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Agribio Union is stepping up its presence in Southwest France

Agribio Union's new silo was inaugurated on Thursday, 1 June 2023 in Roquelaure, Gers, Southwest France. The Gers department represents 20% of Agribio Union's total surface area. The new silo at Roquelaure required an investment of €7 million, financed by the cooperative union with support from the Fonds Avenir Bio and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). It meets the expectations of farmers and the food processing industry, as well as consumers who are concerned about the quality and traceability of products.

This new facility is entirely dedicated to organically grown crops and has a storage capacity of 15,000 tonnes. It will help support and further develop organic farming in the Gers, which is France's leading department with almost 30% of its arable land already farmed organically. *"This new investment sends out a strong signal. We still believe in the development of organic farming, and this is the third silo we've built in seven years after the ones in Barcelonne-du-Gers and Monbahus. Even though consumption is falling in France, storage capacity is not sufficient to meet the growing demand from Gers farmers. In addition, the number of new organic arable farms is rising in the Occitanie and Nouvelle-Aquitaine regions. We are helping to structure the sector and are continuing to improve the technical and economic performance of organic farmers in the Southwest",* explained Olivier Ladeveze, Chairman of Agribio Union.

The Roquelaure silo, dedicated specifically to organic crops, will enable Agribio Union's 150 farmer-producers in the Gers, southern Lot-et-Garonne, western Haute-Garonne and Tarn-et-Garonne to travel less for collections.

This silo is specifically designed to receive the different species grown by organic growers in their rotations. It has 21 product storage compartments, a dryer with energy recovery and two cleaning circuits. It includes an innovative insect control solution, with the installation of 4 compartments adapted to using inert nitrogen gas. This diversity of storage spaces is a real asset, enabling us to create uniform batches of grains and control quality to meet the demands of increasingly segmented markets. *"France is aiming to have 18% of its agricultural land organically farmed by 2027. To achieve this, we need to have high-performance tools that enable us to make the most of our production, to be even more competitive and thus meet our customers' expectations",* explained Stéphane Vanrenterghem, Managing Director of Agribio Union.

THE ROQUELAURE SILO IN FIGURES:

- **15,000 t** of equivalent wheat storage
- **21** storage compartments for cleaned and dried products
- **2** cleaning circuits, **2** seed cleaning machines, **2** dryers
- **7** million euros invested, including **1.35** million euros of subsidies from **Fonds Avenir Bio** (as part of the Recovery Plan) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (**EAFRD**) managed by the **Occitanie Region**. Support from **Sofiprotéol**, a strategic and sustainable financial partner for the agricultural and food sectors, and **Bio Filières Durables**, a French funding organisation dedicated to organic farming.
- **Products collected in the zone:** milling wheat, barley and triticale, rapeseed, linseed flax, sunflower, soy, pulses (lentils, chickpeas, etc.)

AGRIBIO UNION IN SHORT:

The Agribio Union was founded based on the conviction that organic farming could not take off without support from regional cooperatives. This original organisational model has been proving its worth since 1999, and is now the leader in organic grain collection in France, accounting for almost 9% of the national total, including 31% for soy and 19% for sunflower.

President: Olivier Ladeveze

CEO: Stéphane Vanrenterghem

▪ 100% organic union of 6 cooperatives:

o Acteo (Vivadour)

o Alcor (Terres du Sud)

o Alliance Occitane (Arterris)

o Coop Agribio

o Euralis

o Maïsadour

▪ 1,250 producers

▪ 70,000 hectares of arable farmland monitored

▪ 53 million euros in turnover

AGRIBIO UNION IN 2023

1,250

Farmers

present in 17 departments of Southwest France

90,000

Tonnes

of grains, oilseeds and pulses collected in 2022

70,000

Hectares

of arable farmland monitored in 2022

53

Million euros

in turnover

Quality and certification processes

Union of 6 cooperatives in Southwest France

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