Nordzucker starts the 2026/2027 campaign – factories well prepared

Nordzucker will begin processing sugar beet at its European sugar factories in early September. The production sites have been thoroughly prepared for the campaign, with the focus on health and safety, quality and efficiency. Due to weather conditions, beet yields have not developed optimally in most growing regions.

Braunschweig, 1 September 2026 – In the coming days, Nordzucker will launch the 2026/2027 campaign at its European sites. The two Polish sites, Chełmża and Opalenica, will kick off the campaign, followed by Lithuania, Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. As in previous years, organic sugar beet will be processed first at the Schladen (Germany) and Nykøbing (Denmark) sites. The Nordzucker factories have made intensive use of the period between campaigns to carry out extensive maintenance, repair and modernisation work.

“Due to the weather this year, the beet has not developed optimally so far in many of Nordzucker’s growing regions. However, weather conditions in the coming weeks will remain crucial for the beet’s further growth and the development of its sugar content right up to harvest,” says Lars Gorissen, CEO of Nordzucker AG.

Plant diseases such as SBR remain under scrutiny

Furthermore, the spread of the Schilf-Glasflügelzikade* and the associated beet diseases SBR and stolbur remain a key concern. These diseases can affect the sugar content and processing of the beets and reduce sugar yield. Nordzucker is continuously monitoring developments and utilises comprehensive monitoring systems to assess the situation in the growing regions and, on that basis, to devise measures for crop advisory services and recommendations for growers. At the same time, the company continues to rely on close cooperation with research institutes, ministries and authorities.

“The success of a campaign depends on close cooperation between many stakeholders along the value chain. From our growers, through our agricultural colleagues and beet logistics teams, to the staff at our factories – numerous teams work hand in hand to ensure the safe and reliable processing of the beet and the supply of sugar to our customers. I wish everyone a successful campaign,” emphasises Gorissen.

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Maintenance phase utilised for modernisation and efficiency improvements

In preparation for the 2026/2027 campaign, Nordzucker has invested in the modernisation of production facilities at numerous sites. For example, new evaporator stages have been installed at several Nordzucker sites to enable a more energy-efficient production process with significant CO_2 savings. At the Nordstemmen plant, a new beet washing facility will also come into operation at the start of the campaign. The plant features state-of-the-art cleaning technology, optimises water treatment and enables the beets to be transported more gently to the factory for processing. The Nordzucker site in Schladen is commissioning a new extraction tower. This will make sugar production more efficient and reduce energy consumption in the production process.

“Through our investments and maintenance measures, we are driving forward both efficiency and decarbonisation in equal measure. We have already achieved around half of the CO_2 reduction planned by 2030 compared with the base year of 2018 and have significantly reduced energy consumption per tonne of sugar produced since 2018. The combination of operational excellence, energy efficiency and decarbonisation is and remains a central pillar of our corporate strategy,” explains Alexander Godow, COO of Nordzucker AG.

Challenging market environment persists

The start of the campaign continues to take place against the backdrop of a challenging market phase. High sugar stocks in the EU and on the world market, as well as low sugar prices, are currently shaping the operating conditions for the European sugar industry. Added to this is the tax on sugar-sweetened soft drinks currently being planned in Germany, which could bring with it considerable uncertainty and significant economic consequences for the industry, the agricultural sector and numerous jobs in rural regions. At the same time, extreme weather conditions and increasing disease pressure are affecting yield expectations in many European growing regions. “It is precisely in a challenging market environment that high-performance factories, efficient processes and close cooperation with our growers are crucial. We are continuing to work consistently towards this,” says Gorissen.

Restructuring of the production network as part of the strategic transformation

Against the backdrop of persistent structural overcapacity in the European sugar industry, Nordzucker intends to cease sugar production at its Nakskov site in Denmark. This is a proactive measure as part of the company’s Fields for Growth strategy, aimed at securing the Group’s future competitiveness and creating a more efficient production network overall. Earlier this year, the company had already announced that sugar production at the Trenčianská Teplá site in Slovakia, as well as the refining of raw sugar at the Porkkala site in Finland, would be discontinued. This has already optimised production capacities within the Group.

*Pentastiridius leporinus

Background

Campaign

The sugar beet campaign, or simply ‘campaign’, refers to the period of the year during which sugar beet is processed in sugar factories. The campaign usually runs from mid-September to January.

Nordzucker

Nordzucker is one of the world’s leading producers of sugar from sugar beet and sugar cane. The group produces sugar products in various forms, such as white sugar, raw sugar, refined sugar, organic sugar, speciality sugars and liquid sugars. In addition, Nordzucker produces animal feed, molasses, fertilisers and fuels, as well as electricity. In the 2025/26 financial year, the company generated turnover of 2.3 billion euros.
With its ‘Fields for Growth’ strategy, Nordzucker is focusing on two key areas: strengthening the profitability of its existing business and pursuing targeted diversification and growth.
As part of this strategy, Nordzucker is also focusing on the goal of operating its plants in a carbon-neutral manner by 2050 at the latest. This is complemented by targets to reduce CO_2 emissions in beet cultivation.
High-quality products and services, growth prospects and continuous improvement are the driving force behind a dedicated and international team of around 4,000 employees at 18 production sites across Europe and Australia.
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