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Press release

ARD opens the second line of its BioDémo industrial demonstrator

This new line doubles ARD's capacity, cementing its place as a leading international player in industrial biotechnology



From left to right: Olivier de Bohan (President of Cristal Union), Christoph Büren (President of the VIVESCIA group), Henri Prévost (Prefect of the Marne), Philippe Aubry (Managing Director of ARD), Catherine Vautrin (President of Greater Reims), Olivier Miaux (Managing Director of VIVESCIA Industries), Anne-Sophie ROMAGNY (Senator for the Marne), Xavier Albertini (Member of Parliament for the Marne)

ARD, a company of VIVESCIA Industries, has today opened a second line at its BioDémo industrial demonstrator. Present for the inauguration were Henri Prévost, Prefect of the Marne department, Benoit Lemaire, Subprefect of Reims, and Catherine Vautrin, President of the Greater Reims region, together with shareholders and partners of the business.

Thanks to this €8m investment, which has created 35 new jobs, ARD is now well placed to meet the high level of international demand for biotechnologies. The new BioDémo line will reinforce the company's unique position as a partner to businesses developing molecules for applications in fields as varied as cosmetics, healthcare and the food industry. ARD works with businesses in these sectors to scale up their processes from the laboratory environment through to commercial production.

* Technology Readiness Level

Christoph Büren, President of VIVESCIA Group, said, “After 18 months of works, the new line was successfully commissioned at the beginning of the financial year. It is now operational, helping our customers bring to market biosourced molecules based on renewable carbon, in preparation for the post-oil era. ARD is known to its global customer base – start-ups and large groups alike – as a leader in biotechnology. This new phase further confirms this position. We can no doubt look forward to other promising developments at the Pomacle-Bazancourt agro-industrial cluster in the future.”

Philippe Aubry, Managing Director of ARD, said, “BioDémon 2 is an open innovation platform and project incubator. Customers will look to it to derisk their industrial investments. With the new 220m³ fermenter, we will also be able to propose contract manufacturing of carbon-free molecules to complement or replace petrochemical products, aligning our solutions even more closely with customer demand. This investment is part of a growth strategy under which we plan to add new modules to meet strong international demand for fermentation capacity. ARD is ready for the challenges that lie ahead!”

Key figures:

€8m invested

35 jobs created

Duration: 18 months

Commissioned: June 2023

Pioneering skills and established expertise

ARD was founded in 1989. **In 2009**, the company reached a significant milestone by building its original BioDémon demonstrator, which became the unique selling point of the open innovation platform located within the Pomacle-Bazancourt biorefinery.

In 2015, ARD brought all its laboratories and pilot plants together on a single site alongside the demonstrator, equipping it to provide customers with all the resources they need, wherever they are on the TRL* scale. ARD transitioned from being a major partner in the Futurol project to assuming control of the pilot plant, thereby bolstering its production capacity. In the same year, the Pomacle-whole Bazancourt site was achieved “*Territoire d’Industrie*” certification.

From a cellular factory to a commercial factory

ARD is known for its expertise in fermentation, from laboratory level right through to full-scale production. Its skillset encompasses both natural strains and those “programmed” using cutting-edge techniques and technologies.

Over the last 15 to 20 years, the tools used in modern biology have expanded the available options for producing useful molecules that will pave the way for the post-oil era.

Applications in industrial and precision fermentation

ARD operates in sectors with high value creation potential including the production of everything from bio-inputs, to food and cosmetic ingredients, to “biohydrocarbons”. The company has an impressive list of clients across these sectors spanning businesses of all sizes, with products at varying stages of development.

The burgeoning bioeconomy

Although the term is still unfamiliar to non-specialists, the bioeconomy – which we could also call “the economy of living resources and photosynthesis” – is part of a generalised, global movement to limit the use of fossil-based carbon (decarbonisation) and strive for a circular economy.

* Technology Readiness Level

From its inception, ARD set itself on a path powered by industrial biotechnologies and what we now know as “biomanufacturing.”

The bioeconomy provides many opportunities to scale up production and even reindustrialise. It is clear that global demand for fermentation outstrips capacity. That is why ARD has invested in a second BioD mo production line, equipping it to meet its customers’ needs and providing the facilities required to serve the fast-expanding bioeconomy.

Did you know? Every year, ARD contributes to the development of global innovation

Cosmetic hyaluronic acid: created by Soliance, which was sold to Givaudan.

Succinic acid: biosourced plastics markets – BioAmber.

Omega-3 food supplements: FermentaIlg.

Isobutene for biofuel (Global Bioenergies), which enabled the first international flight for an aircraft powered by renewable aviation fuel.

And around a dozen confidential projects developing strategic molecules for major players in fine chemicals and the food industry.

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About VIVESCIA

VIVESCIA is an international, cooperative farming and food processing group with 7,000 employees in 25 countries, generating revenue of €4.6 billion for the year ending 30 June 2023. Specialising in producing and adding value to grain, VIVESCIA is owned by 10,000 farming entrepreneurs from the North-East of France.

VIVESCIA strives to take care of grain, from field to fork, thanks to a collective of men and women who are committed to sustainable plant-based industries. The Cooperative and its agricultural subsidiaries collect 3.6 million tonnes of grain every year; one in 10 beers worldwide are produced with our malt thanks to Malteurop’s expertise. Our Francine flour can be found in one in three French households. Grands Moulins de Paris works with nearly one in four French bakers every day. Thousands of consumers enjoy sweet and savoury treats in France and around the world thanks to D lifrance’s croissants, patisserie, viennoiserie and bread. We also have expertise in the milling maize industry, with Kaliz a, in animal nutrition with Nealia, and in biotechnology and plant chemistry with ARD.

About ARD

ARD is a research & development company specialising in scaling up processes and contract manufacturing to generating value from crops in the fields of bio-refining, industrial biotechnologies, and green chemistry. Backed by major cooperative groups, including its majority shareholder VIVESCIA, ARD is now a leading European platform for innovation within the Pomacle-Bazancourt biorefinery, boasting laboratories, pilot installations, and an industrial demonstrator called BioD mo. ARD provides process development services for start-ups or major manufacturers, with the double aim of optimising production costs and protecting the environment. ARD is also a founding member of the global competitive cluster “Bioeconomy for Change.”