of modern pressure control valves and demand-optimised reduction of pressure levels
- Use of energy-saving LED lighting
- Insulation measures on pipework within production
- Reduction of domestic hot water – for example by replacing cleaning nozzles

In 2023, our total energy consumption was 1.26 MWh per tonne of finished goods. It should be noted that previous energy consumption was higher during the corona virus pandemic in 2020 and 2021 due to changes in the settings of air conditioning systems to optimise the supply of outside air and protect against infection.

Depending on the focus of production, we require different energy sources at our plant locations. As part of our continual monitoring, we record and analyse our demand for individual energy sources in order to precisely identify potential savings.

Natural gas is currently the most relevant energy source for our production. It is primarily used to generate electricity and heat. We cover part of our electricity requirements with self-generated electricity, and the rest is purchased on the electricity market. Liquid fossil fuels play a subordinate role within our company: We need diesel and super fuels for transport at our operating locations, and we use heating oil to a very limited extent to generate heat.

**Energy efficiency**

Energy efficiency measures allowed us to save more than 12,300 MWh of electrical energy and more than 760 MWh of natural gas in the period under review. This was achieved via continual optimisation in all areas of our company, for example by way of technical innovations. The starting point for effective efficiency measures is, at all times, information from employees directly at the production facilities, who look for potential savings in their daily work.

In the period under review, activities focussed, in particular, on investments in improved cooling generation and distribution at the Berlin, Halle and Ohrdruf locations. Providing cooling for air conditioning in production halls and warehouses using conventional



**3,800**

**MW-HOURS OF ENERGY**

can be saved annually by commissioning a second ammonia refrigeration system at the Ohrdruf location.

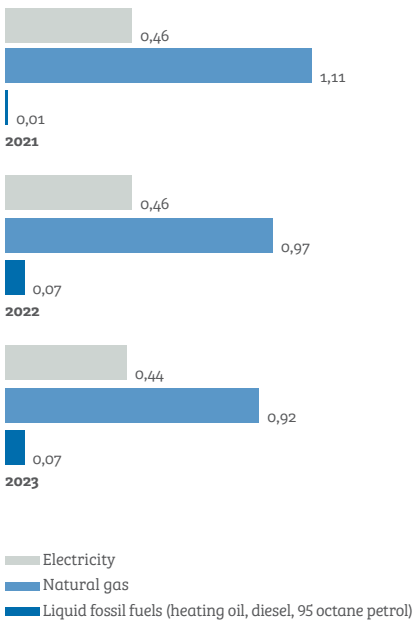
**TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION**

in MWh/t of finished goods



**PRINCIPAL ENERGY SOURCES**

in MWh/t of finished goods



Since as early as 2011, Storck has been using hybrid recoolers, which require about 35% less energy than alternative systems.

refrigeration systems requires a large amount of electrical energy.

At our production locations, several relatively small units used to generate the cooling for each building directly at the individual production halls. We are increasingly replacing this decentralised refrigeration with larger, centralised refrigeration systems. This gives Storck’s refrigeration system an efficient and sustainable structure.

In the search for efficient and environmentally friendly solutions, we have weighed up various technologies: Refrigeration systems based on ammonia or propane gas are more cost-intensive than a standard refrigeration system based on Freon, but they achieve higher levels of efficiency. Investments in centralised refrigeration systems thus produce up to 60% greater energy efficiency than in the use of many smaller refrigeration units.

In the period under review, we therefore commissioned a second ammonia-based centralised refrigeration system at the

Ohrdruf location. The new system will allow us to achieve annual energy savings of more than 3,800 MWh. In addition, the natural refrigerant ammonia has a global warming potential of 0 and therefore does not contribute to the greenhouse effect or damage the ozone layer.

**Own power generation**

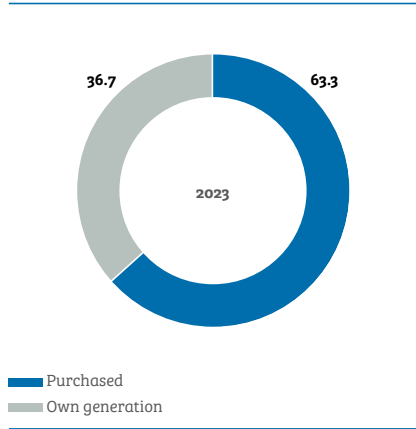
We see the expansion of in-house electricity not only as a chance to realise efficiency potential, but also as an opportunity to strengthen our resilience in this way: Especially in times of energy shortages and sensitive supply chains, having our own reliable energy supply is important for our company.

We are currently working towards our target of covering half of our electricity consumption with self-generated electricity by 2030 with the help of two different technologies:

- **Combined heat and power:** Combined heat and power is used to generate mechanical energy and usable heat at the same time. This principle ensures a high level of efficiency and is used at Storck in its own combined heat and power plants and also with a gas turbine at the Halle location.
- **Photovoltaics:** Photovoltaics utilise solar energy by converting the sun's radiation – directly and without CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions – into electrical energy. We have installed photovoltaic systems to generate electricity at our production locations in Halle and Ohrdruf. Plants are being planned for Berlin and Taunusstein.

By using and expanding these technologies, we generated almost 70,000 MWh of our own electricity each year in 2022 and 2023, which is more than 2,000 MWh than in 2021. The share of self-generated electricity in total consumption was just under 37% in 2023.

**ELECTRICITY SOURCES** in %



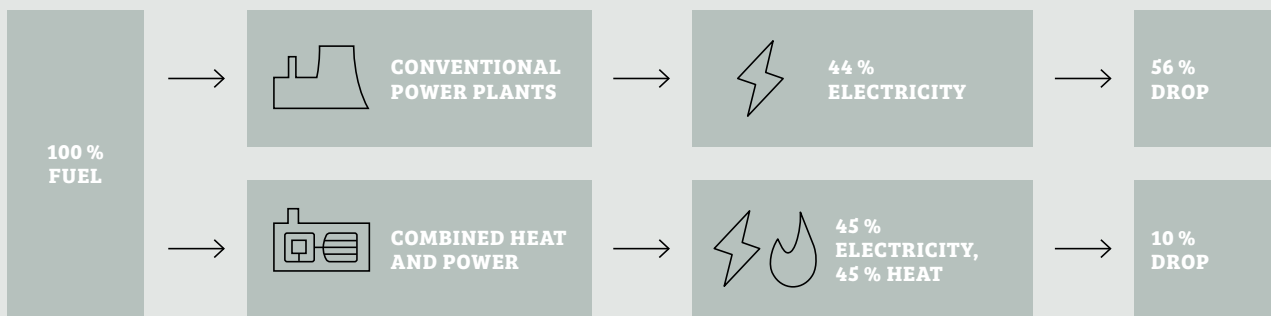
We are aware of the challenge that future growth will produce an increased demand for energy. This makes our goal of covering 50% of this demand with self-generated electricity in the future all the more ambitious. We are, therefore, already investing in the expansion of our own electricity generation: For example, three additional photovoltaic systems will be connected to the grid at the Halle location alone by 2025 and will generate about 900 MWh of electricity each year.

We are also planning to build two combined heat and power plants there to generate our own electricity and heat. One of these CHP plants will be fuelled in part by sewage gas, which we generate in our own wastewater treatment process (see □ page 54). We are, therefore, replacing the fossil fuel natural gas with a self-generated resource.

Our energy experts are constantly examining further possibilities for environmentally friendly energy generation. For example, they are investigating whether or not other areas and building roofs meet the structural requirements for generating energy using solar systems.

We are also pressing ahead with plans for the use of heat pumps, by way of which we can recover the waste heat generated during cooling processes at all locations and utilise it in production.

**BETTER ENERGY UTILISATION VIA COGENERATION**



Source: [www.umweltbundesamt.de](http://www.umweltbundesamt.de)

## ENVIRONMENT



**Modern ammonia refrigeration systems** are in use at the Berlin, Halle and Ohrdruf locations.

**Combined heat and power plants** achieve high levels of efficiency in energy utilisation.

**The generated solar power** is used directly at the locations in production and administration.



**EMISSIONS**

Storck calculates the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG emissions) of its business activities annually and has been verified in accordance with the ISO 14064-1 standard since 2022 as part of such a calculation. The balance sheet for the company-related carbon footprint covers the direct and indirect emission sources Scope 1, 2 and 3:

- Scope 1: Direct emissions
- Scope 2: Indirect emissions from the purchase of energy
- Scope 3: indirect emissions along the value chain

On this basis, the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint can be analysed in order to reach a fact-based assessment of the operational impact. A meaningful assessment of the CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions is a prerequisite for suitable climate protection measures.

We use emission factors from scientific databases to calculate the GHG balance within the three scopes. We state greenhouse gas emissions in carbon dioxide equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e).

**Energy-related emissions**

We have set ourselves the goal of continually reducing energy-related GHG emissions (Scope 1 and 2) within our company:

By 2030, we aim to reduce energy-related CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions per tonne of finished goods by 50% compared to the base year 2008. In the year under review, we increased our CO<sub>2</sub>e reduction target from 35% to 50%.

**VERIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ISO 14064-1**



In 2023, the accounting of GHG emissions was again audited externally and verified in accordance with the requirements of ISO 14064-1.

**GHG EMISSIONS IN SCOPES 1–3**

in t CO<sub>2</sub>e/t of finished goods for 2023



\* Scope 1: Direct energy-related emissions  
Calculation of emissions from direct energy consumption based on the "Central Emissions System" from Germany's Federal Environment Agency

\*\* Scope 2: Indirect energy-related emissions  
Calculation of indirect emissions from electricity consumption based on the provisional CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent electricity for 2022 (0.434 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e/kWh) from the German electricity mix, Federal Environment Agency.

\*\*\* Scope 3: Emissions according to the "Cradle-to-gate" approach  
The key figure was calculated taking into account the land use change for cocoa. Without taking the land use change into account, the figure for 2023 is 3.47 t CO<sub>2</sub>e / t finished goods.  
Calculation of emissions is based on factors from the ecoinvent, Probas, Gemis and DEFRA databases. If no factors were available in the databases, values were modelled.

Sources:  
**For natural gas, heating oil and diesel:** "Development of the specific carbon dioxide emissions of the German electricity mix in the years 1990 to 2022" 20/2023; Annex 3: Emission factors according to ZS; as at 20/2023  
**For electricity:** "Development of the specific carbon dioxide emissions of the German electricity mix in the years 1990 to 2022" 20/2023; Table 1: Rounded initial values and calculation result: carbon dioxide emissions from electricity generation, electricity consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emission factor of electricity; as of 4 April 2023; 20/2023  
**For petrol:** Official Journal of the European Union L 181 Legislation 55th year dated 12 July 2012; page L181/93

With regard to GHG emissions, we use an intensity quotient to compare emissions over time. To that end, we set the emissions in relation to the actual production volume of the corresponding year and therefore obtain a meaningful comparative value. For energy-related emissions in 2023, this value is 0.33 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e/tonne of finished goods and is at a consistently low level. Since the base year 2008, we have reduced our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in Scope 1 and 2 by about 24%.

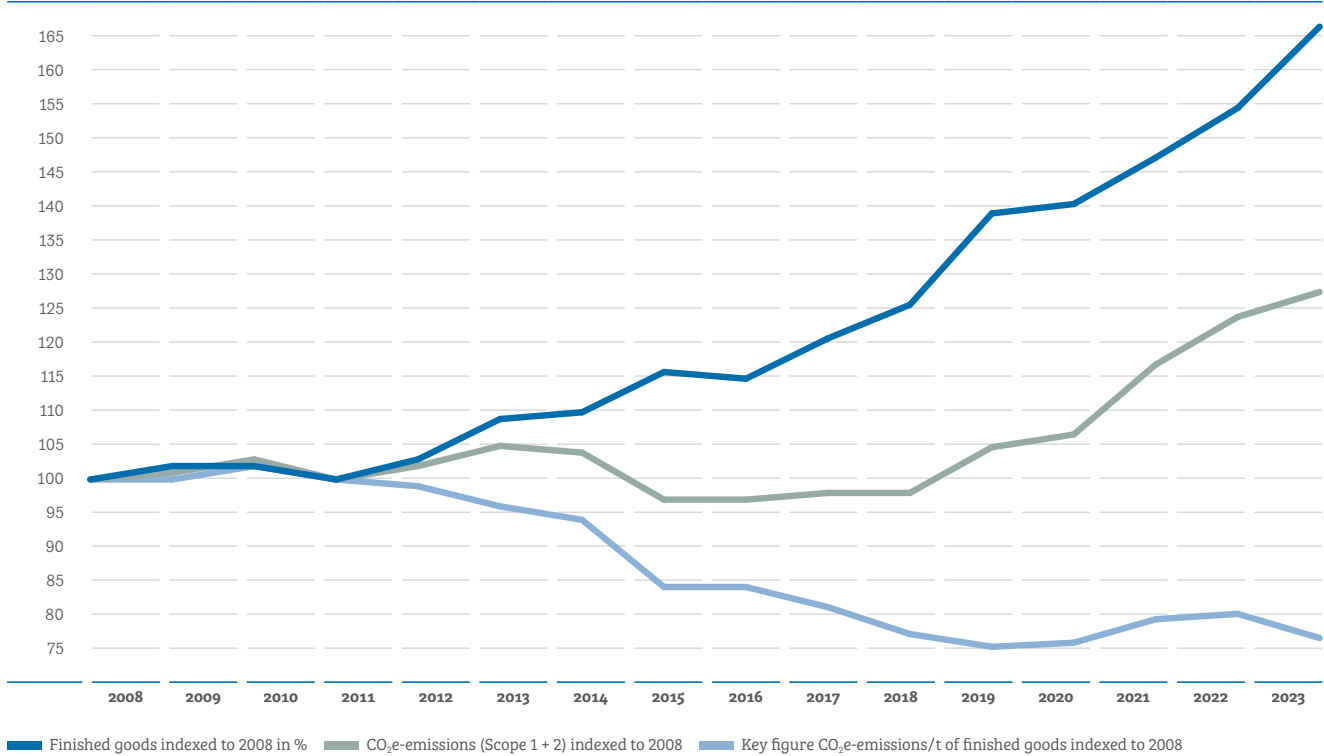
Absolute Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions have risen in recent years due to a sharp increase in production volumes as a result of positive demand for our products. With economic growth, it is particularly challenging to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in absolute terms. The systemic energy transition and the expansion of renewable energies cannot progress at the same speed – even though as a company and society as a whole we are constantly working on this. Many projects will only show their impact in a few years' time.

By way of the aforementioned investments in in-house electricity generation (see □ page 45), we want to reduce the need for fossil natural gas, which will have a direct impact on our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. Lower emissions will also result from the systematic modernisation of our production technology and energy generation facilities – such as the roasting plants, boiler houses and CHP units.

Storck has its plants regularly maintained and checked by independent testing institutes for other emissions, such as nitrogen and sulphur oxides, dust or unburnt hydrocarbons. All of the measured values are below the statutory limits. The checks again confirmed that the plant was operating properly in the period under review.

**ENERGY-RELATED GHG EMISSIONS**

Production volume and energy-related CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions (Scope 1 + 2) compared to 2008 in % (indexed)



**Scope -3 emissions**

Our accounting of Scope 3 emissions is based on the cradle-to-gate approach. This takes into account all emissions caused along the entire upstream value chain of our products until they are purchased or received.

Since 2022, we have had our direct, indirect, energy-related and other indirect emissions verified in accordance with the ISO standard 14064-1. An independent testing institute audits and confirms the verification of Storck’s corporate carbon footprint. We will continue this documentation process with a view to improvement, but also to identify further savings potential.

**ACCOUNTING BASIS**

The following categories form the basis for calculating Scope 3 accounting, provided they have been commissioned by Storck:

- Upstream transport/distribution of goods
- Downstream transport/distribution of goods
- Commuter business transport operations
- Business trips
- Procured goods and raw materials, including land use change\*
- Capital goods
- Utilisation of facilities
- Disposal of solid/liquid waste
- Use of other services (consulting, cleaning and maintenance etc.)

*\*Land use change is a value recognised for the change in land use from nature to agricultural use for economic activities.*



***The Halle logistics centre** is located on the factory premises in the immediate vicinity of the production facilities.*

***We use our own tractor units for internal transport operations** and to bring together the goods produced in the high-bay warehouse.*

### **TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS**

Transporting goods plays a central role along the entire supply chain. By increasing the efficiency of these transport processes, we are realising the great potential for reducing emissions.

We source the majority of our raw materials and packaging materials from Germany and other EU countries without utilising air transport. As in the case of deliveries, internal traffic flow

transport operations and the distribution of our finished confectionery are largely performed by lorry. We work with haulage companies that specialise in the temperature-controlled transport of foodstuffs and at all times keep their fleets up to date with the latest technology. They mainly use vehicles of the highest Euro 6 standard and have a nationwide distribution network.

Storck has its own vehicles for internal transport between the production halls and logistics centres. Their engines are throttled to a speed of 20 km/h to minimise environmental pollution and the risk of accidents.

We use our own cars primarily for sales and field service operations. In this context, it has been determined that new vehicles with modern, environmentally friendly engines and low energy con-

sumption will be regularly purchased. Electric vehicles are increasingly being purchased.

**Centralised logistics and precise planning**

Storck bundles the finished products from the three confectionery production locations in Berlin, Halle and Ohrdruf for dispatch in its own distribution warehouses. We operate these full-range warehouses directly at the factories in Halle and Ohrdruf. Storck has also acquired or rented additional logistics properties in the direct vicinity of the locations. This deliberately direct geographical connection to the production locations enables us to significantly reduce public goods transport and, therefore, the burden on the transport network.

Storck has developed customised software to ensure the most efficient transport possible, aiming for high vehicle capacity utilisation. In the year under review, we achieved an increased pallet utilisation rate for each truck of over 93% on average for transport operations between our production and storage facilities. We are therefore approaching our target of 95%.

In addition, we combine the delivery of our confectionery with the collection of raw materials and packaging material en route, thereby also increasing transport efficiency.

We have been loading lorries using the double-decker method since the 1980s: The loading space offers room for a total of 66 pallets on two levels. In addition, we are increasingly using long trailers to transport our relatively light confectionery by lorry, particularly on longer routes between our own production and storage facilities. Such lorries can be loaded with 72 pallets instead of 66. This allows us to reduce the number of journeys and effectively save CO<sub>2</sub>e. We aim to increase the portion

**COMBINED TRANSPORT OPERATIONS**

We are increasingly using combined transport to ship sea containers: Instead of being transported exclusively by lorry, the containers are transported from the production location to the port of loading by lorry, rail and barge. This combination of different modes of transport on selected routes enabled us to save around 480 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.



of transport using long trailers to 30% for these relocations. In the year under review, we have already achieved 25%, with more than 4,400 transfers using long trailers – and saved 115 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e in this manner.

**Dialogue and outlook**

With the help of these and other optimisation measures, we were able to keep CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions low compared to previous years, despite increasing production volumes and a greater variety of products. We are in constant dialogue with our logistics service providers and specialists from various industries and aim to further limit the negative effects of transport operations on our environment. To that end, we share experiences from past projects and discuss further optimisation options. These include improved insulation properties of refrigerated trailers and the use of emission-reducing fuels. Pilot projects in the field of alternative drive technologies are also at the centre of the exchange. For example, in the future we intend to use electric lorries for transport operations between our locations.

Close dialogue with service providers is not only relevant for us with regard to the technical potential of the vehicles. We also see this as an opportunity to actively involve another important group from the transport sector in achieving our goals: The lorry drivers, to whom our service providers provide incentives for an energy-saving driving style by way of training and bonus systems. At Storck, shower and washrooms as well as the in-house company restaurant are available to all drivers of our transport partners at the logistics centres.

95%

**PALLET UTILISATION**

is our target figure as an average for transport between our production and storage locations.

**PALLET UTILISATION**

on average for each lorry in %



2021  
2022  
2023

### WATER

Water is an indispensable resource for the production of our confectionery and a key product component. For example, sugar is boiled in water for the production of sweets until it produces the usable syrup. Water is also essential for rinsing and cleaning pipework and systems, for generating steam and cooling and for sanitary purposes.

As a food manufacturer, the water we use must comply with the German Drinking Water Ordinance. We use this pure water carefully, sparingly and responsibly. Saving water has been an integral part of our company's overall concept for years: To ensure efficient water use, we have developed customised measures based on regular measurements, documentation and analysis of the quantities of water taken and used. The use of rainwater or the reutilisation of waste water are not possible in production for hygiene reasons.

### Water withdrawal

We cover our water requirements with water from our own wells as well as water from municipal suppliers. In Halle and Berlin, we pump about three quarters of the water we require from our own wells. This in-house sourcing not only secures the majority of our own requirements, it also relieves the municipal supplier and, therefore, the wells that it operates for the water requirements of private households and other commercial consumers. We do not have our own wells at the Ohrdruf and Taunusstein locations. Here we only use water from the municipal suppliers.

**Inselbrunnen** is one of a total of seven wells at the Halle location.

### RESPONSIBLE IN-HOUSE WITHDRAWAL

The amount of water withdrawn from a total of eight of our own wells at our Berlin and Halle locations must not affect the groundwater table. At the Halle location, we ensure this by regularly determining the respective groundwater levels via an extensive network of monitoring wells with more than 60 measuring points – both automatically and also manually by our own technical specialists. We apply for a licence to use the wells at regular intervals. The necessary hydrogeological assessment is performed by an external hydrogeologist. Impacts on legally protected areas and habitats with high biodiversity can be safely ruled out.



**Our wells** are regularly checked for proper operation.



We do not draw water from areas with water stress. We do not use any surface water – including water from wetlands, rivers, lakes or seas. In the year under review, we were able to reduce the amount of water withdrawn per tonne of goods produced from 2.55 m<sup>3</sup> to 2.51 m<sup>3</sup>.

**Water consumption**

We measure not only water withdrawal, but also consumption through extensive monitoring within the plants. Usage locations, quantities and fluctuations are documented and analysed in detail with regard to potential savings.

Our effective water consumption (water extraction minus recycling) in the year under review was 0.43 m<sup>3</sup> per tonne of finished goods produced. This consumption is the result of the remaining water content in the product and evaporation at the production facilities.

**Water meters** are used to continuously monitor and document consumption.



We have been making targeted investments in more efficient technologies, which enabled us to further reduce water consumption per tonne of finished goods in the period under review: Based on close water monitoring, for example, an automatic system warns us as soon as more water is used in an area than is expected or usual. This means that technical defects can be quickly identified and rectified and water losses avoided.

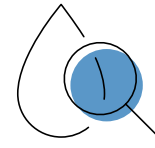
Analysing our monitoring data provides insights into where effective water-saving measures can be adopted. Technological progress always offers new opportunities for improvement: For example, our technical experts have continually modernised and optimised the water-intensive but necessary cleaning processes in recent years and decades. In plant cleaning, we rely on cleaning-in-place (CIP) processes, which are particularly efficient.

Most recently, we have been in a position to reduce water consumption in cooling processes in particular. The further commissioning of hybrid coolers, which consume up to 90% less water than conventional wet coolers, played a major role in this during the period under review. We have been using hybrid coolers at Storck since 2011. Since then, we have continued to invest in these modern systems at all plants.

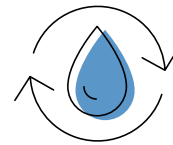
**Reuse**

As a result of the justifiably high hygiene regulations in the food industry, used water can only be treated and reused for production purposes to a limited extent.

We have developed strategies to reuse water several times for cooling and for the first steps in the cleaning of production facilities: Here, the water remains in the process for as long as possible and is reused several times.



**WATER CONSUMPTION =**  
water withdrawal minus water return



**90%**

**WATER SAVINGS**  
can be achieved with hybrid coolers compared to conventional systems.

**TOTAL WATER WITHDRAWAL**

in m<sup>3</sup>/t finished goods



**TOTAL WATER CONSUMPTION**

in m<sup>3</sup>/t finished goods



By means of a filtration system, Storck has succeeded in making process water from production usable again as cooling water. Initial tests have produced promising results following a development phase spanning several years. Recirculating treated water for cooling purposes has the potential to save about 15% of our total water use in the long term. Further technical measures are required to establish the complex process in the company.



**At the Halle location,** we purify the process waste water in our own plant.

**Water recirculation**

As part of our environmental management, we measure, review and document the quantity, quality and risks of wastewater. No problematic wastewater is produced from the water used for production. In general, no harmful substances are discharged in the company to protect people, soil and water.

In the 2023 year under review, we returned 83% of the water withdrawn to the natural or municipal water cycle. We treat the water in our own facilities before returning it to the water cycle. At the Halle location, 100% of the process wastewater is pumped into the company's own process water plant after pre-cleaning (flotation) to remove fats,

**WATERING GREEN SPACES**

While Storck can only reuse water in production to a limited extent, this is possible to a greater extent for the maintenance of outdoor facilities. For example, no fresh water is used to water the large green areas at the Halle location; instead, rainwater stored in a collection tank is used. For this purpose, we have invested in a system that distributes the water via a network of pipes to water the large lawns and borders and returns it to nature.

solids and phosphate. In this plant, the water is purified using anaerobic and aerobic technology and then channelled into a body of water. A water law permit to do so, which requires testing the water quality on a regular basis, has been granted.

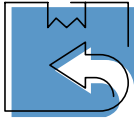
An annual report on the operation and the test results is prepared for the district water authority. We also commissioned a process water treatment plant at the Ohrdruf location in the year under review. This purifies the wastewater before it is channelled into the public sewage system, relieving the municipal sewage treatment plant.

We discharge cooling water at our production locations in Berlin and Ohrdruf mainly via the public sewerage system. At the Halle location, we channel all of the cooling water, with excess rainwater, into infiltration systems or return it to nature. For this purpose, the cooling water is analysed by an independently accredited laboratory in addition to the authorities.

At Storck, we also regularly review the quality of the excess cooling water and rainwater before it is returned. If the water quality does not meet the high quality requirements, it is fed into the municipal wastewater treatment plants via the sewerage system. No wastewater is reused by another company.

**WATER RECIRCULATION**

in %	2021	2022	2023
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>83</b>
of which surface water	57	57	58
of which water from third parties (e.g. wastewater treatment plants)	40	40	37
of which groundwater	3	3	5
of which seawater	0	0	0



**92.5%**

**OF OUR PACKAGING**

used in Germany in the year under review was recyclable.

**PACKAGING**

Packaging protects our freshly manufactured products. It ensures that quality and flavour are preserved, shelf life is guaranteed and hygiene and food law requirements are met. The packaging material must act as a reliable barrier so that moisture and flavours cannot escape from the inside, and neither oxygen nor UV light has a negative effect on the product from the outside. All of the packaging materials we use are suitable for direct and indirect contact with food. They comply with the regulations applicable in the European Union.

**Challenges and management**

Storck has established its own “Packaging Technology” department, which develops the optimum packaging for our requirements. Quality, safety and availability of materials as well as sustainability aspects must be guaranteed. The amount of material in the packaging should be as low as possible, and the proportion of recyclable packaging materials should be high.

However, measures to minimise or change materials pose a particular challenge in respect of food because packaging primarily serves to ensure product safety and protect quality: The respective material properties must be fundamentally suitable for the packaging of the food in question. Our packaging experts also have to consider



**Processability on the packaging machines** is an important factor that must be taken into account when deciding on product packaging.

logistics requirements, the consumer’s need for information and process capability on our packaging machines. Taking these complex interrelationships into account, we once again slightly reduced the amount of packaging material in relation to the finished goods produced from a previously low level during the period under review. We are aiming for a further reduction in the coming years and are already regularly reviewing the suitability of innovative packaging materials and packaging technologies.

**Packaging materials used**

We largely use cardboard, corrugated cardboard, plastics and composites as packaging for our confectionery, as well as small quantities of paper and aluminium. In the year under review, we used

213 kg of packaging material for each tonne of confectionery produced, which amounts to 21 g for 100 g of confectionery.

We use high-quality materials that are as thin and light as possible: plastic film for sales packaging is only 0.05 to 0.07 mm thick, while aluminium foil is between 0.007 mm and 0.018 mm thick. Technological progress is also enabling the use of ever thinner materials for cardboard packaging. Storck regularly tests the respective cartons with regard to the properties of the material as well as processing and optimisation possibilities on our systems.

In addition to the packaging materials for our confectionery, we use packaging materials for raw materials or semi-finished products. These materials accounted for less than 1.5% of the total packaging volume in the year under review. The paper, cardboard and plastic waste generated in this context is collected separately at the respective locations. Specialist waste disposal companies commissioned by us collect the waste separately and send it away for professional recycling.

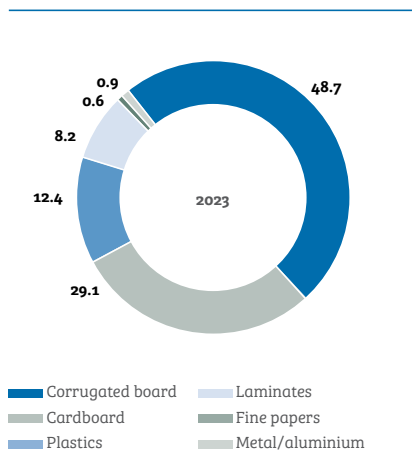
**Recycling capability**

Cardboard, corrugated cardboard, fine paper and aluminium are packaging materials with a very high recycling capability. At Storck, they account for the largest share of our packaging volume at just under 80%. In total, 92.5% of our packaging used in Germany was recyclable in the year under review. We also prioritise high recyclability for the plastic packaging we use. To increase recyclability, we changed the primary packaging of individual chocolate products during the period under review, for example. Instead of a composite material made of cardboard and aluminium, we use a pure aluminium wrap, which is much easier to recycle.

A basic prerequisite for successful recycling in practice is a well-organised collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure where packaging waste is generated. For example, the following applies to our confectionery packaging in Germany: All packaging materials for primary packaging in Germany are licensed by the dual system for household waste disposal and can be recycled via the collection system. This means that we meet the requirements of the German Packaging Act (VerpackG).

**PACKAGING MATERIALS**

USED in %



**Certified materials**

Wood-based packaging materials – paper, cardboard and corrugated cardboard – account for more than 78% of the packaging materials we use. Of these materials, almost 73% are certified according to the FSC and PEFC standards (systems for the certification of sustainable forestry). All corrugated cardboard packaging materials are now FSC-certified. The paper and cardboard materials used by Storck are sourced exclusively from suppliers that obtain their wood from sustainably managed forests.

**Use of recycled raw materials**

Currently, plastic, aluminium and paper materials are largely recycled mechanically. However, mechanically recycled materials cannot be used for confectionery packaging that comes into direct contact with food for hygiene and

**STRINGENT DEMANDS ON GOOD PACKAGING**

The choice of packaging material and its strength are fundamentally influenced by the high requirements in the food sector.



sensory reasons as well as due to the possible migration of undesirable substances. Therefore, as a precautionary measure for consumer health protection, we only use primary material for the direct packaging of our confectionery. Only this material meets the high statutory and quality requirements of the food industry.

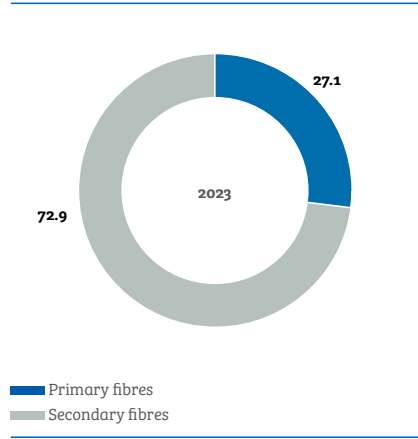
The recycling industry is currently working intensively on the further development and widespread implementation of chemical recycling. The ongoing development of this alternative recycling process could also enable the use of recyclates for packaging with direct food contact in the future. If this process proves to be reliable, we will review the use of such materials as product packaging.

Use of recycled materials is less problematic for transport packaging. This packaging has no direct contact with the product. At Storck, almost 50 % of all packaging is made of corrugated cardboard – an ideal transport material that can be easily recycled. A share of 73 % of corrugated cardboard comprises recycled secondary fibres. However, this share of recycled fibres cannot be increased indefinitely, because as the proportion increases, the stability of the cardboard boxes decreases, and the required technical parameters are no longer achieved.

**Reused materials**

Due to high hygiene requirements, using reused products in confectionery production is only possible to a limited extent. At Storck, we have developed a system that replaces the upper Euro pallet for covering a transport unit with a lighter, reusable, cover panel made of FSC-certified veneer plywood. These pallets, which have been produced specifically for this purpose, last twelve times longer than Euro pallets, only weigh around a quarter of a conventional pallet and save about 2,000 tonnes

**RECYCLING SHARE  
CORRUGATED CARDBOARD** in %



**CHEMICAL RECYCLING**

In chemical recycling, plastics are broken down into their individual monomers in a pyrolysis process and then reassembled into polymers, new identical plastics. The end result of this process is a highly pure material that would be suitable as a raw material for food packaging.

**REDUCTION IN STRETCH FILM CONSUMPTION**

In the Ohrdruf and Halle logistics centres, we were able to save a significant amount of stretch film by optimising the pre-stretch process: The film, which plays an important role in transport safety, is pre-stretched and, therefore, extended before the pallets are wrapped. This allows us to reduce the amount of film by up to 17%.

of transport weight each year. Furthermore, the space saved results in around 10 % higher utilisation of a pallet unit.

**Outlook**

Even though only about 3% of a product’s CO<sub>2</sub> footprint can be attributed to packaging, we will continue to use materials and energy responsibly in the future. That includes reducing the amount of packaging material as well as increasing the recycling rate. Composite materials pose a particular challenge in this respect: Although the combination of two different materials – such as paper and plastic – forms a good barrier, it is difficult or impossible to recycle. We, therefore, want to use mono-materials wherever possible, from which new materials that are largely identical to the original material can be produced in the recycling process.

Packaging made exclusively of paper, and which meets the requirements in respect of quality and product protection has not yet been sufficiently tested and is not yet available.

When the European Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) comes into force in 2030, all packaging materials used in the EU must be 100 % recyclable. In line with this regulation, we aim to make even the last small proportion of our packaging recyclable by 2030.



**In our own staff and factory outlets** we can also offer second-choice goods, thereby preventing food waste.

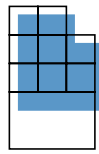
**WASTE**

Storck has put in place a strict waste management system. We pursue two goals as part of this management: We aim to further minimise the amount of waste we generate and recycle as much waste as possible in the interests of a sustainable circular economy.

Seamless documentation forms the basis for effective management: We record waste separately in annual waste balances and document all types of waste. Approved specialist waste management firms from each region collect the waste. We hand over the waste directly to the disposal companies on the factory premises and document this carefully. The disposal methods are set out in law and determined by the respective waste characteristics. It is important to us that the disposal companies confirm the methods used for documentation purposes. Furthermore, the food supervisory authorities monitor the proper disposal and utilisation of production residues.

**Waste reduction**

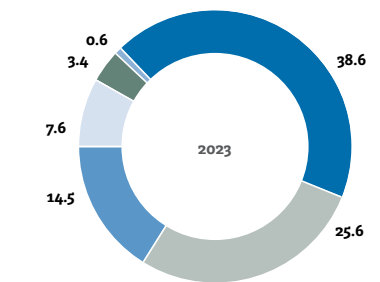
In the 2023 year under review, about 90 kg of total waste was generated per tonne of finished goods – about 20 kg less than in 2021. Waste at the plants mainly includes production residues



**100%**

**OF RESIDUAL PRODUCTION WASTE** was recycled in the 2023 year under review.

**WASTE QUANTITY DISTRIBUTION** in kg/t



- Production residues
- Grease separator contents
- Commercial waste similar to household waste (including glass)
- Wood and construction waste and scrap
- Packaging waste
- Hazardous waste

and grease separator contents as well as household-type commercial waste, wood and scrap metal.

A key goal at Storck is to reduce production waste from manufacturing processes. Such waste is mostly generated during the start-up and shutdown of plants or during cleaning processes, and, in particular, when new plants are initially put into operation. Compared to 2021, about 30% less production waste was generated within the manufactur-

ing processes in the reporting period. Many successful improvements from recent years in terms of reuse have made a crucial contribution to this. We rely, in particular, on clever plant planning and early involvement as well as training for the employees involved.

Production waste is not destroyed at Storck, but reused to the extent possible. In 2023, the company sold about 60% of its waste to the animal feed industry. The remaining 40% was reused as an energy source in biogas plants, where energy is produced via fermentation.

Biogas plants were also able to utilise some of the grease separator contents, which make up a large proportion of the waste volume due to the use of fatty raw materials in confectionery production. Grease separator contents would have a negative impact on wastewater quality and are, therefore, separated from the wastewater at Storck's own plants.

The quantities of commercial waste similar to household waste are subject to strong annual fluctuations because they are largely determined by remodelling measures. Compared to previous years, a comparatively large amount of commercial waste was generated. After passing through a sorting plant, it was sent for material or energy recovery.

Cocoa shells, which are left over from the processing of cocoa beans at our plant, are ecologically reused as compostable soil improvers. They are, therefore, not included in Storck's annual waste balance.

We have taken wide-ranging precautions to prevent waste such as cleaning agents, oils and fuels from escaping. Safety devices prevent harm to employees or the environment in the event of a leak. There were no negative effects from waste in the year under review.

**HARDLY ANY HAZARDOUS WASTE**

The waste designated as “Hazardous” in accordance with the provisions of the Basel Convention was 0.6 kg for each tonne of finished goods at Storck in the year under review. This waste includes substances such as mineral oil-based machine, gear and lubricating oils, old fluorescent tubes, paint and varnish waste and construction waste containing hazardous substances. Storck hands them over to specialised disposal companies in Germany and does not export them to other countries. The disposal companies recycle the hazardous waste or utilise it to generate energy.

**TYPES OF WASTE**

in kg/tonne of finished goods	2023
Waste for recovery	72.33
Waste for disposal	17.96
<b>Total waste generation</b>	<b>90.29</b>

**Ongoing optimisation**

Every employee can have a positive impact on the waste balance by way of their behaviour. It is therefore important to us to sensitise our colleagues to the issue of waste management. We are already proactively receiving many suggestions for optimisation from the workforce – from production employees as well as from administrative staff. Trained waste experts, who are deployed at all production locations and ensure reliable waste management in all areas, also deal with topics such as waste separation and ideas for process optimisation. They increase the proportion of unmixed waste by correcting disposal errors, separating mixed waste and sorting waste that needs to be monitored. In addition to this operational sorting, they ensure the smooth process of waste transport and communication with waste disposal companies.

We work closely with external consulting service providers who analyse the existing management and suggest optimisations. For example, a detailed inspection of the production halls took place at the Ohrdruf location in the year under review. This focussed on reducing waste and internal collection logistics. Building on our already very successful waste management system, in the future we shall continue to push ahead with targeted optimisation measures.



**Conscientious waste separation** ensures that a large proportion of the waste produced can be recycled.

# Reporting parameters

With this sustainability report, Storck provides an insight into the company’s strategy and measures for sustainability and social responsibility for the period from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2023. Reports are filed every two years.

The reporting boundary is drawn along the three production locations of August Storck KG as well as Condetta GmbH & Co. KG – integrated at the location in Halle (Westphalia) – and Helmut Löser GmbH & Co KG Waffelfabrik. The 22 international sales organisations of the owner-managed company are not included in the sustainability reporting because they play a subordinate role for the key performance indicators in this context.

The “Sustainability Reporting Team” – an internal task force which interfaces with all departments relevant to the issue – is responsible for this report, under the management of the Managing Director Production & Engineering. The approved and verifiable standard of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) serves as the basis.

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## **PUBLISHING INFORMATION**

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