billerbeck

SLEEPING CULTURE SINCE 1921

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2022

Corporate Social Responsibility

| A PERFECT DAY BEGINS AT NIGHT |

NIGHT

FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

For more than 100 years, the focus on long-term success has determined the actions of the family company billerbeck.

Guided by the company's mission statement, for us, being successful not only means sustainably growing our economic results, but also continuously advancing the company's ecological and social performance.

We, therefore, commit ourselves, on the one hand, to using the resources provided to us carefully and responsibly and, on the other hand, to planning our material flows intelligently.

Something that is particularly important to us is the cultural commitment with which we have actively participated in society for many years, and we wish to help shape that society positively.

In this sustainability report, we would therefore like to demonstrate in detail how the interplay of social engagement and responsible corporate governance works, and is practised, at billerbeck.

It is our goal as a company to continue to integrate sustainability systematically throughout our processes. We are aware of our ecological and social responsibility in all this, and perceive it as a holistic challenge.

Over the following pages, we would like to give you an insight into the diverse range of sustainability activities at billerbeck, which should continue to develop in the future.

Yours Friedrich Ermert

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OUR COMPANY

Who we are and what we do

billerbeck Betten-Union GmbH & Co. KG is a renowned manufacturer of high-quality bedding based in Kraichtal. We have been manufacturing duvets, pillows, toppers, mattresses and other bedding products with select filling materials and cover fabrics since 1921. The notion of good sleep is made a reality by branded articles that meet the highest quality standards in terms of materials and environmentally friendly production.

As an owner-managed family company, with almost 100 years of tradition and experience, we enjoy a great amount of trust in the trade and with our customers. This is not only due to our market-driven innovations, but also due to the high quality of our products, our comprehensive service, and our consistent management of our brand and product range.

Our high-quality products are manufactured in our factories in Germany, Hungary and Switzerland with a crucial degree of manual work. Our exacting company standards demand the best raw materials, careful processing and a high level of environmental compatibility, which are all evidenced by strict quality controls and our billerbeck certificate.

„If you look down from above onto that little blue planet (...), it becomes clear that we should recognise our home planet much more as a gift, because we only have one."

Alexander Gerst

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability as an identity

Sustainability is a frequently used catchphrase, but there is much more behind it than most people suspect. Sustainability is playing an increasingly important role not only for consumers, but also for producers. However, in order to be able to assess the sustainability of a product, it is important to note that sustainability is not limited to small sub-divisions, but rather encompasses a product or a production system in its entirety.

- What materials are the best choice for people and nature now and in the future?

- How can we use our resources efficiently enough that nothing is wasted and we produce economically?

- What corporate strategy ensures that we have long-term success?

In order to achieve sustainability, one cannot use more resources in production than nature and humans are able to provide again. If you take sustainability seriously, you therefore have to pay attention to lots of things. That is also true for us at billerbeck. We at billerbeck are aware of this and know that we are only at the beginning of a process that will both accompany and influence our future decisions. Because wanting to achieve greater sustainability is a permanent task that will always involve new challenges.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability in the corporate philosophy

For billerbeck, sustainability is not an entrepreneurial goal, but part of our self-identity. This has a direct impact on the people who work or shop here, or who are associated with us through partnerships. In our corporate philosophy, we have determined that we want to set an example in our sphere. It is therefore a motivation for us to think and act in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.
Moreover, we are convinced that sustainable management is just as essential in the present as in the future. This is why we think long term and intensively set our wits to the following issues again and again afresh.

Customer satisfaction
It is important to us that our customers enjoy our products for as long as possible, and that we offer them good advice and a comprehensive service.

Quality of the raw materials
We place our focus on using materials that are optimal for people and the environment.

Saving recources
Careful and efficient handling of raw materials is very important to us. We therefore try with the greatest care to avoid waste and chemicals.

Social issues
We are convinced that the highest quality of product and the best service can only be achieved through respectful cooperation between employees and suppliers.

The concept of sustainability, originally focusing on the environment, has long since evolved. People are increasingly recognising the extent to which the environment, the economy and society influence and condition each other. billerbeck therefore understands sustainability as having three dimensions, exactly in line with the three-pillar model of sustainability: the simultaneous and equal implementation of ecological, economic and social goals.

Environmental sustainability
By this, we mean creating an opportunity for nature to regenerate and preserving it for future generations. Our environmental management system ensures operational environmental protection – ecology – at billerbeck. Durable products and modern production conditions enable us to operate in harmony with nature.

Economic sustainability
Our quality management team works on customer satisfaction and thus also on the economy. By reducing the use of materials and chemicals, which also benefits the environment, we cultivate a way of doing business that focuses on long-term stable budgets instead of short-term maximisation of profit.

Social sustainability
Our occupational health and safety management system, which incorporates high social standards for both our own employees and those of our suppliers, covers the area of social sustainability. Fair and respectful cooperation is also a high priority for us, which should enable all employees to develop freely.

We see the great opportunity for our company as consisting in satisfying ecological, economic and social goals in equal measure, and in establishing an appropriate balance between these three dimensions. It is particularly important for us to make real compromises and to always ask ourselves the following question when approaching new innovations: Which new products, processes, regulations and initiatives promote all three goals in equal measure, or to some extent?

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION DIN ISO 14001

billerbeck environmental certification DIN ISO 14001

We do not only make an important contribution to the climate and environment by supporting numerous environmental projects, but within the company, ecologically relevant topics such as responsible treatment of nature and the conservation of resources are also of particular concerr to us.

On the basis of the measures already taken in the areas of sustainability, climate and environmental protection, it was a matter of course and a logical next step for us to have ourselves certified according to the internationally recognized environmental standard DIN ISO 14001. This ensures that we meet the environmental requirements with the legal specifications and that the system is consistently adhered to.

In August 2020 we received the environmental management system certificate DIN ISO 14001 and thus meet the highest internationally recognized environmental standards.

What does the DIN ISO 14001 environmental certification mean?

ZERTIFIKAT

billerbeck Betten-Union GmbH & Co. KG

ISO 14001:2015

The globally recognized environmental standard ISO 14001 determines which requirements a company must meet in order to continuously improve its own environmental performance. The implementation of the strict guidelines of DIN ISO 14001 and the certification are proof that a company has established a functioning and effective environmental management system. In addition to the continuous optimization of the company with regard to ecology and sustainability and the implementation of self-imposed environmental goals, the focus is also on compliance with applicable legal regulations.

The internationally recognized ISO 14001 standard specifies the guidelines according to which a company's environmental management system must be structured in order to be effective and efficient. Based on these guidelines, a company can establish and implement its own environmental management system that is specifically tailored to its operational needs. The focus here is on the continuous optimization of the company in terms of environmental protection and sustainability.

Introduction of the environmental management system at billerbeck

The introduction of the environmental management system underlines our responsibility for the conscientious handling of the environment and nature to protect the climate and conserve resources. Sustainable economic activity, thinking and acting not only influence the present, but especially our future and thus the life of future generations. These ideals and values are underpinned by our corporate environmental management system.

In establishing the environmental management system, we not only deal with our own environmental goals within the company and how these can be successfully implemented, but also with the environmental goals of our employees. The ecological effects of external factors such as suppliers, transport routes or raw material extraction also play an important role for a company when setting up an environmental management system and must therefore always be taken into account.

Environmental Management Team

The idea of sustainability is present throughout the company. A billerbeck environmental management team has been put together to implement environmental projects. Under the leadership of our trained environmental manager, all future environmental and climate-relevant projects are regularly discussed, planned and implemented.

However, the greatest part of our commitment is the initiative of each individual employee, which helps us to sustainably develop the various areas of the company.

Corporate Social Responsibility – Our responsibility –

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the responsibility companies bear towards society. The European Commission defines CSR as a „a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis".

For us, CSR means responsible, entrepreneurial action that goes beyond purely legal requirements. We understand this to mean conscious, active economic management along the value chain, with respect for employees, customers and suppliers, and with consideration for the environment, nature and animals.

„Knowledge is not enough – we must also apply it. Wanting is not enough – we must also turn it into action."

In line with this quote by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, we understand that a prerequisite for sustainable thinking is to create an awareness of sustainability, because only once one has this can sustainable action then follow.

True to the motto „Do good and talk about it", this sustainability report offers the opportunity to provide an understandable and true-to-life depiction of our company. Over the following pages, we will address and present openly both the services we provide and our contribution to promoting economic growth, ecological balance and social justice, as well as difficulties, suggestions for improvement and conceptual ideas for our development in the coming years.

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

Local Engagement – a part of our self-identity

From fundraising campaigns for the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (Naturschutzbund) to support measures for the hospice in Karlsruhe – our social and cultural commitments are diverse and aim at providing support to numerous institutions. In our corporate philosophy, we have already determined that we want to set an example in our sphere, and we therefore commit ourselves beyond the confines of the company.

Since the very beginning, billerbeck's donations have been aimed at demonstrating and appreciating the diversity of social engagement. That is why we foster and support numerous civic initiatives together with our partners. This commitment to social and cultural projects in our environment is a matter close to our heart that takes high priority.

In addition to our commitment to local campaigns and associations, such as the Bruchsal School of Music and Arts, we also place particular emphasis on supporting organisations such as Ein Herz für Kinder (A Heart for Children) or blut.eV – Citizens for Leukaemia and Tumour Diseases.

Below is a selection of our partners from recent years. Their diversity makes it clear once again how much attention we at billerbeck devote to helping shape our environment positively.

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

Lebenshilfe Bruchsal-Bretten e.V. is an association of and for people with intellectual or mental disabilities in the Bruchsal-Bretten district. Our collaboration goes back more than 50 years.

With more than 620,000 members and supporters, NABU campaigns for protection of nature and the environment. Together, they initiate projects for environmental protection.

The Kraichtal Volunteer Fire Brigade currently has 283 active fire service members. The youth department has 131 members, and the seniors' department, 73 members. As the official partner of the fire brigade, billerbeck supports these volunteers.

The German Red Cross (DRK) rescues people, helps in emergencies, offers people a community, supports the poor and those in need, and stands guard over international humanitarian law – in Germany and around the world. The DRK Kraichtal was financially supported through the purchase of a rescue vehicle.

In addition to help with language acquisition, in Childcare, integration assistance, Employment opportunities for adults the association also distributes donations in kind to the needy people.

For over 25 years, der bunte Kreis (The Colourful Circle) has been looking after families with children suffering from a chronic or seriously disease or cancer in the Swabian region.

Oase des Lebens e.V. (Romania)

The vision of Oase des Lebens e.V. (Haven of Life) is to help children in poor neighbourhoods develop their personalities, to improve their living conditions and enable them to climb out of poverty and rejection through receiving a good school education.

The goal of its work in outpatient children's hospices is to improve the quality of life of seriously or terminally ill children and adolescents. Another aspect of their work is supporting families in which one parent is seriously ill with cancer.

The BILD Aid Organisation supports children's hospitals, kindergartens, soup kitchens, schools and families. The association enables seriously ill children who cannot be treated in their home country to receive life-saving operations.
In addition, Ein Herz für Kinder (A Heart for Children) provides help in war zones and disaster areas.

Blut.eV (Blood) is an association that has set itself the task of finding stem cell donors for cancer patients and helping them and their relatives throughout all stages of the disease.

Kraichtaler Jazztage (Kraichtal Jazz Days) have developed into an international jazz festival. Every year, they put on a variety of concerts.

„Lions Clubs" campaign on a voluntary basis for people who need support. Among other things, they arrange projects for youth work as well as work with the disabled and elderly.

The AutismCenter Bruchsal is an institution, that people with ASS (Autism Spectacular Disorder) in a variety of ways supported (e.g. through counseling, therapies, school accompaniment…). billerbeck sponsors the team of the AutismCenter at the Caritas run of hope Verband Bruchsal e.V. With the income from run of hope will be social projects and people in emergency situations supported.

The Bruchsal School of Music and Arts is an administration union of regional cities and municipalities that is constantly offering various initiatives. From basic musical training to singing to art, theatre and dance projects.

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

Collaboration with Lebenshilfe Bruchsal – for more than 50 years

We would particularly like to mention our collaboration with Lebenshilfe Bruchsal-Bretten e.V. (Bruchsal-Bretten Counselling), which goes back more than 50 years.

This is an association of and for people with intellectual or mental disabilities in the Bruchsal-Bretten district. In addition to producing neck support pillows and refill bags, the employees sew pillowcases for billerbeck and thereby support us in our production work.

NABU Kraichtal – our commitment to environmental protection

To underline our local engagement and, above all, our commitment to nature conservation, we attach great importance to working with the Kraichtal Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU).

A meadow in the immediate vicinity of the company premises was bought by billerbeck in 2019 and passed over to a tenant, who manages it in accordance with strict ecological regulations, as compliance with these is our top priority. Examples of this include low use of fertilisers or only mowing the property twice a year with cutting tools, which is particularly important for insect populations and for protecting species.

By engaging in this commitment, we wish to make a sustainable contribution to nature conservation and, especially, to combatting the difficult problem of the decline in insects. In doing so, we are concerned in particular about caring for this meadow properly, or even bringing about an improvement, in order to thereby ensure a greater biodiversity of flora and fauna.

Regular donations since June 2016 are used in particular to purchase land, which NABU Kraichtal cultivates in the interests of nature conservation.

Donations made in June 2016

SPACE FOR EMPLOYEES TO DEVELOP

Not just with our customers and suppliers, but also within the company, we strive for an open culture of communication and transparency based on a mutual exchange of information.

The help of various further training options and a healthy working atmosphere make it possible to exploit the full potential of our employees and continually advance ourselves forward.

Sustainable training concept

Every year, we offer young people the opportunity to complete their training as industrial management assistants in our company. As of September 2020, we will hire additional trainees who we will try to support as well as possible. In addition to receiving financial subsidies for travel tickets, our trainees are released for seminars if they are interested in these. We also finance books that are used for learning.

In order to, on the one hand, provide incentives to be motivated and, on the other, to express our appreciation, we show regard for our trainees by giving them vouchers for good certificates or very good performance in the company.

Another important aspect of our training concept is the opportunity to accompany us to the Heimtextil trade fair in Frankfurt. What is important to us here is that our trainees both get to know how such a trade fair runs, give us their support, and also get the chance to observe the competition.

As early as during the hiring of new trainees, we like to emphasise that we place great value on taking them on after their training if their performance is commensurate. In fact, many of our employees have been with us for several decades, since they were also taken on immediately after completing their training.

At this point, it is also important to us to mention that we regularly hire trainees at billerbeck through the IB (International Federation) or through AAW (Working Group for Training and Further Education), in order to thereby enable them to get a good education and a secure job.

In addition to our training concept, we also offer numerous students the opportunity to do an internship. They also receive a schedule from us, which shows which departments should be visited on the different days. In this way, we try to offer the interns the broadest possible insight into our work. In addition to providing them with a certificate, we also show our gratitude in the form of a gift for their effort.

SPACE FOR EMPLOYEES TO DEVELOP

Integration of refugees

We have been integrating five refugees from Syria into the work of our company since the start of 2019. They are employed in the production department and already speak German because of attending school.

Inclusion of people with disabilities

We engage staff with disabilities in production and in the finished goods warehouse.
The substance of the work was adapted to the skills of the employees and the workstations were designed.

Further training concept

Our training concept, which is strongly nurtured at billerbeck, is greatly important to us. Our staff across various departments attend seminars and training courses at regular intervals. By doing so, we wish to support and spur on their very own personal development, in order to be able to both challenge them and nurture them.

Moreover, we attach great importance to transparency and straightforwardness in dealings with colleagues and customers, because, for us, these components are essential for functioning collaboration and a healthy working atmosphere within the company.

Promoting a healthy work atmosphere

We are also convinced that only an employee who feels good can contribute to our working communities with joy and commitment. Communication at the workplace and the promotion of a healthy working atmosphere that ensures greater well-being among our employees are, therefore, high priorities for us. Smaller campaigns, anniversary bonuses and gifts for special birthdays are ways of showing our regard that are intended to clarify what unique status each individual in our company possesses.

The aspect of cross-departmental work also receives great support. Self-responsibility and self-initiative are, therefore, the foundation of our entrepreneurial way of thinking and acting. Both technical and social skills also make it easier to manage tasks and overcome conflicts in both your own and cross-departmental teams.

By adapting the scenery every season and providing retreats in the form of resting places or canteens, we strive to create a pleasant atmosphere in which every employee feels good and can exploit their maximum potential.

Working time models

It is furthermore important to us to adapt the working conditions for a wide variety of tasks to the needs the individual has due to their life situation or phase of life. This is why we, for example, offer part-time jobs to employees after their maternity leave, in order to make it possible for them to be able to better combine family and work. In production, too, we offer employees the opportunity of having a later starting time in such a situation.

Equality

At this point, it is also interesting to mention that we have a high female quota at billerbeck of 60 %, and place great value on having no gender pay disparities.

Employee health

At billerbeck, we also pay particular attention to the topic of employee health. An example of this is exchanging our computer screens thereby ensuring that our employees now work with models that are state of the art, which should have a long-term positive effect on health and productivity.

Research into human sleeping habits

forms the basis for the responsible production of bedding and furniture for lying on.

This thought prompted Gerd Billerbeck to initiate sleep research more than 50 years ago, out of which then developed the billerbeck STIFTUNG SCHLAF & GESUNDHEIT® in 1984.

billerbeck STIFTUNG SCHLAF & GESUNDHEIT

billerbeck Sleep & Health Foundation

Starting point for billerbeck sleep research

For a long time, human sleep was largely ignored by research. But when the REM phase (rapid eye movement) was discovered in the 1950s and scientists began to study sleep intensively for the first time, so too did billerbeck's work on sleep research begin. At this point in time, billerbeck could already look back on around 30 years of experience in the development of bedding products and was able to build on this knowledge.

Foundational research for healthy sleep

Over the following years, numerous studies and research activities were carried out that were devoted to the material properties of duvet fillings, the requirements for a good night's sleep, and correct bedding.

Thermal insulation capacity was tested as well as, among other things, the permeability to air and moisture, the weight, and the importance of lying surfaces that relieve load and promote relaxation.

In doing so, we collaborated with well-known institutions such as the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (1952–1956), the Frobenius Institute of the Goethe University Frankfurt (1956) and the Hohenstein Research Institute (1957 until the present).

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

billerbeck STIFTUNG SCHLAF & GESUNDHEIT®
billerbeck Sleep & Health Foundation

This intensive basic research resulted a good 20 years later in the Sleep Research Foundation, on 4th June 1984. The aim was to combine the expertise of many years of sleep research within the foundation, and to communicate this knowledge to the outside world. In 1989, the Sleep Research Foundation was renamed „billerbeck Stiftung Schlaf & Gesundheit® " (billerbeck Sleep & Health Foundation), which set itself the goal of promoting people's health through good sleep.

In particular, the focus is on researching the requirements for healthy and natural sleep, and on continuously developing innovative bedding and furniture for lying on. At the same time, the foundation aims at providing information and actively passing on knowledge about good sleep. In addition to ongoing product development, the foundation has also produced numerous product innovations and publications on healthy sleep:

- Double duvet: high heat retention at low weight (1952–56)
- The all-season bed with duvets of different heat classes that can be buttoned together
- The "master class" sheep's wool duvet with optimised moisture management
- One of the first neck support pillows in Germany (1981)
- Reading matter: „How to get bedding right", all about sleeping and sleeping habits (1981)
- Reading matter: „The Fascination of Dreams. The Phenomenon of Sleep" (1990)
- The sleep guide: „The Fascination of Dreams. The Phenomenon of Sleep" (2006)
- Guide: „A perfect day begins at night – Better Quality of Life Thanks to Healthy Sleep" (2014)

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Product development

The internationally active billerbeck Stiftung Schlaf & Gesundheit® (billerbeck Sleep & Health Foundation) , introduced above, brings together specialists from a wide variety of subject areas: doctors, physiologists, psychologists, biologists, physicists and textile research institutes are constantly examining the various aspects that determine the quality of sleep. The knowledge gained from this benefits all of our products, and forms the basis for numerous innovations and new developments.

In addition to its own work, the foundation specifically awards research contracts to permanently expand the level of knowledge about sleep behaviour. Particular attention is paid to the areas that up until now were only poorly able to be made transparent by reliable research.

billerbeck is the only manufacturer of duvets and pillows that systematically invests in sleep research with its own foundation. For example, the first neck support pillow was developed for people with tension, but also sleep aids that paid regard to research findings.

Based on the results of various research contracts, the aim was also, on the one hand, to create products and innovations in the future based on the latest finding, and, on the other hand, to invest in sleep research over the long term.

Product design
Our product range – environmentally friendly products

Environmental friendliness, animal welfare and general sustainability also do not stop at the subject of bedding. As a pioneer and innovative leader in this sector, we at billerbeck have been relying on environmentally friendly products and resource-saving and pollutant-free production for years.

For down bedding, the down is subjected to a strict quality check and carefully selected. We only use guaranteed traceable down and feather from geese and ducks that have not been plucked alive and have not been reared for foie gras production. Due to our high-quality standard, it goes without saying that only down from a controlled provenance, from species-appropriate rearing conditions and no living animals is processed.

Organic range with GOTS certificate

Our organic range, which has been in existence since 2015 and is GOTS certified, is produced using resource-saving production and includes, in addition to duvets, pillows and neck support pillows, also a topper and a mattress.

This bedding range focussed on the natural world meets our requirements for sustainable products that are free of synthetic raw materials. Only renewable organic materials are used in the production, which is confirmed by certifications from renowned institutes and well-known standards.

The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is one of the highest certifications that a natural textile can carry. It stands for the best organic quality along all stages of the textile production chain and at the same time demands compliance with criteria in relation to social affairs. The entire sustainable production and supply chain is also checked, as well as, for example, the high environmental standards, biological raw materials and socially responsible conditions.

organic
Certified by BCS
Licence no 24683

„COSICOMFORT®“ natural latex mattress

Our „COSICOMFORT® “natural latex mattress combines the advantages of an ergonomic organic mattress with natural latex. The entire mattress is characterised by GOTS-certified natural materials, which come from guaranteed controlled organic cultivation and controlled organic animal husbandry. The mattress core consists of 100 % Natural Vita Talalay® latex without any artificial additives.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ORGANIC

„COSINECK® NATURE“ vegan neck support pillow

The „COSINECK® NATURE“ neck support pillow is a world first. We are inspired by its innovative natural materials, and it is GOTS-certified.

The 100 % natural latex core made from Natural Vita Talalay® has also been gold-certified by the RAINFOREST ALLIANCE™ and cradle to cradle Certified™ GOLD.

The three-part vegan core can be custom adjusted so that optimal neck support is guaranteed. A perfect addition is its soft batiste cover fabric from controlled organic cultivation, made of 100 % organic cotton.

GOTS certificate

CERTIFIED cradle to cradle GOLD

„cradle to cradle Certified™“ is an internationally recognised standard for documenting the use of environmentally safe, healthy and recyclable materials as well as the use of renewable forms of energy and compliance with social obligations. It is an independent certificate that assesses the safety of a product for people and the environment as well as the design for future life cycles.

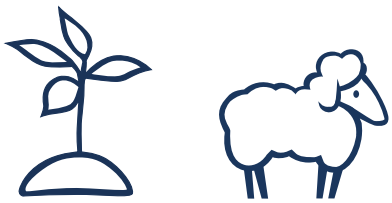
RAINFOREST ALLIANCE CERTIFIED

With our RAINFOREST ALLIANCE™ Certificate, we guarantee our customers that our products are made of materials that were produced in an environmentally friendly, socially and economically responsible and sustainable manner.

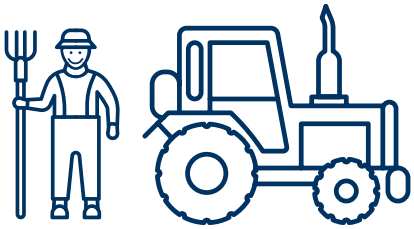
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ORGANIC

The supply chain for organic textile production

The filling materials come from
controlled organic cultivation and controlled organic animal husbandry



The social aspects of agriculture are taken into account



Careful delivery and production – quality assurance through controls

In combination with the finest upholstery fabrics,
a lot of love and skilled craftsmanship goes into making these true masterpieces of sleeping science

billerbeck STIFTUNG
SCHLAF & GESUNDHEIT

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT BLUE ANGEL

Product series E15 Frieda®, E14 Greta®, E16 Lasse®

Also of high importance are our new product series E15 Frieda®, E14 Greta® und E16 Lasse® consisting of pillows and comforters certified with the BLUE ANGEL eco-label.

BLUE ANGEL is the first and oldest label in the world for environmentally friendly products and services. Among other things, it is a by word for the sparing use of raw materials, for use of recycled materials, for low energy consumption and environmentally friendly disposal. With the BLUE ANGEL certificate for textiles, we also show our consumers, on the one hand that high environmental standards are observed in the manufacturing process and that occupational safety and social conditions are improved in the manufacturing process and, on the other, that harmful chemicals are avoided in the end product.

www.blauer-engel.de/uz154

No optical brighteners

Another noteworthy aspect of our product design is that we refrain from using optical brighteners. For a large part of our range, we already do without the chemical additives, and further products are also due to be converted in the future.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY without optical brighteners

E15 Frieda®

E14 Greta®

E16 Lasse®

GOOD FOR ME, GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. WHAT THE BLUE ANGEL STANDS FOR:

- Environmentally friendly manufacturing
- Tested for harmful substances
- Social criteria related to obtaining raw materials and final production

BLUE ANGEL FOR TEXTILES
THE ENVIRONMENTAL LABEL OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Photo: BLUE ANGEL award of certificate at the Heimtextil trade fair in Frankfurt am Main 2020.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
CERTIFIED DOWN AND FEATHERS

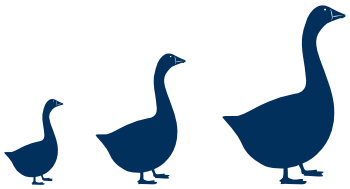
Certifications

We guarantee these standards with the certificate of the billerbeck foundation SLEEP & HEALTH®, which means that the goose down and feathers as well as the duck down and feathers are certified and guaranteed to be traceable right back to the egg. With our stand on „no live plucking" and „no foie gras production", we assure that down and feathers are only used from animals that are in any case being used for food production.

Certifications – the supply chain for certified down:

Traceable right back to the egg

Only from geese that have been reared appropriately
- No force-feeding -



Only from animals slaughtered for the food industry
– Therefore, no live plucking –

Carefully washed and sorted into the ranges

Exclusive
Classic
Basic

=

=

BILLERBECK QUALITY

billerbeck quality testing

One of the cornerstones of our corporate philosophy is the focus on producing top-quality bedding, furniture for lying on and accessories. We turn the idea of good sleep into a reality with high-quality brand products. When doing so, the quality requirements for the blankets, pillows, toppers, mattresses, frames and accessories are traditionally very high: the use of the best raw materials and their careful processing are checked and documented in a complex step-by-step quality control process.

The testing is carried out according to applicable European standards in addition to our own quality standards that were developed at billerbeck.

Quality testing by independent institutes

In a comprehensive study, billerbeck had a selection of duvets reviewed by the renowned Hohenstein Institute. The results found by the independent textile experts confirms the traditional nature of billerbeck's corporate strategy to focus in a targeted manner on value and quality. Some of the duvets were rated „very good" for comfort in the various classes of thermal insulation, and are distinguished in the „special" category for the comfort seal for scientifically proven sleep quality.

The journey to customers

As an international company, billerbeck is aware of its own responsibility within the global flow of goods. We are convinced that lasting commercial success can only succeed if the effects of doing business are in harmony with people and the environment.

Suppliers

The billerbeck group's membership of amfori BSCI

The entire billerbeck group is registered as a member of the amfori Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI). Members undertake to support and promote amfori BSCI and its goals in general. In particular, they determine to verify their suppliers and to integrate them into the Compliance Programme (programme for social standards). amfori BSCI is a business-driven platform for improving social congruence in the global value chain and therefore offers companies a comprehensive monitoring and qualification system that can cover all products. This enables them to effectively and systematically improve working conditions worldwide.

In addition to health and safety at work, the requirements at amfori BSCI include a ban on child and forced labour, regulated working hours, and compliance with minimum environmental requirements.

Code of Conduct for suppliers

As we have already stipulated in our corporate philosophy, we attach great importance to social engagement, thought for the environment and fair cooperation as the pillars of our work. Our goal is to bring economic, ecological and social responsibility into harmony with one another.

This is why recognised social standards for the production and processing of raw materials should be complied with for billerbeck products. The fundamental requirements for our suppliers are regulated in a Code of Conduct whose principles are in line with the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI), the conventions of the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child and on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the principles of the UN Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and the Code of the European Down & Feather Association (EDFA).

BILLERBECK QUALITY

The principles laid down in our Code of Conduct should not be considered maximum requirements, but should even be exceeded if possible.

We would at this point like to emphasise that our Code of Conduct forms the basis for all business relationships relating to all national and international production processes and sites concerning primary commodities and materials for merchandise purchased from billerbeck.

The Code of Conduct applies worldwide both to billerbeck Betten-Union GmbH & Co. KG itself and to our direct business partners and the other agents employed by our partners who are involved in the production of merchandise for billerbeck. Our business partners must guarantee and vouch that they adhere to and/or guarantee the principles set out in this Code of Conduct.

In addition to complying with national and international laws and regulations as well as minimum industrial standards in the respective production facilities, our Code of Conduct prohibits not only all forms of discrimination in hiring and employment, but also child labour and any exploitation of children and young people.

In addition to the fact that our business partners have to ensure a safe and healthy working environment, there is also an obligation to provide regular working hours and fair remuneration and to prohibit of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.

Due to the great value placed on protection of nature and the environment in our business practice, our business partners undertake to comply with the applicable environmental standards in accordance with the Code of Conduct. They are also encouraged to continuously work on avoiding and reducing environmental pollution.

Of course, we are aware of our responsibility to ensure that these principles of the described Code of Conduct are guaranteed.

BILLERBECK RESPONSIBILITY

Monitoring the Code of Conduct

It is the responsibility of billerbeck Betten-Union GmbH & Co. KG to champion the principles of this Code of Conduct. Business partners are also obliged to have a social audit carried out at their production facilities at the request of billerbeck Betten-Union GmbH & Co. KG. Our direct business partners guarantee that billerbeck Betten-Union GmbH & Co. KG itself, or a third party it has authorised, may, if necessary, check compliance with the principles set out in this Code of Conduct at the premises of the direct partner or any agent appointed by him. In order for this to be able to happen, he will name any such production facilities as required.

In addition to our Code of Conduct, there are also three other aspects as regards the substance that have been set up specifically for billerbeck and that must be accepted by the suppliers concerned:

Mulesing

The production of Australian sheep's wool is often associated with cruelty to animals, and therefore finds itself in the public spotlight, because, in Australia, the "mulesing" process is often used on sheep or lambs. Since moisture and excrement can easily collect in the folds of the animals' skin, they often become infested with fly maggots. In order to prevent this, the folds of the sheep's skin in the tail region are cut off without anaesthetic.

Animal husbandry of this nature is in no way compatible with how we at billerbeck understand responsible and sustainable corporate activity. This is why we refuse to use Australian wool in our range and expect our business partners to prove that they are not selling any Australian sheep's wool to billerbeck.

Child labour harvesting Uzbek cotton

Despite ongoing international pressure, the media continues to document the systematic and state-controlled use of child and forced labour during the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan. However, as stated in our Code of Conduct, we do not tolerate any form of forced or child labour.

We have therefore decided to stop purchasing any cotton products that originated in Uzbekistan. We are also requiring our business partners to refrain from using Uzbek cotton in their products until the situation has improved.

We, furthermore, intend to use our influence to increase economic and political pressure on the Uzbek government to end the use of child and forced labour during the cotton harvest.

It is therefore a top priority for us that our business partners refrain from selling any kind of textile products or raw materials made from Uzbek cotton to billerbeck.

No live plucking and no foie gras
We also require our trading partners and suppliers to provide written confirmation and proof, by means of an audited certification, that all feathers and down that are used or resold are by-products of the food industry and come from birds that were only plucked after their death. We can therefore assure that no feathers or down come from ducks and geese from foie gras production.

Since, with grey geese, it is highly likely that they were plucked live or came from foie gras production, the suppliers we use for billerbeck deliveries have to undertake to completely refrain from using any down and feathers from grey geese.

Oeko-Tex® Standard 100

We also attach great importance to the fact that all materials used in billerbeck products and purchased from trading partners are certified according to Oeko-Tex® Standard 100.

The Oeko-Tex® Standard 100 is an independent testing and certification system for textile raw materials and intermediate and end products at all stages of processing.

Dealing responsibly with packaging, waste and recycling

We are particularly interested in recycling in terms of utilisation of the substances and materials used. Residual waste and edge remnants are separated and fed back into the production cycle, provided the law permits it. This is successfully achieved thanks to modern recycling systems, which enable us to feed valuable raw materials that are lost during production back into the material flow cycle. This way, we can ensure that none of our high-quality fibres, feathers or down are wasted. This not only reduces the amount of materials used, but also protects the environment by demonstrably reducing CO2-emissions. By working with companies active in this area, we are able to recycle or reuse the remnant materials and edge strips of duvets, pillows and toppers that amass during production. While the filling material goes back to billerbeck and is reused in production, the strips have been sent for several years now as pressed bales to a company that can make use of the material for further exploitation.

We are also careful to collect used but still recyclable boxes and use them further. By purchasing a fine dust filtering system, we have been able to do without additional plastic outer packaging for a long time, because, thanks to the filtered, clean air, our product packaging is contaminated with less dust. We, therefore, do not need any additional packaging.

Digitisation

A printout here, a copy there – in a company like billerbeck there are many places where paper can be saved.

By reorganising how we print brochures, we have achieved a significant reduction in the paper used. Storage quantities have been reduced and small quantities can now be printed based on demand.

As added value, this measure allows us to save resources and avoid wasting paper.

It also enables us to ourselves control or determine which paper we use. We attach great importance to using FSC-certified paper.

The aim of the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) is to support and promote environmentally friendly, socially responsible, economical, and thus holistically sustainable, forest management.

In addition, by means of digitisation measures, we strive to create new structures, processes and opportunities for our company – in respect of both customers and employees.

It is particularly worth mentioning our warehouse management software, which we have been using since 2010. In addition to improving delays in delivery and reducing two shifts to one in warehouse and shipping, we have also thereby succeeded in providing our customers with better delivery quality and, thanks to the modern system, offering employees more pleasant conditions and a significant improvement in their way of working. Another noteworthy advantage is the route optimisation achieved during order picking, which saves both time and resources.

It goes without saying that we also attach great importance to further advancing various work processes. We would like to push forward with digitising these processes in order to create a decisive technological foundation that enables new channels for information and networking.

A good example of this is our document management system (DMS) introduced in 2012, which enabled us to optimise many processes and to convert documents, such as delivery notes, into a paperless, digital form.

The construction of a second data centre with high data availability should also be mentioned here, since we have been able to minimise downtimes and provide better workplace conditions thanks to the high performance. Using modern, state-of-the-art devices that therefore use less electricity means we make significant savings in this area.

Climate and environment

We implement resource-saving measures to further improve our energy efficiency.

Use of regenerative energies

Photovoltaic system
On the way to becoming a CO_2-neutral production site, a photovoltaic system was installed on the roof of our production facility, which is constantly being expanded. The photovoltaic system has a peak output of 165 kWp. It supplies us with climate-friendly and CO_2-neutral electricity from solar energy, thus reducing our CO_2 footprint.

Electric cars as company vehicles
When purchasing new company cars, we look for environmentally friendly alternatives such as electric cars. These can be charged at the company's own charging station at any time.

Energy efficiency through modernization of facilities and buildings
In addition, great attention is also paid to ecological measures in production. Energy efficiency is also taken into account in the modernization of plants and buildings, for example in the installation of the extraction system, which also results in significant electricity savings.

Other noteworthy examples that underline our commitment to climate-neutral or environmentally friendly behavior include the insulation of various buildings on the one hand and the purchase of machinery on the other, which enables us to reduce both waste and dust emissions. In 2019, we also replaced both the heating burner and the air compressor, which is an example of the great importance billerbeck places on ensuring that our machines are state-of-the-art, which not only allows us to work more efficiently but also results in important energy savings. To protect our employees and the environment, our systems are also noise-reduced.

Intelligent heat control
In practice, we have already implemented this project by means of an internal heat control system for our offices. With the help of a control function, our heaters switch on automatically during core working hours. In this way, we avoid unnecessary heat energy and record important savings.

LED lighting
According to the 2014 report, for example, we have started to convert our lighting to LED technology.

Reducing transport routes
We continuously scrutinize all logistics processes. We avoid unnecessary empty runs and reduce CO2 emissions through transport round trips.

Energy audits
The energy audits, which have been mandatory since 2015 and are also carried out regularly at billerbeck, are an important source of information for us to find out in which areas we are already achieving good results and where improvements still need to be made.

BILLERBECK GROUP

billerbeck Group

As already mentioned at the start, our products are manufactured not only in Germany, but also at specialised locations in Hungary and Switzerland. In addition to having a consistent corporate philosophy, the entire billerbeck Group is founded on not only the same values and goals, but also on uniform seals, standards and regulations. Nevertheless, there are still some aspects where both Switzerland and Hungary differ from billerbeck Germany. We would like to reveal these below and thereby underline important additions.

billerbeck Switzerland

The production in the down category for the Swiss brands Dauny, Swiss Dream and billerbeck bear, at a minimum, the „Swiss Made" seal of approval and, in some cases, also that of „Swiss Wash". This means that the finished goods must be transported only within short distances within Switzerland and consequently leaves behind a lower carbon footprint. By producing nationally in Switzerland, we also dispense with any external outsourcing, which enables us to provide our employees with job security, which is very important to us. Our feathers and down for this come exclusively from Europe.

In addition to the renowned seals of approval that have already been listed, such as GOTS or the Oeko-Tex® Standard 100, we also bear the VSB and Down Pass seals in relation to Switzerland.

billerbeck Switzerland has been a member of the Association of Swiss Bedding Factories (VSB) for over 50 years. The Swiss Guaranty VSB seal of approval from the VSB guarantees, among other things, that the all-natural goose and duck down and feathers that are processed come from the dead animal (no live plucking and no foie gras) and are natural, environmentally friendly and recyclable.

Products sealed with the Downpass represent high quality and the assurance that the down and feathers used as filling material have been obtained in an ethically correct manner and come from strictly controlled and traceable supply chains. What is more, the quality of all products is monitored by independent testing institutes.

It is also worth noting that billerbeck Switzerland collaborates with a local printing company that places special emphasis on climate-neutral printing and environmentally friendly packaging. It supplies billerbeck with cardboard boxes for its down duvets and pillows. For our Swiss Dream brand products, we also use new boxes made of up to 80 % recycled material.

Furthermore, we also strive for environmental commitment in production. Thanks to the heat we are able to recover, we save about 4 kg of heating oil per hour when drying down and feathers, which equates to a reduction of around 6,000 to 8,000 kg of heating oil over the year. In other words, we save 7% on an annual consumption of 100,000 kg.

WORLDWIDE

billerbeck Hungary

billerbeck has been active in Hungary for over 30 years, and we are always striving here to be at the forefront of technological innovations. It is important to us to use state-of-the-art machinery to manufacture our products in a customer-orientated and environmentally friendly way and, in the process, keep our ecological footprint as low as possible. On top of using environmentally friendly raw materials and committing to integrating them into our everyday practice, we also place great value on continually improving our quality system. All employees are responsible for this.

We always work using the strictest standards, both in terms of our suppliers and our quality guidelines. What is more, we are convinced of using recyclable raw materials instead of chemical polymers in order to live up to our claim that we handle our resources in an environmentally friendly manner.

This is why even orders from our online shop are therefore sent to our customers in recyclable paper packaging.

In terms of our social engagement, we are particularly committed to social institutions. For example, by visiting and helping to organise an event at a children's home in Budapest, we wanted to draw attention to the fact that there are around 23,000 children in Hungary who do not have the opportunity to be raised by their own families. To give them a treat, the children also received gifts from billerbeck.

A „Brandy and Sausage Stuffing Competition" was held in the town of Szeghalom, in which billerbeck Hungary employees also took part. More than 40 teams in total from sports clubs, companies, restaurants and governmental institutions met in a sports hall to present the best sausage products/sausages from their own, secret recipes.

At the end, a three-person jury assessed the finished dishes and table decorations.

The event also served a charitable purpose: the money raised was used to enable children from the region to learn a foreign language. The billerbeck Hungarian team was awarded a certificate of praise.

OUR CUSTOMERS

In order to be as customer oriented as possible, billerbeck not only relies on dedicated sales staff and personal contact in our shop in Kraichtal, but also tries to always keep the customer comprehensively informed through news releases about product offers and innovations.

It is also our personal aspiration to be able to provide information wherever our customers need it – be it in our brochures, on our website or via our social media channels.

Our customers can find useful information about sleep and health in the form of blog articles on our website. We also offer information about our products and how to care for them optimally.

In order to continue to be able to meet the growing needs of our customers in the future, we would like to further expand our areas of expertise.

To do this, we engage in an intensive and, above all, transparent exchange with our end consumers, because we are convinced that the only way to continue being able to develop our products in the best possible way is through focusing without compromise on customer needs.

*„What we do **today** dictates what the world will look like **tomorrow**."*

by Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach

AFTERWORD

Dear Readers,

With this report, we have now given you a comprehensive insight into our efforts in the area of sustainability.

We have already succeeded in the past in the various divisions of our business to make important decisions to improve our initiatives on behalf of nature conservation and environmental and climate protection.

Nevertheless, we are aware that we will have to take further measures in the future in order to be able to further expand our commitment to environmental friendliness. Because for us as a company, the commitment to sustainability is a continuous process without an end date that must always be expanded and continued.

At the same time, this report also aims at further raising our employees' awareness of the issue of sustainability. Our goal is to openly and equally address both successes and difficulties and suggestions for improvements in the way we think about our environment and society, in order to be able to drive our development.

If, dear readers, you have any suggestions or questions about our sustainability programme, we would be happy to assist you at info@billerbeck.info.

YOURS, Friedrich Ermert

billerbeck

SLEEPING CULTURE SINCE 1921

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Terms referring to persons are understood to include both female and male persons equally.

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