

## PRESS RELEASE

# Pieter & Virginie Delbaere appointed as new Co-CEO's of Crop's

*Family Duo Takes the helm from current CEO Eric Lauwers*

**Ooigem, Belgium, December 5, 2024** – Today, Crop's, a Belgium-based, fully vertically integrated leader in frozen vegetables, fruit, and ready meals, announces a leadership transition within the family-owned company. With Pieter and Virginie Delbaere as co-CEO's, Crop's is doubling down on its commitment to family roots, strategic stability, and the continued execution of its growth plan.

Founded in 1977 by Michel Delbaere, who served as CEO for over 45 years, Crop's began a new chapter in March 2024 with the appointment of Eric Lauwers as CEO. During his tenure, a new five-year strategy was developed, culminating in the *Grow People Forward* plan, which aims for significant milestones by 2028-2029. With the groundwork laid, Eric Lauwers is now passing the baton to Michel's children: Pieter and Virginie.

It has always been the intention for the next Delbaere generation to lead the company. Both Pieter and Virginie have held leadership roles and have been long-standing members of Crop's Executive Committee. Eric Lauwers was brought in to facilitate this generational transition and believes the time has come to entrust the company's leadership to Pieter and Virginie.

"After eight years on the Board of Directors, I eagerly began my tenure as CEO of Crop's. During this period, together with the teams, we achieved critical progress in preparing the company for the future with renewed ambition, clearer positioning, and a concrete growth plan. With this foundation now in place, I feel that the natural next step is to hand over leadership to Pieter and Virginie. I wish them every success in continuing the growth trajectory and will remain available to guide and coach during this transition", says Eric Lauwers.

"We are delighted to embark on this significant milestone together and to continue the family's legacy. We want to sincerely thank Eric Lauwers for paving the way. His extensive international experience leading renowned global companies and his expertise in commercial strategies have helped set the stage for this new chapter while aligning with the validated strategy", says Pieter Delbaere.

"Our ambitions remain unchanged. We aim to bring high-quality and innovative frozen products to market that address evolving consumer trends. Together with our retail, industry, and food service clients, we want to pave the way for healthier and more sustainable choices, where frozen food plays a vital role. We look forward to building the future with our team of motivated employees, always with a nod to the past", concludes Virginie Delbaere.

## About Crop's

With an annual turnover of €600 million in fiscal year 2023–2024, Crop's is a European player in frozen vegetables, fruit, and ready meals. Founded in 1977 and headquartered in Ooigem, Belgium, Crop's began as a family business and currently employs 2,000 people worldwide. The group operates key vegetable facilities in Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain, and Poland, and important fruit facilities in Serbia, Poland, Morocco, and Costa Rica, strategically located for optimal soil and climate conditions.

Crop's serves the entire food industry, through retail, industry, food service, and wholesalers. With customers and business partners in 62 countries, Crop's grows and freezes the finest fresh ingredients globally. By creating innovative products for both private labels and brands, Crop's aims to grow the frozen food category.

As a vertically integrated company, Crop's brings together farmers, agronomists, and partners within the TRUST sustainability program. The program facilitates traceability from field to fork, knowledge building and sharing on the latest farming techniques, transparency on clean labels, and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

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