Milestones

1873
AXEL JOHNSON FOUNDED

Saddler's son and clerk Axel Johnson founded A. Johnson & Co, an agency and trading business on Lilla Nygatan in Stockholm.

1883
RESCUES AVESTA JERNVERK

Crisis at Avesta Jernverk (ironworks). After reconstruction A. Johnson & Co becomes partner.

1905
TAKES OVER AVESTA JERNVERK

A. Johnson & Co acquires all the shares.

1890
REDERIAKTIEBOLAGET NORDSTJERNAN FOUNDED

The steamship Annie Thérèse, named after the founder's wife, was the company's first vessel. The foundation is laid for the Johnson Line.

1910
CONSUL-GENERAL TAKES OVER

Axel Johnson dies and his oldest son, Axel Ax:son Johnson, also known as the Consul-General, takes over.

1925
A MODERN FLEET

The Johnson Line has the world's first diesel-powered ocean-going fleet.

1928
OIL REFINERY AND ROAD BUILDING COMPANY

Axel Ax:son Johnson builds Scandinavia's first oil refinery in Nynäshamn to supply ships with diesel. Asphalt and road construction companies acquired to take advantage of new business opportunities.

1936
NEW TAKEOVERS

A series of engineering companies acquired, including Karlstads Mekaniska Werkstad.

1971
ANTONIA STARTS

Axel Ax:son Johnson's daughter Antonia joins the firm.

1958
THIRD GENERATION TAKES OVER

Consul-General Axel Ax:son Johnson dies with a legacy of over 100 companies. Nordstjernan becomes foundation-owned and incorporates most of the Johnson group. His son Axel Ax:son Johnson, also known as the Mining Engineer, takes over as CEO of Nordstjernan and the trading company A. Johnson & Co.

1979
NEW PRESIDENT

Göran Ennerfelt takes over as president after Mining Engineer Axel Ax:son Johnson.

1982
ANTONIA BECOMES CHAIRMAN

Nordstjernan is restructured. Business cooperation between Nordstjernan and A. Johnson & Co gradually decreases. Antonia Ax:son Johnson becomes chairman of A. Johnson & Co.

1988
FOCUS ON RETAIL

The Saba Group is acquired which includes Åhléns, Dagab, Hemköp, B&W and Saba Trading. A. Johnson & Co changes name to Axel Johnson AB.

1994
RESTRUCTURING The Saba Group is restructured. Åhléns is streamlined. Servera is formed through a merger of Dagab food service and KF's wholesale operations. The foundation for Axfood is laid.

1999
INVESTS IN GROWTH COMPANIES

Novax is formed and becomes the platform for investments in growth companies such as DesignTorget, BevakningsTjänst and WeSC.

2000
AXFOOD IS BORN

Axfood is formed through mergers of the Hemköp chain, Dagab and D-gruppen. Willys expansion starts and becomes a nationwide chain.

2006
NEW ACQUISITIONS

Axel Johnson International acquires a number of technology trading companies. Axel Johnson becomes principal owner of Mekonomen. Svensk BevakningsTjänst becomes a wholly owned group company within Axel Johnson AB.

1st generation – The Founder *1873 –1910*
Axel Johnson laid the foundation with business centered around exports of iron and imports of coal.

2nd generation – The Industrialist *1910 –1958*
Axel Johnson, also known as the Consul-General, expanded the group substantially.

3rd generation – The Internationalist *1958 –1982*
Axel Johnson, the Mining Engineer, transformed A. Johnson & Co into an international trading company.

4th generation – The Businesswoman *1982 –*
Under Antonia's leadership the Axel Johnson group has been transformed into one of Sweden's leading retailing groups.

1870 1875 1880 1885 1890 1895 1900 1905 1910 1915 1920 1925 1930 1935 1945 1950 1955 1960 1965 1970 1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010

1871 SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The second industrial revolution starts. Series production of increasingly complicated goods paves the way for increased cross-border trading.

1873 SWEDEN HAS KRONOR AND ÖRE

Scandinavian Currency Union. Kronor and öre replace riksdaler as the main currency unit in Sweden and Denmark. Norway joined the union in 1876.

1914 OUTBREAK OF FIRST WORLD WAR

Export ban on certain goods and food price freeze introduced.

1929 DEPRESSION

Wall Street crashes on 24 October and drags the global economy into recession, which lasts for most of the 1930s.

1939 OUTBREAK OF SECOND WORLD WAR

General price freeze introduced for the first time in Sweden in 1942.

1960 SWEDEN JOINS EFTA

Free trade agreement opens up for increased trade with industrial products in Europe

1973 OIL CRISIS

The oil crisis forces up oil prices leading to reduced economic growth and international trade.

1990 PROPERTY CRISIS

Banking, finance and property crisis. Deregulation of the credit market at the end of the 1980s leads to a sharp rise in lending. Falling house prices and lower consumption affected the start of the decade.

1992 SOVIET UNION DISSOLVED

The Soviet planned economy collapses and leads to the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc. The Cold War ends.

2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS

A global recession spreads faster than ever before.