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Nagel-Group and Herta test THT New Cool

Bochum, 9 December 2020. The food logistics company Nagel-Group and the ham and sausage maker Herta are working towards more sustainable logistics. The companies are jointly testing the practical application of a fully electric semi-trailer truck.

“Climate change poses a serious threat, and we have to make every effort to significantly reduce CO2 emissions. Logistics plays a significant role in this regard. That is why we gladly agreed to take part in this trial project,” says Bettina Fürstenberg, Managing Director at Herta.

The project will involve a fully electric refrigerated semi-trailer, which is based on the Krone Cool Liner and equipped with technology from the Dutch company THT New Cool/Twan Heetkamp. In addition to powerful batteries, one of its main features is its ability to recover energy using the axle. The semi-trailer produces less than two kilogrammes of CO2 emissions per hour of cooling compared to the 6.5 kilogrammes of a conventional, diesel-powered semi-trailer.

“A distinctive feature of the semi-trailer is that the batteries have moved the weight more toward the middle of the trailer. That has the advantage of optimising weight distribution even when transporting less-than-truckload (LTL),” says Ingo Geerdes, Managing Director of Distribution at Krone. Yet the electric semi-trailer does not weigh more than a semi-trailer with a conventional cooling system. The weight of the batteries is offset by eliminating the diesel engine and the fuel tank. Nagel-Group had already tested the electric semi-trailer in southern Germany at the end of 2019, and the initial results were promising.

Working with Herta, Nagel-Group has selected existing transports for the trial period of several months. Pulled by a conventional tractor unit, the electric semi-trailer will commute between the production site of Herta in Herten and the Kraftverkehr Nagel branch in Bochum several times a day as part of a shuttle service. The one-way distance is around 35 kilometres. The sausage products must be chilled along the entire supply chain. Therefore, the semi-trailer is cooled to zero degrees in order to be able to offer the ideal temperatures for loading and unloading.

The electric semi-trailer does not require dedicated charging infrastructure. The existing 380V/32A power plugs at the loading bays do the job. In Bochum, the electricity required is generated directly at the branch. It started operating the largest rooftop photovoltaic system in the Ruhr area in September 2020. The electricity it generates also charges the electric semi-trailer. “This way, our site can ensure

that the food in the semi-trailer is chilled without the use of fossil fuels, thus promoting even greater sustainability,” says Björn Heinnermann, Branch Manager.

An additional benefit is a reduction in noise emissions from 70 to 59 decibels. “This corresponds to reducing the noise levels from a lawnmower to a normal conversation,” explains Arthur Ebel, Fleet Manager at Nagel-Group. That increases the socially responsible use of the semi-trailer in urban areas. Herta and Nagel-Group will test Krone’s electric semi-trailer in the Ruhr area for at least three months. “We will incorporate the results into our considerations for the further modernisation of our fleet,” explains Carsten Taucke, CEO of Nagel-Group. “Unfortunately, current federal funding programmes are focusing exclusively on motorised units. Logistics companies and their customers must currently bear the significant extra cost themselves to move to an electric semi-trailer compared to diesel-powered units. A change in the funding structure would be a helpful incentive here.”

About the Nagel-Group

The Nagel-Group, which specialises in food logistics, operates throughout Europe and has its headquarters in Versmold. It employs over 13,000 people at more than 130 locations. Recently the company reported a turnover of 2.1 billion euros. The company group moves food consignments of all sizes and in all temperature ranges. Whether frozen products, meat, dairy products, coffee or sweets, by order of manufacturers and retailers, the Nagel-Group daily provides consumers all over Europe at the point of sale with the right goods in the right quality at the right time. Thus, the Nagel-Group makes a substantial contribution to the success of its customers.



If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.:

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