



WINGCOPTER DRONES DELIVER EVERYDAY GOODS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN GERMANY

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Wingcopter and the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences launched “Drone-Cargo Bike Express Delivery” project. Under the name "LieferMichel", the pilot project offers residents of remote districts in Michelstadt, Hesse, the opportunity to have groceries and consumer goods delivered to their homes quickly and emission-free by Wingcopter delivery drone and cargo bike. The drone deliveries are intended to sustainably improve local supply in the region. The project is being funded by the German Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport as part of the "Innovative Air Mobility" funding directive with a total of around 430,000 euros.

Initially, the two districts of Rehbach and Würzberg well outside Michelstadt will be served. Residents of these districts can order everyday goods such as non-perishable milk, eggs, fruit and vegetables, canned food and many other non-refrigerated products via the website www.liefermichel.de and have them delivered to their homes at a desired time. The orders are flown by Wingcopter to set landing points just outside of the villages, from where they are transported to the end customers by electric cargo bike. To start with, a wide range of products from the local REWE store will be available for selection. Other local retailers will be added to the

platform as the project progresses.

Tom Plümmer, CEO of Wingcopter, commented: "We are really proud to pilot LieferMichel, the first drone delivery service for groceries and everyday goods in Germany. Our biggest goal is to gain experience and evaluate, together with the residents, an environmentally friendly and efficient service that creates real added value for the population in rural areas. We are deeply grateful for the hospitality of the people of Odenwald and the openness with which they have welcomed the project and the LieferMichel team."

Prof. Dr. Kai-Oliver Schocke, Director of the Research Lab for Urban Transport (ReLUT) at Frankfurt UAS, said: "We believe that a drone-based delivery service in rural areas can be a win-win situation: Residents benefit from better supply options, retailers can increase their customer catchment area without having to set up delivery services themselves. We also expect ecological benefits, as trips for smaller errands in particular can be substituted in this way."



The pilot project is being scientifically accompanied by the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, which is evaluating the service from an economic and ecological perspective. The Frankfurt UAS also takes care of the cargo bike rides. It has a profound expertise in the field of last-mile logistics with cargo bikes and small electric vehicles.

Alongside the city of Michelstadt and REWE, Vodafone and Riese & Müller were won as associated project partners. The mobile communications company Vodafone provides the necessary mobile communications infrastructure so that the Wingcopter drones have a secure and stable connection to the ground station throughout the flight. The cargo bikes used are produced and provided by e-bike pioneer Riese & Müller, also based in the Odenwald region.

In the villages involved, many local retailers have closed their stores in recent years, forcing residents to drive to Michelstadt or other towns to do their shopping - in some cases well over 10 kilometers each way. Especially for smaller errands weighing up to 4 kilograms, LieferMichel users can now leave their cars behind. Another advantage is that flying with the all-electric delivery

drones is also more environmentally friendly than traveling by car.

Based on the experiences in Michelstadt, a sustainable and scalable business model is to be developed to improve local supply in other rural regions of Germany as well through fast, ecologically reasonable and reliable delivery of everyday goods by drone. After all, although many smaller stores have disappeared in rural areas in recent years, food delivery services that deliver orders within a few minutes have so far been limited to urban areas. The project partners see enormous potential here. The project will initially run until the end of 2023 and will be continued if it proves successful.

Dr. Tobias Robischon, mayor of the city of Michelstadt, added: "Local supply in more remote neighborhoods is an important issue not only for us in Michelstadt, but in many rural communities in the region. That's why we're always interested in innovative ideas and concepts such as delivery by drone and cargo bike, and are delighted to be part of this German premiere."

Dr. Robert Zores, Chief Digital Innovation Officer (CDIO) at REWE digital, is pleased about the start of the project: "We have been working on the topic of autonomous mobility in the Research & Innovations division for years and always have one goal in mind - to offer our customers new shopping experiences and to make shopping convenient and easy. We are a pioneer and trailblazer in German food retailing. In addition to numerous projects in urban areas, we are also looking forward to testing offers in rural areas and to learning and further developing technology and processes together with the project partners."

Michael Reinartz, Head of Innovation at Vodafone Germany: "We are delighted that the DroLEx team is relying on Vodafone's mobile network to fly the LieferMichel drone, underscoring the crucial role that mobile technology plays in commercial drone flight. After all, especially over longer distances, only a highly responsive mobile network offers the necessary reliability to enable automated drone flights - and thus innovative applications such as food delivery by drone."

Jörg Matheis, Chief Communication Officer at Riese & Müller: "We are very pleased to be part of this exciting and innovative project. Especially the combination of different and climate-friendly mobility solutions makes this project so important."

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