

Media Release

Growing demand for staple foods in Africa drives Bühler's growth

Johannesburg (South Africa), 23 January 2025 – Opportunities in strengthening local supply chains, especially within food processing and agribusiness, will be the main focus for Bühler Southern Africa in 2025, says MD Marco Sutter. “The African market remains pivotal, with ongoing growth in the staple foods like maize as well as rice and pulses, driven by increasing demand for locally produced, high-quality food products.” In addition, the mining and infrastructure sectors present opportunities to deploy innovative technologies that enhance operational efficiency and reduce environmental impact.

The African market is essential to Bühler's growth strategy. With a young and rapidly growing population, the continent offers immense opportunities to build resilient food systems and manufacturing hubs. “Our focus is on delivering tailored solutions that address local challenges while enabling scalability and sustainability. This market not only drives our business growth but also aligns with our mission to feed the world sustainably,” says Sutter.

Sustainability remains at the core of Bühler's vision. In 2025, it plans to enhance its green supply chain initiatives by localising more manufacturing processes, thereby reducing transportation-related emissions. “Collaborating closely with our partners, we remain steadfast in our commitment to achieving carbon-neutral production by 2030 while continuously improving the energy efficiency of our solutions. Aligned with our sustainability goals, we aim to reduce energy, water, and waste in our customers' value chains by 50% by 2025 and decrease greenhouse gas emissions in our own operations by 60% by 2030,” says Sutter.

Last year was a challenging year, shaped by various external factors. Elections across many African countries brought a degree of uncertainty, while rising steel prices, increased transport costs, and limited access to foreign exchange in several regions posed significant hurdles. “Despite these challenges, Bühler remained resilient, focusing on innovation and customer-centric solutions,” he adds.

The food and beverage sector saw steady demand, particularly in the staple foods markets and grain storage, as the need for efficient and sustainable food systems continues to grow. The mining sector performed robustly, driven by demand for material handling solutions and an increasing focus on energy-efficient technologies. “Looking ahead, our strategy prioritises strengthening local supply

chains and driving sustainable practices to support our customers and communities effectively,” explains Sutter.

Bühler also embarked on various upgrades last year, says Francois Knoetze, Head of Manufacturing. These included installing First in First Out (FIFO) racking to improve stock utilisation, new compressors to ensure better energy efficiency of air production and newer welding machines. Knoetze points out that the main benefits for Bühler’s clients and growth potential following the upgrades is increased throughput driving shorter lead times.

On the corporate social responsibility front, last year Bühler was involved with upgrading The Little Star Day Care Nursery School, a testament to its commitment to community welfare. It also focused on employee well-being by establishing new facilities such as a nurse's room, entertainment areas, and safer parking solutions. Successful initiatives like the Student Career Day Expo and Heritage Day celebrations fostered a strong sense of community within and outside Bühler.

Looking ahead, by continuing to spend up to 5% of turnover on research and development a year, Bühler’s mission is to develop innovative technologies, machines, and services for the food, feed agriculture and mobility industry. This differentiates it in the market through high performance, productivity, reliability, and improved sustainability.

“This year we will continue empowering communities through various initiatives and educational projects. Skills development remains a priority, with plans to expand training through our collaboration with MathU and our Global Learning Festival. Workshops and internships will assist to nurture future innovators, building on the success of our Student Career Day Expo. “As we look ahead, Bühler remains steadfast in its commitment to shaping a more sustainable and inclusive future. We invite all stakeholders to join us on this journey as we innovate, collaborate, and grow together,” concludes Sutter.

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About Bühler

Bühler is driven by its purpose of creating innovations for a better world, balancing the needs of economy, humanity, and nature in all its decision-making processes. Billions of people come into contact with Bühler technologies as they cover their basic needs for food and mobility every day. Two billion people each day enjoy foods produced on Bühler equipment; and one billion people travel in vehicles manufactured using parts produced with Bühler solutions. Countless people wear eyeglasses, use smart phones, and read newspapers and magazines – all of which depend on Bühler process technologies and solutions. Having this global relevance, Bühler is in a unique position to turn today's global challenges into sustainable business.

As a technology partner for the food, feed, and mobility industries, Bühler has committed to having solutions ready to multiply by 2025 that reduce energy, waste, and water by 50% in the value chains of its customers. It also proactively collaborates with suppliers to reduce climate impacts throughout the value chain. In its own operations, Bühler has developed a pathway to achieve a 60% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (Greenhouse Gas Protocol Scopes 1 & 2, against a 2019 baseline).

Bühler spends up to 5% of turnover on research and development annually to improve both the commercial and sustainability performance of its solutions, products, and services. In 2023, some

12,500 employees generated a turnover of CHF 3.0 billion. As a Swiss family-owned company with a history spanning 164 years, Bühler is active in 140 countries around the world and operates a global network of 105 service stations, 30 manufacturing sites, and Application & Training Centers in 25 locations.

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