



Press release

THE MAÏSADOUR AND VIVADOUR COOPERATIVES ANNOUNCE THE CREATION OF A 100% SOUTH-WEST OF FRANCE SOYBEAN CHAIN

9th of July 2021. The Vivadour and Maïsadour cooperatives announce the creation of a new company named Graine d'alliance to supply the animal nutrition market with **100% local, GMO-free soybean meal**. From cultivation to crushing, the two cooperatives are committed to a complete control of the chain. A dedicated plant will open in Saint-Sever in February 2022.

A 100% South-West of France non-GMO Chain

First source of proteins in the animal nutrition, soybean is mainly produced in the United States, Brazil and Argentina. In France, the farmers are facing a fragmented market with multiple operators, without any real continuity in the chain. In 2019, the country was still importing more than 3.2 million tons of soybean meal and seeds, mainly from Brazil, which represented 46% of its needs*. In this context, the Maïsadour and Vivadour cooperatives, both soybean producers, have created a 100% South-West of France chain. *"By creating Graine d'alliance, we want to value our common soybean production and relocate in France all the steps necessary for the production, from cultivation to crushing. We have entrusted the industrial management of this company to Sud-Ouest Aliment (SOAL) which will bring all its expertise,"* explains Jean-Marc Gassiot-Bitalis and Michel Prugue, respectively Presidents of the Vivadour and Maïsadour cooperatives. *"In a context of agro-ecological transition, soybean is a crop adapted to the oceanic climate of the South-West of France with a strong agronomic interest: it can be cultivated in rotation with maize, which improves the quality of the soil, and it requires low inputs. On our territory, we have all the required conditions to produce non-GMO soybean and supply a French market in high demand,"* explains Jean-Louis Zwick, President of SOAL.

A dedicated multi-production site will be launched in February 2022

Graine d'alliance company which will lay the foundation stone for its plant in mid-July, will process its first local soybean harvest in February 2022. Seed preparation, shelling, cooking, pressing, filtration, the objective is to process 30,000 tons of soybeans per year and thus to cover 100% of the food factories need for local and sustainable non-GMO soybean meal. If the activity is first intended for the animal feed of the poultry chain, the initiators of the project will also value the co-products in oil (human food, agro-fuel) and hulls (animal nutrition for other animals). The two cooperatives set a turnover target of 15 million euros by 2024.

More than 90% of the site activity will be dedicated to crushing local soybean and will have two other workshops also dedicated to animal nutrition. The first one for the manufacture of local corn and barley flakes, the second for the blending of farmyard seeds.

Michel Prugue, President of the Maïsadour Cooperative: *"Thanks to this project, conducted hand in hand with Vivadour, we will gain more autonomy, control our protein supplies, enhance local production and limit imports. Developing the local soybean production is also to diversify the crop rotation of the farmers on our territory of the South-West of France."*

Jean-Marc Gassiot- Bitalis, President of the Vivadour Cooperative: *"This project perfectly fits into the national recovery plan for the plant protein strategy. Besides, we also received support for the "Investment for the Resilience of our Economy". This development is for us a real step forward, a path of progress for local agriculture."*

Paul Le-Bars, Director of Fermiers du Sud-Ouest: *"The breeders of the South-West of France are the heirs of the Red Label and the precursors of quality chains. We are now proud to be able to supply them with local soybean and to go even further with our commitments. There is a dual benefit: offering high-quality feed to our animals, and meeting the expectations of final consumers, in search of transparency and made in France products."*

*The Agricultural Cooperation – Animal Nutrition Department, 2019

About SOAL

Sud-Ouest Aliment is now the leader of animal nutrition in the South-West of France.

In 2008, the Maïsadour, Vivadour and Val de Gascogne cooperative groups created Sud-Ouest Aliment to enhance local productions, and ensure the competitiveness of the animal production chains.

The group has 15 manufacturing sites and produces almost 800,000 tons of food with a turnover of 229 million euros in 2020.

About the MAÏSADOUR Group

Since 1936 Maïsadour has been a committed cooperative from the South-West of France, placing Man and the Living at the heart of its concerns, for a sustainable agriculture, food and society.

Maïsadour develops chains of excellence that meet the expectations of consumers to promote, in France and internationally, the productions of thousands of members and farmers.

The Group - 5,000 members, 5,17 employees, 1.358 billion euros of turnover in 2019-2020 - is today structured around four business lines: Seed Business Line, Agricultural Business Line, Poultry Business Line, Gourmet Business Line

About the VIVADOUR Group

With 4,600 farmers and 1,100 employees, Vivadour is a cooperative group with a strong territorial anchorage in the Gers and neighboring departments.

It is engaged in six activities: crop productions, seed production, winegrowing and winemaking, animal production, specialized mainstream distribution and environmental innovation.

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