

## PRESS INFORMATION

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### **Kiefel expands its natural fiber expertise with a new Technology Center**

#### **Investing in research on sustainable packaging technologies**

*Freilassing, 07.01.2021.* Today, KIEFEL GmbH opened a new Technology and Material Center at its headquarters in Freilassing. Thereby the mechanical engineering company's is increasingly investing in its own research activities into sustainable packaging solutions with a focus on natural fibers. The market-leading company for plastic thermoforming and joining technology opened up the additional business area of "Fiber Thermoforming" internationally last year. In future, the center will be used for material research and tests, as well as for sample production and machine demonstrations.

"The Packaging Technology Center and the connected Material R&D Center, deepen our materials expertise and allow us to support our customers even more closely in the development process for everything related with fiber materials, products and machines.", explains Matthias Hausmann, Head of Central Development. "We are thus consolidating our role as a holistic solutions provider." With this investment, Kiefel intends to develop and use even more sustainable technologies, processes and materials.

#### **From materials research to production**

The Material R&D Center is the starting point for product developments for customers. Here, Kiefel researches, analyzes, and categorizes various natural fibers and designs coating concepts for packaging made from natural fibers. These are then tested on pilot systems and optimized for the manufacturing process. The Material R&D Center complements Kiefel's Applied Polymer Research Center in the Netherlands, which focuses on materials research into recycled and bio-based plastics.

In the Packaging Technology Center in Freilassing, Kiefel demonstrates its extensive machine portfolio for the production of fiber packaging to its customers: The NATUREPREP KFP series for high quality stock preparation of natural fiber pulp and the NATUREFORMER KFT series systems, on which various fiber products, e.g. bowls, cups, secondary packaging for electronics, coffee capsules or flower pots can be manufactured. The company tests tools on the systems, carries out machine tests and small batches of sample production. Prototype testing also takes place here. Hausmann adds: "With our concept we achieve solutions that are optimally tailored to our customer requirements from material to machine."

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### **Taking responsibility for the environment and society**

A sustainability exhibition is also integrated into the Packaging Technology Center. Cornelia Frank, Head of Sustainability at Kiefel emphasizes: "We have been involved in various initiatives for a number of years, for example helping improve plastics recyclability. As a mechanical engineering company, we want to actively take responsibility in order to become the leading solution provider for the development and implementation of the most sustainable technology." The "Rethinking Concept" has long anchored this claim in the company's DNA. The aim of the concept is to rethink materials, machines, processes and products, to ultimately achieve the ideal, most sustainable design for the customers. This is the case, for example, if the end product can be easily recycled in the circular economy or can be biodegraded. In addition to this, Kiefel has now set goals in order to holistically identify sustainability potential and utilize it efficiently.



*Kiefel is pushing ahead with thermoforming with natural fibers in the new Technology and Material Center at its Freilassing headquarters. © KIEFEL GmbH*

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### **About KIEFEL GmbH**

*KIEFEL GmbH develops and produces high quality machines for processing plastics recycled and, bio-based materials and natural fibers. Kiefel's customers include well-known manufacturers from the medical engineering, refrigerator and packaging industries. With its own technology and material centers, the company offers turnkey solutions and provides support in partnership from product development through machines and tools to service.*

*Kiefel has a global presence thanks to its own sales and service branches in the USA, France, the Netherlands, Russia, China, and India, as well as sales partners in more than 60 countries.*

*Kiefel owns the Dutch thermoform toolmaker Kiefel Packaging BV, as well as the Austrian company KIEFEL Packaging GmbH, a supplier of tools and automation solutions.*

*Kiefel and its subsidiaries employ around 1,000 staff. KIEFEL GmbH is a member of the Brückner group, based in Siegsdorf, which is a family owned group of medium-sized enterprises active in machinery and plant engineering with around 2,400 employees at 23 different locations worldwide.*

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