Press release

Nordzucker concludes the 2016/2017 campaign

Above-average yield reflects the excellent growing year across the Group

Braunschweig, Germany, 4 January 2017

The Nordzucker Group has almost reached the end of the 2016/2017 beet campaign, recording above-average sugar yields. The 13 plants were operating for an average of 104 days, a figure that was once again higher than in the previous year.

In total, Nordzucker processed some 15 million tonnes of beet in its 13 plants (previous year: 12.5 million tonnes). With most other plants having already ended the campaign in the past few days, those in Uelzen (Germany), Örtofta (Sweden) and Opalenica (Poland) will be following suit in the days ahead. At just one plant, Trenčianska Teplá in Slovakia, the campaign will run until 22 January 2017 following a record harvest.

“We have conducted an overall stable campaign at our plants this year. Only at the beginning of it did some of our plants have to deal with a greater proportion of weeds,” points out Axel Aumüller, Chief Operating Officer. “First and foremost, this is the result of continuous investment in our sites and our targeted and centrally managed maintenance efforts. All this is necessary to continue producing in a competitive manner and in line with market requirements,” stresses Aumüller looking ahead to 2017, which will herald a sea change due to the abolition of sugar quotas and minimum beet prices in the EU.
This year’s sugar yield is above the long-term average in all of the countries in which the Group operates, with particularly outstanding results achieved in some growing regions. Slovakia stands out particularly strongly this year.

“We had overall favourable weather, which was extremely conducive to the growth of the beet. The good result, however, is also due to our cultivation advice and close working relationship with the farmers,” explains Dr Lars Gorissen, Chief Agricultural Officer. He underlines that, “We are moving in the right direction and will increase our yields further; our beet will stay competitive in the future.”

Below is an overview of the results by country:

**Germany**

After an average of 103 days, a very good campaign for the five German plants is coming to a close. With some 13.5 tonnes of sugar per hectare (previous year: 13.0 tonnes), yields are above the long-term average, albeit with significant regional fluctuations and some peak scores. Even though a very dry September and a lack of sunshine in October prevented even better results, the high beet quality right up to the final day contributed to stable processing at the plants.

**Denmark**

The two plants in Nakskov and Nykøbing processed above-average beet yields up to the turn of the year over an average of 101 days. Coming in at 13.1 tonnes, the sugar yield was on a par with last year’s level. Back in spring, the beet had been drilled under favourable conditions. The summer, however, was drier than normal, giving difficult harvesting conditions at the start of the campaign.

**Sweden**

This year’s campaign at the Örtofta plant has lasted round 116 days and will probably come to an end on 9 January. With a sugar yield of 11.4 tonnes per hectare (previous year: 10.8 tonnes), the results are up slightly on the five-year average. Subsequent the beet sowing in March/April followed favourable growing conditions however slightly dry during the summer period. Early frost at the beginning of November, created difficult harvesting conditions in some areas and presented a few challenges at the end of the campaign.
Finland
Säkylä in Finland was the first plant to complete its campaign back in November, with a somewhat above-average sugar yield of 6.7 tonnes per hectare (previous year: 5.3 tonnes). The beet growing season was characterized by very favourable weather conditions however drier from early autumn. The virtually uninterrupted processing period lasted a total of 57 days.

Lithuania
The Kédainiai plant in Lithuania was operating at a high level and more or less without interruption over 106 days until 30 December. Despite a slight delay in sowing and a slightly unsettled spring, subsequent good growth conditions resulted in above-average sugar yields of 11.6 tonnes per hectare (previous year: 9.6 tonnes).

Poland
This year, the weather conditions in Poland were extremely conducive to beet growth. On the back of two very dry years, there was sufficient precipitation this year, giving rise to strong yields. The sugar yield of 12.8 tonnes per hectare is up considerably on the previous year’s level (previous year: 10.0 tonnes). The campaign lasted 104 days on average and ended on 4 January in Opalenica.

Slovakia
It is anticipated that the Trenčianska Teplá plant will end its campaign on 22 January after 130 days of processing. This will mark the end of an outstanding year in Slovakia – and one that brought with it very high yields. This year’s sugar yield per hectare stands at 12.9 tonnes (previous year: 9.9 tonnes). Unlike in previous years, enough precipitation fell (especially in summer) for the beet to grow extremely strongly.

Background
The Nordzucker Group, based in Braunschweig, is Europe’s second-largest sugar producer. The Group also produces bioethanol and animal feed from sugar beet. Eighteen production and refinery facilities across Europe form the technical, logistical and geographic basis for continued success. The Group’s some 3,200 employees strive towards providing excellent products and services.