

News from Euro Plant Tray eG

The onset of spring also brings growth and blossom to Euro Plant Tray eG.

Already 26 companies from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands have joined Euro Plant Tray eG, which was founded in August 2022. With AS Blomsterringen Engros, the first member from Scandinavia has recently come on board.

Dirk Bansemer, board member of Euro Plant Tray eG: "Our common goal is to introduce a new standard of reusable packaging in plant transport and thus save up to 40,000t of plastic waste p.a.. We are pleased about the great involvement from the industry and that we can now actively develop our vision for a European solution further with our first member from Scandinavia."

Due to the strong growth in EPT's members, 4 additional supervisory board members were elected, in accordance with the statutes. In addition to Jutta Lehmann (Hornbach), Christian Müller (Marktverband Bremen) and Norbert Engler (BGI), Felix Thun-Hohenstein (Bellaflora Austria), Marco Bertoli (Coop Switzerland), Dr. Peter Wüst (BHB and representative of Blomsterringen) and Michiel de Haan (Royal Lemkes Netherlands) were elected as supervisory board members by the cooperative assembly.

The Board of Directors and the Supervisory Board will continue to work together to promote the development of EPT in the future. An further important milestone in this regard is the foundation of Euro Plant Tray GmbH, for which an application has now been filed.

"In order to be able to handle the operative business efficiently, we need the GmbH. This was already clear from the discussions in the Flowertray project that preceded the founding of EPT. Coordination of all day-to-day business issues can be realised even more efficiently this way," says Thomas Berthold, board member of EPT eG.

Board member Dirk Bansemer adds: "The GmbH will also be the owner of the assets, i.e. the future trays. Operational and strategic decisions will thus be made where it makes sense."

In addition to the activities to set up the future company structure, the members' focus is currently also on the extensive practical testing of two models. In more than 5 supply chains in Germany and the Netherlands, the trays are handled through the entire supply chain. Feedback from all stakeholders is collected and fed back to the tray producers to fine-tune the current designs.

Kai Fleiner, Südblume Vertriebs GmbH: "In the first test run, we supplied 54 Globus Fachmärkte store locations. The distribution to the stores was done in-house. In terms of handling, the Euro Plant Tray was more stable and reliable than the previous disposable trays. We receive feedback from our plant producers that EPT offers advantages in terms of stability and handling also in their operations."

Maik Schwirtz, product group manager for plants at Globus Fachmärkte: "In the store, we use the Euro Plant Tray to display the goods. Our employees tell us that the EPT is easier to handle because of its stability. The appearance at the POS is uniform and promotes sales."

Similar feedback is also shared by Verena Nilges from Ideen mit Blatt und Blüte, a FleuraMetz customer: "The stability of the trays is super, I'm really thrilled! The EPT trays are easy to grip from below, have a good grip in general and are overall very easy to handle, much more practical than the various disposable trays that are currently in circulation. The design, which allows several pot sizes to be accommodated on one tray each, makes me much more flexible and also

makes it easier to sort for return. I am looking forward to the introduction of the reusable system, the right way for the future!"

Solutions also continue to be worked on within the Euro Plant Tray members: In a joint practical test in Aalsmeer, the members carried out tests and agreed on parameters in future handling, e.g. the transport of empty trays. In order to meet all future market requirements, the EPT trays are to be equipped not only with barcodes and 2D Datamatrix codes for identification, also the use of Bluetooth tags is being investigated.

Dirk Bansemer: "In addition to the possibilities for automating booking processes and inventory tracking, Bluetooth also offers additional options such as temperature control of goods. The investment requirement for users is many times lower than with RFID, but the technology is reliable, durable and easy to use. We are convinced that the application possibilities of Bluetooth will offer EPT users significant added value. Which identification is to be used in each case and which information is queried in the respective chains is always up to the respective supply chain to decide. We just want to make sure that all possibilities are offered."

At the beginning of June, the cooperative meeting will jointly consider all the test results and then select the tray with which to start into the future. At the same time, it will also be decided which formats will be developed in the next step.

Follow EPT's development on LinkedIn [linkedin/company/europlanttray](https://www.linkedin.com/company/europlanttray) and visit www.europlanttray.com for more information.

Photo 1: Norbert Gruner-Weingärtner, Dehner Garden Centre:

"By participating in Euro Plant Tray eG, we are taking another consistent step in our sustainability strategy. Shortly after the start of the test delivery in three garden centres of the Dehner Group, there were already the first, very positive customer statements about the EPT reusable system."

Photo 2 and 3: Verena Nilges

Photo 4: Südblume