

PRESS RELEASE

Cologne, 27 May 2021

REWE opens future-orientated green supermarket featuring lots of timber and a roof farm

The new generation of green constructions – green farming buildings – is revolutionising the way we shop

- **Herbs and fish are cultivated and sold on site**
- **Wood as the main building material saves 700 tonnes of CO₂**
- **Unique architecture with wooden columns creates a marketplace ambience**

What will the stores of the future look like? How can we build sustainably? REWE answers these questions with the first green farming building in Wiesbaden-Erbenheim. The pilot store is more sustainable and represents the new generation of REWE green buildings. It opens on 27 May and is the first supermarket in Europe with resource-saving food production on its roof.

The approximately 1,500-square-metre supermarket at Berliner Strasse 277 is striking even from the outside due to its unusual architectural concept. Columns of stacked timber form the supporting structure for the glass roof farm to create a unique vaulted shape that extends out over the market. The inside of the store affords customers a view out onto a glass atrium – the greenhouse on the roof. The design, conceived with the London architectural firm ACME, creates a natural marketplace ambience bursting with daylight.

“With the green farming project in Erbenheim, we are ushering in a new generation of REWE green stores since, for us, holistic sustainability isn’t just about the range of products we stock – it includes construction and operation too. This new structure, the first of its kind in Germany and Europe, combines a supermarket, basil nursery and fish farm under its glass roof – it’s the latest generation of green building. Since 2009, we have already built over 200 green buildings in Germany. The new store with its integrated rooftop farm is the logical next step for us,” says Peter Maly, Divisional Director of REWE Group, who is responsible for REWE stores in Germany.

Build sustainably, conserve resources

The building was constructed with around 1,100 cubic metres of wood. This natural and renewable raw material is the core element of the supermarket of the future. Using native coniferous wood for the building saves more than 700 tonnes of CO₂. In 30 years, the wood will have grown again, thereby restoring the CO₂ balance.

The glazed east and west façades and the atrium have been designed to let in plenty of sunlight. In addition, resources are conserved by the store's intelligent cooling and heating technology, 100 per cent green electricity supply and use of rainwater for the roof farm, sanitary facilities and cleaning of the market.

“The architecture for this market of the future celebrates resource-efficient building. The sculptural timber supports allow for the rooftop farms and other applications to be integrated on the roof, providing shade and shelter for open market stalls below, and giving the market hall a new human scale. In cooperation with REWE, we have broken new ground not only in timber construction, but also in interior design, to create a very local market that's rooted in the region, in the choice of materials, the presentation of local products and by producing and processing products directly in the market”, says Friedrich Ludewig, founder and director of ACME.

The outdoor areas are also designed to be sustainable. With a new car park layout, in which the parking spaces are arranged in a circle, sealed surfaces were reduced and permeable subsoils were created. The additional green spaces and a flowering meadow create important habitats for insects.

Food on the shortest delivery route thanks to urban farming

The REWE green farming store is not just a supermarket, but also a production facility in the middle of the city. On the rooftop farm, which is operated by REWE's partner [ECF Farmsystems](#) 800,000 basil plants can be grown annually using aquaponics, which use dung from the fish that REWE farms on site as fertiliser. No pesticides are used in this process.

“Our vision is to provide people with sustainably produced food. That's why I'm happy to be able to help realise the dream of a self-producing supermarket here in Wiesbaden”, says Nicolas Leschke, founder and managing director of ECF Farmsystems.

Two separate, resource-saving cycles have been connected thanks to the innovative technology of the Berlin start-up: the aquaculture cycle of fresh production and the hydroponics cycle of plant production – thus creating an *aquaponics* system. The use of this recirculation

system enables food production with 90 percent less water consumption compared to conventional agriculture, as the water is used twice.

Around 14,000 pots of basil are packaged plastic-free on site every week. Sustainable packaging can save 12 tonnes of plastic a year. Even at the store's opening, the basil is already available for sale and will also be delivered to 480 REWE stores in Hesse and parts of Rhineland-Palatinate. Alongside the basil, around 20,000 cichlids (European perch) are being bred in basins of around 230 square metres under sustainable conditions and processed while still on site. This produces about one tonne of fish meat per month. The fish is expected to go on sale at the end of 2021.

Customers can expect a wide range of fresh products and digital services

The range of items for sale is focused entirely on fresh products with a large fruit and vegetable section, including salad bar, many regional and organic products as well as a glass butchery area with a show kitchen and meat from animal welfare farms. In front of the store, local suppliers can sell their products in specially built market stalls.

“The new REWE store in Erbenheim is a milestone in the development of modern supermarkets. I'm very pleased and also a little proud that this special project has been realised in our region”, says Jürgen Scheider, Chairman of the Management Board of REWE Region Mitte. “We are particularly proud of the wide range of over 100 regional and local suppliers.”

In addition, customers can use ‘Scan&Go’ in the store, i.e. they can scan their products themselves via an app or hand scanner and pay at the express checkouts. A REWE pick-up service lets you shop online and pick your order up ready-packed from the store. There are also charging stations for electric cars and e-bikes.

Partners on board are [EatHappy](#) with a sushi counter and [Lohner's](#) bakery.

The path to a more sustainable future

Green farming in Wiesbaden-Erbenheim is paving the way for the REWE stores of the future. The concept is to be fully implemented as a standard in new constructions or, depending on the building, partially adapted. Find out more at rewe.de/greenfarming.

About REWE:

With a turnover of 26.5 billion euros (2020), 161,000 employees and 3,700 stores throughout Germany, REWE Markt GmbH is one of the leading companies in German food retail. REWE stores are operated as branches or by independent REWE merchants.

The cooperative REWE Group is a leading trade and tourism group in Germany and Europe. In 2020, the company generated total external revenue of around 75 billion euros. REWE Group was established in 1927, employs over 380,000 people and operates stores in 22 European countries.

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