

## New Seal of Quality – 'Manufactured in Germany'

**ZDH-Zert, together with the Chamber of Handicrafts (Handwerkskammer) for Upper Franconia and Bavaria, develops a new 'Seal of Quality' for piano manufacturers Steingraeber**



Bayreuth. The Chamber of Handicrafts for Bayreuth/Upper Franconia, in cooperation with national body the German Association of Skilled Crafts (Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks – ZDH), has developed a new and particularly demanding 'Seal of Quality'. It is awarded to German manufacturers who demonstrate that a minimum of 80 percent of all raw materials used in the making of their pianos or grand pianos originate from Germany, and in addition that at least 80 percent of the processing of these raw materials takes place

within Germany itself. The new 'Seal of Quality' is awarded upon successful completion of the most stringent certification tests for manufacturing processes in the country.

The initiative for its development came from piano manufacturers Steingraeber & Söhne in Bayreuth. Conventional seals of quality, such as 'Made in Germany', were simply not demanding enough to reflect the aims and objectives of Company Director Udo Steingraeber, as they allow products to be described as 'Made in Germany' even though only 50 percent of the manufacturing process might take place within the county, often without first-class, German-made component parts.

Udo Steingraeber explains: "Here at Steingraeber, our level of quality is completely different. As a matter of fact, 90 percent of the materials we use originate from Germany, with a strong emphasis on regional materials, exceptions being hammer felt and wool from Australia, spruce wood from high up in the Alps, and sound posts out of maple wood from Canada. All the materials are processed 100 percent in Bayreuth. Up to now, not one of the seals of quality that are currently available would allow me to demonstrate that with any authority."

This new certificate is also available for other manufacturers. If a firm can demonstrate and ensure that at least 80 percent of the materials used in its production processes originate from Germany, and likewise that 80 percent of the production work actually takes place in Germany, then it will be awarded a 'Seal of Quality'. 'The benchmark of ;80 percent' was chosen to enable other types of businesses to apply.

Klaus Kainath, head of the certification procedure, carried out the evaluation personally at Steingraeber and describes the process: "I spoke to employees and inspected delivery documents, and was able to determine that Steingraeber manufactures 100 percent in Bayreuth using, almost

exclusively, German materials." Piano manufacturers Steingraeber & Söhne can now provide, signed and sealed, further proof of their own highest standards to customers worldwide with the newly awarded certificate: 'Manufactured in Germany HID 0618001'.



Caption: Presentation of the 'Manufactured in Germany' certificate, at Steingraeber Piano Manufacturers. From left to right: Rainer Beck, Director of the Chamber of Handicrafts (KdH), and Udo Schmidt-Steingraeber. Photo: Stefan Dörfler.

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