



Agrofood Bic invests in Mirnagreen, a company at the forefront of plant microRNAs for human and animal well-being.

A partnership that combines innovation, industrial skills and circular economy

Bologna, 19 November 2020 - Agrofood BIC S.r.l. (Business Innovation Center), a multi-company open innovation centre that has been operating on a national and international scale since January 2019 to identify and leverage valuable business opportunities, identified Mirnagreen s.r.l., a company at the forefront of the plant microRNA sector, as the ideal partner for a significant investment in terms of business opportunities. Mirnagreen is based at the Noi Techpark in Bolzano and is chaired by Roberto Viola, entrepreneur and researcher.

A science-intensive company, Mirnagreen has developed unique proprietary technologies for the food-grade and large-scale extraction of plant microRNAs, natural substances with newly discovered beneficial properties to strengthen the immune system. Thanks to an innovative patented process, Mirnagreen develops new generation products and solutions

based on plant microRNAs - that can also be obtained from by-products of the food chain - for the nutraceutical, food and cosmeceutical sectors.

"The focus on microRNAs, important bio-active components, is of great scientific interest as we envisage their potential use in the food sector both for the production of functional foods and food supplements. Many studies confirm the anti-inflammatory activity of plant-derived microRNAs such as those developed by Mirnagreen. It is not for tomorrow but in the medium term we are looking at these innovative solutions with great interest," said Gianpiero Calzolari, the President of Agrofood BIC and Granarolo S.p.A..

"The partnership with Agrofood BIC is of the utmost importance to us. In fact, it provides an excellent opportunity to enhance Mirnagreen assets in the food sector thanks to the synergy with some of the top industrial players in the Italian food supply chain," said Roberto Viola, the President of Mirnagreen. "Italy is a world leader in the agro-food sector and companies in the supply chain have always promoted innovation in order to be competitive and offer excellent products to domestic and foreign consumers. This partnership will generate new production pathways to combine scientific innovation and consolidated agro-food skills, with the aim of creating valuable products for people's wellbeing, with a view to maximising eco-sustainability"

AGROFOOD BIC

A collaborative initiative promoted by Granarolo S.p.A., Gellify S.r.l., Camst Soc. Coop. A r.l., Conserve Italia Soc. Coop. Agricola., Cuniola Società Agricola A r.l., Eurovo S.r.l. has led to the establishment of Agrofood BIC S.r.l. (BIC standing for Business Innovation Centre). The shared and clearly defined objective is to create **an accelerator for promising and innovative start-ups specialized in**

- Healthy food and special needs
- Traceability of food product with a focus on food safety
- Sustainable packaging
- Food Delivery (shelf life linked to the globalization of food products)
- Precision Farming

Agrofood BIC S.r.l. will support **promising start-ups by helping them to convert their ideas into concrete entrepreneurial initiatives**, helping them overcome all organisational, operational and strategic challenges typically faced by new-born companies with the specific skills and tools needed to grow their business ideas on the food market and overcoming access barriers. Agrofood BIC and its partners will make available to start-up entrepreneurs facilities, pilot plants, R&D assistance and access to a network of relationships in the food supply chain that will decisively enhance their chances of success.

Three institutions will collaborate with the new Business Innovation Centre: the University of Bologna, Enema, National Agency for new Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development and ASTER, the Research and Innovation Agency of the Emilia-Romagna Region

GRANAROLO

The Granarolo Group, one of the leading operators in the Italian agro-food industry, comprises two different yet synergistic companies: Granlatte, a cooperative of dairy producers, which operates in the agricultural sector and collects the raw materials, and a public limited company, Granarolo S.p.A., processing and marketing the finished product in 15 production sites in Italy, two in France, three in Brazil, one in New Zealand, one in the United Kingdom and one in Germany.

The Granarolo Group is the most important Italian dairy supply chain to directly represent its associated producers as part of a cooperative. It includes around 700 dairy farmers, a milk collection organisation with a fleet of 70 vehicles that collects the raw material at the source, and 740 distribution vehicles that transport 850 thousand tonnes of milk per year, serving around 50 thousand retailers on a daily basis where approximately 20 million Italian families buy their Granarolo products.

The Group's mission outside Italy is to export the tradition of Made in Italy products, and especially dairy products.

The Group relies on external quality controls carried out by international certification bodies certified by the International Food Standards (IFS), the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and the EU Organic Food Certification (CCPB). Since 2002 the production process has been certified according to the ISO 9001 standard on quality management systems.

The Granarolo Group has over 2900 employees. The Group is 77.48% owned by the Granlatte Consortium, its majority shareholder, 19.78% by Intesa Sanpaolo and the remaining 2.74% by Cooperlat.

In 2019, the Group generated a turnover of over 1,3 billion euro.

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GELLIFY

GELLIFY is a B2B innovation platform able to connect digital software start-ups to traditional businesses to innovate their products, processes and business models

With headquarters in Italy and offices in Spain and the United Arab Emirates, the company's success is based on its unique model offering companies the most advanced technologies of B2B start-ups as well as GELLIFY's expertise. The platform accompanies start-ups from their "gaseous" or "liquid" embryonic state to a reliable and scalable "solid" state through its exclusive and proprietary growth program of "GELLIFICATION". This growth is supported through smart investments made by GELLIFY and co-investors.

GELLIFY operates through two business units:

- GELLIFY for Start-ups, aimed at the "gellification" of start-ups that have already shown traction on the market; the "gellification" programme includes complex services beyond mentorship and business creation typically provided by incubators. The programme lasts 6 to 24 months and affects all business areas.
- GELLIFY for Companies, focused on open innovation services to SMEs and large corporations that are willing to develop new and innovative business solutions. The division specialises in corporate venturing, innovation strategies, digitalisation of sales and marketing, industry 4.0 and digital operations, digitalisation and workforce empowerment.

Partners in GELLIFY's initiatives for 2020 include T.T. Tecnosistemi, a company focused on advanced IT solutions, the tax consultancy firm Pirola Pennuto Zei & Associati, with Partner Stefano Tronconi and Associate Partner Luca Neri, and the law firm Gianni, Origoni, Grippo, Cappelli & Partners with Partner Federico Dettori and Associate Partner Rodrigo Boccioletti, in the context of Gop4Venture practices.

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CONSERVE ITALIA

Conserve Italia is a cooperative consortium with registered offices in San Lazzaro di Savena (BO), a leading Italian company in the food processing sector that includes 14,000 farmers and processes over 600,000 tonnes of fruit, tomatoes and vegetables across 12 plants, of which nine in Italy, two in France and one in Spain. The total aggregated turnover of the Conserve Italia Group is approximately 900 million euro, 40% of which is generated by exports. Conserve Italia employs approximately 3,000 permanent and seasonal workers in Italy, and holds under a number of well-established Italian brands including Cirio, Valfrutta, Yoga, Derby Blue and Jolly Colombani.

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CAMST

CAMST is a cooperative established in Bologna in 1945 that brings the quality of home cooking to schools, businesses, hospitals, trade fairs, shopping centres and cities in Italy and abroad (Spain, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland). The company combines traditional Italian cuisine with the innovation of a modern business as part of a constantly evolving approach, creating a business rooted in the past but with its sight set firmly on the future. In 2017 the Group expanded its services to include facility management in order to offer clients a full-fledged service. The Group has a total aggregated turnover of 785 million Euro, employs over 16 thousand workers (2019 data)

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CUNIOLA

Cuniola Società Agricola a r.l., owned by the family of Alberto Vacchi, Chairman and CEO of Ima S.p.a, owns a 500-hectare agricultural site in San Martino in the province of Ferrara.

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GRUPPO EUROVO

The Eurovo Group is the European leader in the production and marketing of eggs and egg products. The company has been operating on the market for over sixty years and has been led by the Lionello family ever since it was established. Over time, the experience, passion and process automation have turned this small company centred on manual egg-shelling into a market leader in Europe with 10 million layers and 17 plants in Italy and abroad. Eurovo Group products are the result of a complete and vertically integrated supply chain. The company manages all production phases internally, from animal feed manufacturing to shelling,

pasteurisation, packaging and distribution. The Group's success is the result of a constant focus on quality: a transparent production process combined with the stringent controls carried out by qualified technicians, enables Eurovo to guarantee that its products meet the highest quality standards. The company produces and markets a wide range of products for the consumer and catering markets. Its brands include Naturelle, Nonna Anita, Maia, Eurovo Service, Novissime, EPS, Liot and White Force.

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UNIVERSITA' DI BOLOGNA

The University of Bologna has ancient origins: established in 1088, the institution was the first university in the Western world. The university currently has 85,000 students and 219 degree courses, 70 of which are international, delivered across five campuses: Bologna, Cesena, Forlì, Ravenna and Rimini. It has 33 departments, 47 PhD courses, 59 specialist schools, 91 first and second level Masters' courses and an average of 11,000 research products per year. The University of Bologna is Italy's leading higher education institution in terms of number of students involved in exchange programmes, both inbound and outbound.

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ENEA

ENEA is a public research institution specialised in research & innovation and the transfer of advanced technologies and services for businesses, public administrations and citizens in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable economic development. It employs 2500 researchers, technologists and administrative staff in 13 research centres and laboratories with test facilities, cutting edge technological equipment to perform projects, studies, tests, evaluations, analyses and services. Its strengths include energy technologies, agro-food, and sustainability of productive and territorial systems. ENEA has developed a specific technology transfer project (www.kep.enea.it) to support companies in product and process innovation for the competitiveness of the Country System and acts as National Agency for Energy Efficiency.

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ART.ER

ART.ER is the consortium company of the Emilia-Romagna Region for innovation and technology transfer to businesses, universities and the Region.

It promotes industrial research as the main driver for sustainable economic development in harmony with growth and social welfare and collaborates with entrepreneurial associations to promote the development of strategies and actions combining research and business. An established innovation hub at a national and international level, ART.ER is working to transform Emilia-Romagna into a dynamic, inclusive and sustainable region.

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MIRNAGREEN

Mirnagreen is a science-based global leader in plant microRNAs, a new class of natural micronutrients with highly beneficial effects on human and animal health. Based in Bolzano, Italy, the company holds the exclusive international rights for the promotion of plant microRNAs in the nutraceutical and cosmeceutical fields and has a unique platform of technological and scientific competences and know-how. Through an innovative patented process, capable of sustainable, large-scale extraction of microRNA from plant biomass, it develops innovative new generation products and solutions for a healthy immune system.

For further information please contact gc@mirnagreen.com