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Unilever to appoint new CEO soon

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Unilever has hired executive search firm Egon Zehnder International to prepare for a change in leadership for one of the top positions in the food and beverage industry.

The search is currently centred on preparing the Unilever board for the transition process, but a succession will ultimately be led by company chairman Marijn Dekkers.

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Earlier this year Unilever turned down a surprise $143 billion takeover bid from US food company Kraft Heinz. Polman responded by saying that ‘there should be a level playing field’ for takeovers of publicly listed companies.

Kraft-Heinz, which turns over less than half the amount of Anglo-Dutch Unilever, ‘amicably agreed’ to withdraw its interest after its initial offer was rebuffed.

A merger would have created the world’s second largest food company after Nestlé, with turnover in 2016 of more than €75 billion, FoodBev reported at the time.

Unilever is now expected to shake up its dual UK-Dutch corporate structure, by moving to a single headquarters in Holland.