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Press Release

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The Canton of Fribourg officially launches the St-Aubin AgriCo Campus

On 16 October 2019, Fribourg State Councillors Olivier Curty and Didier Castella officially launched the new AgriCo Campus in St-Aubin dedicated to value creation in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition and biomass. They seized this opportunity to announce nearly CHF 4 million in overall funding to completely overhaul the site's administration building, particularly intended to provide office space and conference rooms.

With its large industrial zones suitable for construction, service buildings also equipped with laboratory installations, a million m² of agricultural land providing the possibility to carry out large-scale experiments – *in collaboration with the operational farmer* –, the AgriCo Campus, short for the *Swiss Campus for Agri and Food Innovation*, is simply in a class by itself. Located in the plain of the Broye region, the AgriCo Campus is dedicated to value creation in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition and biomass. Its unique conception makes it possible to cover the entire range of stages involved from applied research to final production in accordance with the “From Farm to Fork” principle. The aim is also to promote multiple synergies between private stakeholders, institutional actors and academic partners, in particular the Grangeneuve Agricultural Institute and Agroscope.

The AgriCo Campus proposes not only office space and laboratories, but also 150,000 m² of land suitable for the construction of operational activity zones. Five start-ups and PME's have already settled in, and the site boasts of the capacity to welcome some twenty enterprises and five or six industrial projects.

Several enterprises are currently holding discussions with the Fribourg Development Agency on the possibility of setting up shop at AgriCo, among which, a potential tenant of particularly high renown: the SQTs (Swiss Quality Testing Services) Company, provider of laboratory services to the Migros Group, which, for instance, tests the quality of its food products.

As concerns the refurbishment of the administrative building, on 8 October 2019, the Fribourg State Council decided to allocate an amount of nearly CHF 4 million for a complete modernization. With time, the building will host, among other things, the reception, a cafeteria, offices, and conference rooms.

The press conference also provided the occasion to launch a new internet site, www.agrico.swiss, designed to facilitate companies interested in installing operations at AgriCo in establishing contact and obtaining information.

As Fribourg State Councillor Olivier Curty stated: “The AgriCo Campus is the only one of its kind. It represents a new offering vested with exceptional potential in an agrifood sector that has become a challenge for society.”

In the Canton of Fribourg, the agrifood supply chain, in a broad sense, accounts for approx. 20% of all jobs. In order to further strengthen its position and to foster the creation of value and innovation in this sector, the Canton of Fribourg is at present formulating a development strategy for the agrifood industry. By becoming a campus dedicated to value creation in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition and biomass, the St-Aubin site— property of the Canton since 2017—, is called upon to play a key role in the implementation of this strategy.

“One of the principal objectives of the Canton’s agrifood strategy is to support the enterprises active in this sector in the creation of added value”, as was pointed out by Fribourg State Councillor Didier Castella.

The tenants

The first tenants to set up operations at the d'AgriCo site last spring are:

- > **Bee Vectoring Technology (BVT):** has devised a revolutionary technology that uses bees to deliver targeted crop controls through the natural process of pollination. According to Forbes Magazine, BVT is one of the five most promising enterprises worldwide.
- > **Alver:** produces innovative foodstuffs based on Golden Chlorella™, a microalgae rich in nutrients and which is also one of the most sustainable sources of protein. Alver has already won a number of business awards and is currently participating in a research and development project supported by Innosuisse.
- > **Edapro:** Healthy soil is the basis for growth and plays a major role in the ecosystem. Edapro proposes ecological and innovative solutions to reinforce the natural defenses of plants.
- > **Timac Agro:** For almost 60 years, TIMAC AGRO, a subsidiary of the Groupe Roullier, has been constantly innovating to offer agronomic and zootechnical solutions that improve agricultural performance in an environmentally-friendly way.
- > **Vertical Master:** Training center for the drone professional. The sulphating/crop treating training program enables the student to acquire the knowledge necessary to carry out agricultural spraying by using a drone.
- > **The Maison Amarella** will set up operations on the site in December. It is developing a concept of avant-garde pastries that blends the flavors of the Middle East with those of the classic pastries of the west.

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