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Given homomorphisms of rings $\varepsilon_S \colon S \to k \leftarrow T : \varepsilon_T$, and ideals in S and T that carry compatible structures of kbimodules, we note that one can form a *connected sum* ring S # T by mimicking the standard construction of connected sum of manifolds in algebraic topology. We study homological properties of the ring obtained by choosing ε_S and ε_T to be the canonical homomorphisms of commutative noetherian local rings onto a common residue field k, and isomorphic k-vector subspaces J in their socles. When the homomorphisms $S \to S/J$ and $T \to T/J$ are Golod, we express the graded Hopf algebra $\operatorname{Ext}^*_{S\#T}(k,k)$ as a coproduct of $\operatorname{Ext}^*_S(k,k)$ and $\operatorname{Ext}^*_T(k,k)$ over the tensor algebra of the vector space $\operatorname{Hom}_k(J,k)$, concentrated in degree 2. (Received August 25, 2009)