

## PRESS RELEASE

# The New Ricola Herb Center – Sustainability and Leading Architecture

Laufen (BL), 23 January 2013 – Ricola today held the official groundbreaking ceremony for its brand new Herb Center. The building has many fascinating aspects. The architecture was designed by the renowned Basel architects studio Herzog & de Meuron. Characteristic of the project is the high-volume long building with flat roof and façade built using the “rammed earth” technique. Façade elements made of compacted local clay sourced from the Laufen valley will form Europe’s largest loam building by 2014. From spring 2014, Ricola’s herb processing activities will be entirely carried out at a single location. Distinctive features of the brand new production building are high energy efficiency and state-of-the-art green building principles.

### Herb Processing At a Single Location

In a symbolic ceremony, Ricola CEO Felix Richterich launched the building phase of the Ricola Herb Center along with friends and architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron. About one year from now, Ricola’s entire herb processing activities – drying, cutting, blending and storing – will be streamlined at a single location. This optimizes the entire production process thanks to shorter transfer routes and state-of-the-art production facilities. In future, the signature 13 Ricola herbs will continue to be exclusively cultivated in the mountains of Switzerland using organic methods.

### At Home in Laufen – Built from Local Earth

The new building reveals many aspects of Ricola’s strong commitment to its production location in Switzerland and at home in Laufen. Its self-appointed high goals for ecology and sustainability are consistently pursued: Logistics efficiency and the sensible use of resources are at the forefront for this project. The new building will be completely constructed using loam sourced from the Laufen valley. Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH (LTE), a specialist company based in the Vorarlberg alpine region in Switzerland, manufactures the façade elements. Production is housed in a temporary hall in the neighboring town of Zwingen where LTE practices a newly developed procedure. “No elements are used other than natural and organic earth from Laufen. This is especially energy-efficient,” asserts Felix Richterich.

### Excellent Energy Performance

The loam façade stabilizes the building temperature and humidity. This lowers the requirement for air-conditioning in the building, which in turn has a further positive impact on energy performance.

Martin Rauch, the owner of LTE, comments that, “Many people think that nowadays loam is only used in developing countries to build the most basic huts. However, the Ricola Herb Center makes a strong statement about future perspectives and the positive qualities which loam construction can have in Europe as well.”

If additional heating is required, recycled heat will be diverted from the herb drop factory that is directly adjacent. The solar panels on the roof of the building will produce most of the required energy.

### **Close Friendship with Herzog & de Meuron**

The Herb Center represents already the fifth building which Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron’s have designed for Ricola. “In addition to the Basel regional location, we also share a common bond of our ideas concerning quality, functionality and ecology,” comments Felix Richterich. Jacques Herzog explains, “Over the last 30 years, we were able to realize a unique building ensemble for Ricola that visibly demonstrates how our architectural approach developed.”

Progress with the new building at Wahlenstrasse can be viewed via a webcam on the Ricola website [www.ricola.com](http://www.ricola.com)

### **Ricola Short Profile**

*Ricola AG is one of the most modern and innovative manufacturers of herb drops in the world. Ricola herb specialties are exported to more than 50 different countries and are famous for their fine Swiss quality. Founded in 1930, with company headquarters in Laufen and subsidiaries in Asia, the USA, Italy and the UK, Ricola products now include around 30 different herb specialties. In Switzerland, this family-owned company is a pioneer in herb cultivation and places great value on using carefully selected locations and controlled, environmentally friendly cultivation methods without the use of pesticides and herbicides. Ricola has concluded fixed purchase contracts with more than 100 farmers in Swiss mountain regions. Ricola AG is committed to sustainable corporate management, financially, socially and environmentally, and is a responsible employer of more than 400 staff. The combination of the traditional values of a family-run company, and the quality consciousness and innovative spirit of the modern Ricola, is behind the success of this premium Swiss brand.*

### **Herzog & de Meuron Short Profile**

*In 1978 Jacques Herzog und Pierre de Meuron jointly established their studio in Basel. Today, Herzog & de Meuron stands for a partnership led by five senior partners – Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, Christine Binswanger, Ascan Mergenthaler and Stefan Marbach. The head office is in Basel with local subsidiary offices also in Hamburg, London, Madrid and New York. The designs managed by Herzog & de Meuron range from small-scale private residences to large-scale urban-planning projects. The studio has been awarded numerous honors including “The Pritzker Architecture Prize” (2001) as well as the “RIBA Royal Gold Medal” (2007) and “Praemium Imperiale”.*

*Since 1994 (and 1989), Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron are both visiting professors at Harvard University, USA. Since 1999, they are also professors at the Department of Architecture at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich, and co-founders of the ETH Studio in Basel – Contemporary City Institute.*

**Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH Short Profile**

*LOAM – CLAY – EARTH. For over 30 years, these three words have defined the work of Martin Rauch and his team. LOAM stands for artisan handcraft and technology, CLAY for artistic design and EARTH for the sustainability of loam construction.*

*The focus of our projects is on the technique of 'rammed earth' construction – proven over many centuries, with new perspectives and developments acknowledged in contemporary architectural design.*

*Thanks to our long-standing experience and constant drive for innovation we are capable of planning and realizing projects of all sizes. Our projects set the highest quality standards based on our vision of a sustainable future.*

*Lehm Ton Erde Baukunst GmbH set up a Swiss subsidiary, Lehm Ton Erde Schweiz GmbH, and production for the "Ricola production hall" project is based at our site in Zwingen.*

**More information**

[www.ricola.com](http://www.ricola.com)

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