

PRESS RELEASE

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A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY MARKET LEADERS

KRONEN and Urschel announce their cooperation

KRONEN GmbH, an internationally leading food technology manufacturer for fruit, vegetable and salad processing, and Urschel Laboratories Inc., the global market leader for industrial cutting machines and milling equipment in the food processing industry, have announced plans to work in close cooperation in the future. Both partners aim to use this partnership to strengthen their market positions, pool their expertise, increase sales, and achieve sustainable growth. The two companies and brands will remain completely independent and continue to run their production facilities in Kehl and Achern, Germany (KRONEN), and in Chesterton, USA (Urschel).

In operational terms, the cooperation mainly involves a sales partnership in specifically defined countries and regions. In the future, Urschel will therefore also sell KRONEN machines and processing lines, namely in Mexico, the U.S. and Asia – with the exception of Vietnam, where KRONEN's local sales activities will remain in the hands of the company's existing representatives. The sales cooperation will begin in the U.S. and Mexico in July 2025. KRONEN's sales activities in Asia will be handed over to Urschel in 2026. The partners will also team up to pursue a multitude of strategic objectives with the aim of pooling their expertise and working together to develop further.

Two strong food technology manufacturers take on a joint market position

Both companies are strong brands in their respective segments and have now decided to join forces to make optimal use of their potential and achieve sustainable growth. Urschel boasts excellent sales networks in the U.S., Mexico and Asia, and the cooperation will allow KRONEN GmbH to also benefit from these locations and partners. Urschel additionally offers a modern showroom in its home market in the U.S., where it will also present KRONEN solutions in the future. KRONEN will continue to work with its existing sales partners in Vietnam and all other countries. KRONEN GmbH has a successful network of representatives in approximately 80 different countries.

The upcoming cooperation will also provide mutual synergistic effects for both partners, which will enable them to further develop their skills and take their expertise to a new level. Urschel exclusively manufactures cutting and milling systems for high processing capacities, as well as knives. KRONEN's machines and lines will complement Urschel's product range, enabling Urschel to offer its customers in the U.S., Mexico and Asia complete solutions for all processing steps – from disinfection, preparation, peeling, cutting, and mixing to washing, drying, conveying, weighing, and packaging. The KRONEN cutting machines that cover other customer requirements will also be added to Urschel's sales portfolio.

“Our cooperation with Urschel and other partners such as iWEIGH puts us in an even better position to offer our customers large-scale lines and complete solutions from a single source. We want to work with Urschel to become the market

leader for innovative new solutions for the fresh-cut industry in Mexico, the U.S. and Asia,” declared Stephan Zillgith, Managing Director of KRONEN.

Investments planned at the KRONEN sites in Germany

Urschel will receive a minority stake in KRONEN GmbH in return for its financial contribution. The company, which has been fully owned by its employees since 2016, plans to use its capital to purposefully expand its market position further by investing in the KRONEN locations in Kehl and Achern, Germany.

“The partnership represents a milestone in KRONEN’s company history. Such cooperations do not come about every day, and this partnership will strengthen our market position and profile. The increase in orders and sales and the investments made by Urschel in our two production locations in Kehl and Achern will allow us to develop more rapidly. As a result, we will not only be able to expand our production capacities and further strengthen our development of new solutions but can also continue to be a future-proof employer,” stated Stephan Zillgith.

KRONEN will not receive any shares in Urschel, and both companies will remain independent in the future. Stephan Zillgith, Eric Lefebvre and Johannes Günther will continue in their roles on the KRONEN GmbH Management Board.

“We are delighted to announce our partnership with KRONEN today,” announced Alan Major, a Member of the Urschel Board of Directors. “Urschel is proud to be a 100-percent employee-owned company, and our corporate culture is an excellent match for KRONEN as a family company. We can also make the most of a multitude of synergies. The fact that we offer different, complementary solutions means that our product ranges and expertise complement each other perfectly. As a result, we can serve the needs of our customers even better. For us, the cooperation represents a sustainable investment in the future.”

About Urschel Laboratories

Urschel is the global market leader for industrial cutting machines and milling technology in the food processing industry and operates in more than 130 countries. Its product range contains more than 50 machine models with high processing capacities, as well as knives, spare parts and accessories. Urschel machinery is sold across food processing industries. When developing its products, Urschel focuses on simplicity, efficiency, and precision. The company constantly strives to further develop food processing technology.

The family company was founded in 1910 and has had an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) as a company owned completely by its employees since 2016. One hundred percent of shares in the company are owned by the ESOP Trust. The ESOP comprises employees of Urschel and its US-based branches who are at least 18 years old and have been working for the company for at least one year.

After the departure of the Chairman of the Board, Bob Urschel, in 2024, Rick Urschel, William Schott, Daniel Marchetti, Rob Thorgren, and Alan Major now make up the Urschel Board of Directors. Rick Urschel, Bob’s son, has been President of the company since 2013. Urschel has more than 650 employees worldwide.

In 2015, Urschel opened its modern headquarters with an integrated production facility in Chesterton, Indiana, USA. The site was expanded in 2024 and now covers an area of more than 48,000 m². It is home to the company’s production facility, sales headquarters,

and a staff fitness center. The site additionally contains expansive training and conference rooms, a test kitchen for products with several different cutting areas in which customers can observe the machines in operation, and an air-conditioned area of the test kitchen where devices can be tested at temperatures as low as -18°C. Its latest additions also include a knife laboratory and extended test laboratories for research and development.

About KRONEN GmbH

KRONEN is a family-managed globally operating producer and supplier of stand-alone machines, special-purpose machines, and high-tech processing facilities for the fresh-cut industry. The product portfolio of KRONEN and its partners covers fruit, vegetable and salad leaf processing: from preparing, cutting, washing, drying, dewatering, peeling, and sterilizing right through to packaging.

KRONEN additionally offers machines for the processing of meat and fish, special vegan products, baked goods, and pet food.

The company, which is based in Kehl am Rhein, Germany, and has a second production site in the nearby city of Achern, currently employs more than 130 members of staff, has representatives in over 80 countries worldwide and supplies its products to more than 120 nations all over the globe.

With more than 45 years of experience in food technology, KRONEN prides itself on its quality awareness and constantly strives to achieve the best possible solutions in its day-to-day work. The machine manufacturer focuses on taking a sustainable, holistic approach toward the hygienic, reliable and resource-friendly production of fresh foods. KRONEN considers itself to be a think tank that provides innovative solutions to benefit its customers and meet all their needs. It guarantees top-quality advice and planning expertise in close cooperation with the industry and research establishments.

For more information, please visit: www.kronen.eu

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KRONEN GmbH photo material:



Alan Major, Chief Sales Officer and a Member of the Urschel Board of Directors (third from left), and the four Managing Directors of KRONEN (from left to right), Johannes Günther, Rudolf Hans Zillgith, Stephan Zillgith, and Eric Lefebvre, as well as Wissam Badr, Head of Controlling, at the announcement of the partnership, which came into effect on April 29, 2025.



Before the partnership was announced to the public, KRONEN's Management Board teamed up with Alan Major, a Member of the Urschel Board of Directors, to inform the entire team of staff at KRONEN about the future cooperation. KRONEN GmbH and its Management Board will continue to operate independently. Plans are in place to further expand and support the growth of the KRONEN production locations in Kehl and Achern, Germany, in the future.



Right: The Managing Directors of KRONEN GmbH from left to right: Johannes Günther, Rudolf Hans Zillgith, Stephan Zillgith and Eric Lefebvre

Left: KRONEN's headquarters and production facility for food machines are based in Kehl am Rhein, Germany. From here, the company delivers its solutions to around 120 different countries worldwide. In 2020, the company took over WS Edelstahltechnik in Achern, Germany, which manufactures turned and milled parts.



KRONEN GmbH manufactures machines and lines for processing fruit, vegetables, salad leaves and other fresh foods, for example meat, fish and vegan products.



The gentle, hygienic processing of products such as salad leaves, fruit and vegetables requires a great deal of expertise. The tools used in the Robot Avocado Line, for example, were developed especially for processing the delicate fruit by KRONEN in a special research project and were granted a patent in 2024.



The KRONEN product range features a number of high-capacity washing machines alongside machines for cutting, peeling, drying or disinfecting fresh produce. The machines are supplied to processing companies that produce various foods: for supermarkets; manufacturers of convenience and ready-made meals; large kitchens and canteens; cruise ships and airlines; farm stores and farmers; the deep-freeze, dry products and canned products industry; manufacturers of vegan products; bakeries; butchers; and the animal feed and pet food industry.

Urschel Laboratories Inc. photo material:



In 2015, Urschel opened its modern headquarters with an integrated production facility in Chesterton, Indiana, USA. The site was expanded in 2024 and now covers an area of more than 48,000 m².



The location is home to the company's production facilities, sales headquarters, a staff fitness center and more.



It also contains expansive training and conference rooms, a test kitchen (see photo) for products with several different cutting areas in which customers can observe the machines in operation, a knife laboratory and extended test laboratories for research and development.