



Press Release

Date: February 2014

Demeter pioneer Holle sets new standards thanks to poultry meat from the rearing of brother roosters by the Bruderhahn Initiative Deutschland project

Organic meat from Bruderhahn in baby food jars

As a partner of the Bruderhahn Initiative Deutschland (BID) we are committed to more ethical breeding of laying hens and broilers. Because every day in Germany 10 000 male chicks are killed after hatching because they are not commercially viable. New Holle Organic Baby Jars with chicken sourced from the rearing of brother roosters have thus been available from retailers since March 2014. Rearing of brother roosters within the scope of laying hen husbandry is a revolutionary concept. In addition to this, we are discontinuing the production of products including turkey.

For many years now Holle has been sourcing its poultry meat from the Demeter farm Bauckhof Klein Süstedt. The owner, Carsten Bauck, is one of the main initiators of the Bruderhahn Initiative Deutschland (BID - German Brother Rooster Project) founded in 2012. The project adheres to comprehensive ecological and ethical guidelines for the breeding of laying hens and broilers. Holle has been supporting the Bruderhahn Initiative Deutschland since 2013 by purchasing guaranteed quantities of meat produced within the scope of brother rooster rearing.

From March 2014 Holle will only be using meat sourced from BID's brother rooster rearing programme for its organic baby jars with chicken. Within the scope of this development Holle will also be discontinuing the use of turkey. This will provide parents with the opportunity to give their child baby food manufactured according to the highest ecological criteria and ethical requirements. Holle offers three different organic baby jars with meat sourced from the brother rooster rearing programme: Chicken; Pumpkin with Chicken and Pumpkin, Potato and Chicken.

Every year up to 34 million male chicks die, also at organic farms. In contrast to their sisters, who are laying hens, to date the roosters have been considered worthless





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since they cannot compete as broilers with races specifically bred for this purpose. “We didn’t want to be part of this killing of day-old chicks any more. In our eyes it is totally unethical and an infringement of animal protection laws,” says Carsten Bauck.

Setting new standards by doing away with an unethical practice

The Bruderhahn Initiative Deutschland has taken up the cause of developing alternatives and ethically justifiable solutions to the one-sided rearing common in conventional poultry husbandry. For example by rearing male laying hen chicks, which would normally be killed immediately after hatching. All the brothers of laying hens are reared, even if this represents an additional financial cost.

Under the slogan “Rescue my brother – stop senseless killing” one male chick per laying hen is allowed to live. The hens’ eggs ensure that their male counterparts are able to enjoy a longer life. A retail surcharge of four cents is levied on every egg produced within the scope of the BID project. This extra income goes directly towards rearing the roosters. Rearing of the roosters is subject to strict guidelines set by the BID and based on those used by Bioland and Demeter.

The BID label - The quality guarantee provided by Bruderhahn Initiative Deutschland

The Bruderhahn Initiative Deutschland seal of approval not only guarantees that brother chicks will be reared but also stands for a comprehensive ecological and ethical approach to chicken husbandry. The birds’ feed and living conditions thus meet the highest animal welfare standards. The BID even exceeds these standards with its refusal to use antibiotics. Verification and certification are carried out by independent monitoring bodies. The certification process is coordinated by the German Gesellschaft für Ressourcenschutz (GFRS, DE ÖKO-039; www.gfrs.de).





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According to the BID's criteria, which are based on Bioland/Demeter guidelines, roosters are reared on a breeding farm with access to outdoor space. Wherever possible, as a matter of principle the chicks come from an organic flock of parent birds. Roosters are kept together with the hens until they are around 5 weeks old. Following this the roosters are relocated to a rearing pen and fattened up under premium conditions in a rural agricultural enterprise for 18-22 weeks. 100% organic feed is used during the rearing process.

"In addition to this, the Bauckhof farm ensures the greatest possible degree of transparency, which is extremely important to us as a manufacturer," says Udo Fischer. This also includes installing webcams in the pens so that consumers can see for themselves at any time how Bauckhof has implemented high standards of chicken welfare. Slaughterhouses also adhere to above-average principles: The transport and slaughtering of brother roosters complies with the highest possible ethical considerations such as keeping transport times as short as possible; high standards of hygiene and guaranteed production batch accuracy.

About Holle baby food GmbH:

Holle baby food GmbH manufactures Demeter quality organic baby food. The company has sites in Riehen (Switzerland) and in Grünsfeld near Tauberbischofsheim (Baden-Württemberg/Germany). The product range includes infant formula milk, baby porridges and jars. Baby weaning oil, teas and snacks round off the comprehensive offering. Holle products are sold in 41 countries. The company, founded in Switzerland in 1933, is the market leader in Germany's organic specialist retailer segment and a founding member of www.babyclub.de, with 700 000 visitors a month the most successful organic internet portal for new parents. www.holle.ch

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Photo caption: Under the slogan “Rescue my brother – stop senseless killing” one male chick per laying hen is allowed to live. Rearing of brother roosters within the scope of laying hen husbandry is a revolutionary concept, supported by Holle.

Source: *Holle baby food GmbH*



Photo caption: The new Holle organic baby jars with meat sourced from the brother rooster rearing programme are available in three flavours: Pumpkin, Potato and Chicken; Chicken and Pumpkin with Chicken.

Source: *Holle baby food GmbH*

