



# Press Release

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## The ecological Oktoberfest: a successful model

In 1997, Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs presented its federal project prize for “Environmental Guidelines Governing Major Events” – known in Germany as the “Eco-Oscar” – to the City of Munich. Ever since, the Oktoberfest, organized by the Department of Labor and Economic Development, has served as an international model for the eco-friendly organization of large-scale events.

### **The ecological concept**

A lot has happened since rules on reducing waste were first incorporated in the Oktoberfest's operating regulations in 1991. In cooperation with other local government departments, a strategy has since been developed to minimize the environmental impact of the world's largest public festival.

Relevant measures range from reducing waste and water consumption through the use of green electricity and natural gas to the sale of organic foods and regional products, plus a rating system based on “eco-points” that can help suppliers qualify for admission to the Oktoberfest. Over the years, protecting the environment has become second nature to the Oktoberfest.

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### **Eco-points help vendors become Oktoberfest suppliers**

Since 1995, applicants looking to offer their goods and services at the Oktoberfest have been able to improve their chances by providing evidence of environmental compatibility. The issues taken into account in this rating system include the use of biodegradable hydraulic oils, the sale of organic products (with self-signed certificates), the implementation of energy-saving measures such as the installation of solar panels, the deployment of electric (haulage) vehicles and accreditation as carbon-neutral operations (or, for the rides, carbon-neutral transportation), for example.

### **ECOPROFIT Munich**

No fewer than 23 companies operating at the Oktoberfest took part in the ECOPROFIT Munich program for environmental consulting and climate change mitigation last year. This year, ECOPROFIT Munich has focused its activities on a program for first-time users among the providers of attractions and catering services. From almond roasters to chairplanes to beer tents, 43 players are now taking part – and improving their carbon footprint in the process. On the basis of professional environmental consulting, ECOPROFIT Munich works with participating firms to define technical and organizational measures that help save materials, water and energy, avoid waste and reduce harmful emissions. At the same time, awareness of ecological issues is enhanced among the vendors' teams as they are integrated in this corporate environment management program. Some of the measures include carbon offsetting for locally generated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, saving water by using water-free urinals, for example,



deploying electric vehicles, but also composting leftover fruit and avoiding the use of aluminum foil when selling food to take out.

ECOPROFIT Munich is a cooperative venture backed by companies in the Bavarian capital, the Department of Labor and Economic Development, the Department of Health and Environment, the city's municipal waste disposal utility AWM, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce for Munich and Upper Bavaria, municipal power/water utility SWM and the Munich University of Applied Sciences (MUAS).

**More information (in German):** [www.muenchen.de/oekoprofit](http://www.muenchen.de/oekoprofit)

### **Carbon-neutral Oktoberfest vendors**

This is another area where the Munich Oktoberfest is showing the way forward. Since 2016, the Ammer chicken and duck roasters have been operating the festival's first carbon-neutral caterer. The “roastery” offsets unavoidable CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with projects in Nigeria (efficient cooking systems for families), India (generating power from residue from the mustard harvest) and Kenya (constructing biogas plants). Chicken roaster Zum Stiftl followed suit in 2018 and is now offsetting its unavoidable CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with a mountain woodland project in the southern German region of Oberallgäu, plus a forest conservation project in Papua New Guinea.

This year, the Kufflers wine tent, too, was certified as a “carbon-neutral company” at the Oktoberfest. Kufflers is using two climate change mitigation projects – a reforestation scheme in Oberallgäu and a clean ovens project in Peru – to offset all local CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that cannot be avoided at the present time. Also in 2019, the brewery Hofbräu München will have a carbon-neutral footprint for the production of its Oktoberfest



beer, its transportation to the festival grounds and the operation of its Hofbräu tent, the “Zur Schönheitskönigin” folk music tent, the wheat beer carousel ride “Fahrenschon” and the “Bieralm” run by the Haas family. This goal will be achieved by renaturing a moorland in Chiemgau and a concept – implemented in Thann, near Zolling – to sequester climate gases in humus.

Carbon-neutral activities can also be found among the rides and attractions. Both the Bayern Tower and the VR adventure ride Dr. Archibald – Master of Time have been accredited, for example. Similarly, the Lechner wave glider, the Höllenblitz indoor roller coaster and ten other rides and sideshows have had the carbon neutrality of their transportation calculated. Climate-neutral wheat beer can now also be enjoyed in the Weissbieralm.

All relevant sources of emissions in the context of a given operation are taken into account for certification as a carbon-neutral company. For catering companies, that includes preparation of the food and drinks consumed, energy and water consumption during the Oktoberfest, employees' travel to and from the tent where they work, waste disposal, and fuel consumption for transportation to set up and dismantle the tent. The total volume of resultant CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is then offset by recognized and accredited climate change mitigation projects, thereby ensuring a zero-carbon footprint on a global scale.

### **Electric power**

Since 2012, all power feeds at the Oktoberfest have been supplied by locally generated, environmentally friendly “green” electricity



(“M-Ökostrom”). In addition, more than 60 percent of the fairground attraction operators, vendors and landlords have accepted municipal power utility SWM's “M-Ökoaktiv” offer. By using M-Ökoaktiv electricity, customers not only contribute to protecting the environment but also support the construction of new facilities for generating renewable energy through payment of a premium. The festival management, too, demonstrates a keen environmental awareness: Since the year 2000, all public spaces at the Oktoberfest, the “streets” on the Oktoberfest grounds and all public toilets have been operated with green electricity.

### **Green electricity (“M-Ökostrom”)**

For Oktoberfest operations that use energy from renewable sources such as hydropower, the volume of electricity needed to meet customers' consumption demand is generated and fed into the European power grid. Munich power utility SWM certifies this fact by producing proof of origin in compliance with European Parliament Directive 2009/28/EC. The use of green electricity under the M-Ökostrom label thus reduces carbon emissions. Proof of origin can be attributed precisely to each customer for each electricity delivery, and the fuel mix disclosure is taken into account in accordance with Section 42 of the German Energy Act (EnWG). SWM manages and validates proof-of-origin certificates with complete transparency.

### **Natural gas**

All catering facilities at the Oktoberfest are also supplied with “green” natural gas under the label M-Ökogas. Supplying green electricity and natural gas to all festival providers alone avoids 1,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>



emissions. A dedicated, roughly five-kilometer pipeline is installed on the Theresienwiese festival grounds to supply the beer tents and other companies with eco-friendly natural gas.

### **M-Ökogas**

Natural gas under the M-Ökogas label is carbon-neutral gas supplied by SWM. Relevant CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are offset by the purchase of certified emission reductions. Revenue from these purchases is then used to advance climate change mitigation projects, most of which also have social welfare aspects. These projects would not exist without the funds raised by certificate sales. The same amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as those generated by the consumption of natural gas can thus be avoided elsewhere. Every kilowatt-hour of M-Ökogas avoids approximately 239 grams of CO<sub>2</sub>.

### **Waste reduction**

The two main elements of the waste reduction concept are a ban on disposable tableware and the strict separation of waste. Tremendous importance is attached to compliance with the very latest ecological standards in the context of waste separation and disposal.

Since 1991, only reusable tableware and cutlery have been permitted at the Oktoberfest. Soft drinks are sold only in reusable bottles with a minimum deposit of one euro. The sale of canned drinks is prohibited. Reusable transport containers are used to deliver food and beer mugs to the Oktoberfest. All waste is sorted and recyclable materials are taken to the appropriate collection bins.



The Department of Labor and Economic Development – the festival organizer – pays for the disposal of waste: Nine compacting containers for paper and cardboard and eight igloos each for white glass and green glass accommodate the waste. Twelve additional compacting containers are available for the disposal of residual (non-recyclable) waste and are managed by a special task force.

The major caterers have their own containers and dispose of used glass at their own expense. Kitchen waste and leftover food are also separated and recycled specially, again at the expense of the relevant landlords.

The municipal street cleaning unit uses electric vehicles and a compact sweeper to clear litter and refuse away from the sidewalks every day. Over the past decade, it has seen the volume of waste for disposal decline from 247 tonnes in 2008 to 88 tonnes in 2018.

### **Water recycling**

A recycling project to save water at the Oktoberfest has been in place since 1998. Resource-friendly gray water recovery systems are in use at seven beer tents (Pschorrbräu's Bräurosl, Hacker, Hofbräu, Löwenbräu, Marstall, Schottenhamel and Paulaner) and at the chicken roasters Zum Stiffl, Poschner and Goldener Hahn. Based on a cascade principle, the rinse water from the machines used to clean beer mugs is not discharged into the public sewers, but is instead used to flush the toilets.

### **Organic delicacies**

Many of the companies present at the 2019 Oktoberfest are certified in accordance with EU Regulation 834/2007 and sell a wide range of organic festival specialties – from classic roast chicken to roasted almonds, from



fried sausages to steak rolls, from chocolate-coated bananas to waffles. Vendors are careful to keep transportation routes as short as possible. Their assortments feature products bearing one of two respected quality seals: “Geprüfte Qualität Bayern” (“Certified Bavarian Quality”) or “Bayerischen Bio-Siegel” (the “Bavarian Organic Seal”). Positive resonance has also been generated by the sale of carbon-neutral products such as gingerbread hearts from Zuckersucht.

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The official website and addresses for all information about the Oktoberfest:

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**Oktoberfest – the Festival of the City of Munich**