

AgroFresh announces the opening of a new Iberica Technical Center

New R & D and customer service facilities right on the site of Spain's renowned Research Center IRTA in Lleida

Paris, June 2015. AgroFresh, well known in Europe for its SmartFreshSM Quality System for fruits, is pleased to announce the establishment of new technical research and testing facilities in Spain. Strategically very conveniently located, AgroFresh's laboratories and cold rooms are next door to IRTA's laboratories and trial rooms.

In setting up this location on the site of IRTA, AgroFresh wishes to emphasize its strong commitment to continue close cooperation with this internationally well known Catalanian research institute, and to guarantee the best services in terms of technical advice and product application to its customers. "AgroFresh has always attempted to deliver not only a product, but also scientific proven knowledge about storage management and fruit conditions to growers, storage managers and exporters. A lot of our horticulture expertise of optimizing the quality of apple and pear varieties, persimmons and plums in relation to SmartFreshTM technology, has been gained through our close partnership with the researchers of IRTA. We want to pursue these synergies for the development and implementation of our new technologies and the continuous adaptation of existing protocols," said Andrea Cucchi, Head of AgroFresh's European R&D. The AgroFresh Iberica Technical Center will not only host developments for Spain, but is also scheduled to carry out European wide R & D projects. "These new research facilities have clearly provided for us a European wide location: we plan to test new technologies and storage platforms."

One of the many focuses in 2015 will be on helping customers to gain more insights into pear ripening patterns. Although SmartFresh has already well proven over the past years to offer longer shelf life and to reduce successfully internal browning and external bruising during the handling process, pears remain a challenging fruit for producers and exporters: their ripening process varies depending on varieties and regions. AgroFresh takes great care to update each year the regional and local SmartFresh use recommendations, offering to customers the latest information.

In addition, AgroFresh will set up efficacy trials for a complete new range of crops like peaches and nectarines. So far, the first results with SmartFresh on these highly sensitive fruits indicate measurable better quality maintenance throughout the supply chain and on the shelf. AgroFresh expects that SmartFresh will offer producers and exporters new possibilities to manage seasonal harvest peaks and varying selling windows.

So far, AgroFresh is the only horticulture technology company that has selected rooms and labs on the IRTA site. AgroFresh feels honored that IRTA has agreed to welcome AgroFresh's research installation on its grounds: "We are very excited and grateful to IRTA to offer the possibility to rent storage rooms and equipment from them and observe the influence of changing storage regimes, like temperature or oxygen fluctuations on the fruit metabolism. Thanks to this new location, we will be able to gather more and faster data and compare our intelligence with the research done by IRTA's scientists", explained Eve Dupille, R& D Manager of AgroFresh in Spain. "We have done this kind of research before, but IRTA allows us to re-group and centralize it, which, of course, will also facilitate the analysis of the data."

Last but not least, this new location offers rooms for product application material and training of AgroFresh's service providers. It brings SmartFresh application management closer to the Spanish end users. Starting this season, the new facilities are expected to further improve the company's service management for the whole country, and plans are made to include Portugal in the future.

The new facilities will be officially inaugurated on June 30.