

Transport fans ensure a targeted laminar air flow in the production hall.

Getting a handle on hygiene

The company DMK Deutsches Milch Kontor GmbH in Zeven is by far the largest dairy in the German market. It arose from the merger of Nordmilch and Humana four years ago. Every year, over six billion kilograms of milk are processed into high quality products at 28 locations in ten regions. An important prerequisite for their microbiological safety is the highest possible standard of hygiene in the production facilities.

Ludger Brüning is responsible for investment projects in the field of technical planning at DMK in Erfurt and Coesfeld. The 54-year-old master dairy technician has a lot to do at the moment as he is involved in the plant restructuring program, which was launched by the Group in 2012. This includes, for example, the relocation of the production lines for cream cheese, cottage cheese, mascarpone cheese, rice pudding and desserts from the Everswinkel and Georgsmarienhütte plants to Erfurt. They are also investing in new technology there. Brüning: "Our ultra-filtration plant with a capacity of six tons per hour may just be unique in the dairy industry for this size of plant." The Coesfeld plant produces fermented milk products and dessert specialties. This site is not affected by the current plant restructuring program.

The term "hygiene" has a special significance for DMK, since it is IFS-certified with a degree of compliance of more than 97 percent. "On the one hand, we want to offer the consumer the highest level of food safety, on the other hand, we also want to protect ourselves from recalls and negative headlines," says Brüning. Previously used sterile air systems could not manage this to the required degree of reliability. "There were a few mould problems in the past," says Brüning. "While we have always had a high standard of hygiene, we still wanted to get a handle on this problem. The filling of our sensitive dessert products such as pudding with cream has become safer." The system has been retrofitted in older machines that do not have the current standards of hygiene.



Ludger Brüning (l.) and Ralf Ohlmann often talk about possibilities to improve hygiene in the DMK plants.