Cargill Inaugurates Expanded Food Research Center in Belgium

The newly expanded European Research and Development Centre features a state-of-the- art pilot plant. The R&D Centre originally opened on the site in 1965. **(Photo: Cargill)**

VILVOORDE, Belgium (Cargill) — Cargill [1] today officially inaugurated its newly expanded European Research and Development Centre in Vilvoorde, Belgium.

The expansion is the result of an 8 million euro investment in line with the highest technological and food safety standards. The R&D Centre now features a new state-of-the-art pilot plant, adding 5,000m² of innovation space where Cargill's 145 scientists and technologists can develop new ingredients, perfect reformulations and test new manufacturing processes. The newly expanded centre will help meet the ever-changing needs of Cargill's customers, across different applications covering the entire spectrum of food and feed ingredients science as well as non-food applications such as personal care and fermentation technology.

Cargill paid special attention to food safety principles [2] during the expansion: "Food safety is one of our most important goals at Cargill. This is why we implemented the zoning model in our new pilot plant, to not only meet today's standards in food safety, but also to anticipate future needs," says Marijana Petrovic, Cargill's R&D Centre Food Safety Leader. "The prevention of contamination is a fast-moving discipline, and Cargill wants to be at the forefront in this field, so that we can provide safe food every time, everywhere. This includes the products produced in our research and development facilities and product samples provided to our customers."

This investment also reinforces Cargill's commitment to continued, sustainable growth through innovation and highlights the importance of the Vilvoorde R&D Centre for the company.

"We have come a long way since the first research was done on this site in 1965. Back then the research focus was mainly on starch and starch-related products," says Jean Simons, Site Director of the R&D Centre. "After subsequent expansions in the 80s and 90s, and the acquisition by Cargill in 2002, the R&D Centre gradually matured into what it is today: a multidisciplinary centre covering the entire spectrum of food, feed and non-food ingredients science."

Cargill's European R&D Centre is the company's primary technology centre serving Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It is integral part of Cargill's network of application centres across the region and the globe, which include the North American and Latin American Food Innovation Centres [3]. In the past few years Cargill opened Innovation Centres in Campinas, Brazil; Wichita Kansas, US; and New Delhi, India; highlighting the importance of innovation for the company.

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