



DMP filling door with door lifting system. The emergency doors have overpressure louvres.

Anodized aluminum racks are being assembled.

are produced yearround, and it is here that 'Frutura Obst & Gemüse Kompetenzzentrum' decided to invest in mushroom farming: Blumauer Bio Champignons.

The set-up

The owners of Frutura were - during the Corona time - receptive to Auer's proposal to supplement their portfolio with a mushroom farm. "The CEO said: we trust your expertise, but it has to really work." Thus began the search for the best possible farm to build, at that location, for that market. Auer laughingly speaks of the result as 'my baby'. "First we had to decide how and how much we wanted to produce for the market and how many employees were available for this. Because we are only 20 minutes from the Hungarian border, we have a lot of harvest workers at our disposal, so a sliding drawer system or tilted shelves are not necessary. A picking robot is not yet available and the systems mentioned have not yet been perfected, and in my opinion are more suitable for large farms, not for a farm with, let's say, 5 to 20 tons of production per week. In itself, the farm is ready for further automation. So the approach was not to build the most 'fancy' mushroom farm ever, but one with which we simply produce very good quality mushrooms with enough available labor and systems that do not require extensive instruction for the pickers." Having decided what was needed, Dutch Mushroom Projects (DMP) in The Netherlands was called in for the engineering.

The partners

DMP thought along with Auer and designed, and provided all materials, equipment and machinery for the entire farm, after which local construction companies built the whole business 'IKEA style' under the meticulous guidance of Ron Hegger, Leo Douven and Roel Hendriks. "They understood that we needed good engineering, and not spare parts." He means that given the somewhat remote location of the farm, suppliers were sought who think along with the client, and who can or want to be on site quickly if something goes wrong. "We are a bit on an island here and if a machine breaks

down here, our Italian heavy machine supplier Alpie can be on the doorstep within four hours. And if we have a question about the Vec41 computer - which is specially designed for mushroom farms and with which I had good experiences in Israel - I can call service engineer Hans Menting at DMP every day."

The same applies to the manufacturer and supplier of the Pascal picking lorries, the Polish company Growtime. "The hydraulic Pascal trolley is simple (in a good way!), efficient and smooth to use and also easy to maintain. And in this case as well, with Michał Kustus, the personal connection and involvement is fast and above par. "He's like Speedy Gonzales!" * Finally, Auer mentions the compost transport of Nooyen/HenoTrans. "Our organic compost is transported from the Netherlands to our company within 24 hours and we are also in constant contact with them. With all the mentioned companies, all pieces come together and we are all very well connected to the product."

A DMP showpiece

All in all, there is now a modern, sustainable, five room mushroom farm in Styria, with all kinds of innovative applications. For example, no steam is used, but a special thermal 'oven' system, which extracts water of about 70-80 degrees Celsius from the soil via a pumping station, to heat and sterilize the growing rooms, directly by the specially designed DMP airhandlers. "Zero disease, means zero costs," says Auer. There are also solar panels on the roof →



Central duct.



Air handling unit.