

Media Release

Insect-derived ingredients for human nutrition

Food-tech company Divaks selects Bühler to develop its first industrial-scale yellow mealworm plant

Uzwil (Switzerland), Vilnius (Lithuania), November 7, 2023 – Lithuanian insect producer Divaks has selected the Swiss technology group Bühler to build its first commercial-scale yellow mealworm plant. Scheduled to go into operation in 2025, the plant will produce up to 15,000 tonnes of sustainable insect-derived products annually. Bühler will be responsible for planning and executing the plant as well as providing solutions for the entire supply chain.

Following the establishment of its pilot facility in May 2022, Divaks has now taken a major step towards its first industrial-scale yellow mealworm plant. Divaks' site, which is located in Lithuania's Marijampolė Free Economic Zone, spans an area of 10,000 square meters. Encouraged by the opportunities in this market, the company expects to double its production in the new facility by 2030.

In the new plant, Divaks will produce yellow mealworm (scientifically known as *Tenebrio molitor*), which is an environmentally friendly, nutritious protein source that can be used in applications including meat alternatives, sports nutrition, snacks, and confectionery as well as premium pet food. The residue from the mealworm production (or insect frass) will be utilized as organic fertilizer, as it contributes to healthier soils, fostering a circular economy approach.

Advanced technology

Divaks has selected Bühler as the technology provider for the plant. Bühler will be responsible for all process technology, which will include feedstock preparation to provide safe, palatable, and nourishing feed to the larvae and a fully automated larvae growth system with sophisticated climate control. Furthermore, Bühler will provide the processing line to transform the harvested larvae into textured insect proteins (TIP), insect protein concentrates (IPC), and other specialized food ingredients.

Divaks CEO and Co-Founder Kęstutis Lipnickas said: "This is a huge step forward for Divaks as we work to establish ourselves as global leaders in high-quality insect-derived ingredients for human nutrition. Bühler will deliver the state-of-the-art technology we need, allowing us to focus on the most important activities: market development and creating sustainable products that excel in nutritional and functional qualities."

Andreas Baumann, Head of Market Segment Insect Technology at Bühler, added: "We are delighted to have been chosen to provide a full-scope solution for Divaks' yellow mealworm production site. It

reinforces Bühler's commitment to ambitious targets that will help to mitigate climate change and build a more sustainable food system."

Sustainable protein

Research shows that there is a growing need for sustainable protein sources to meet the demands of an expanding global population. The alternative proteins market has experienced significant growth in recent years and, while it has so far been dominated by the plant-based sector, insects offer many advantages.

Yellow mealworms – which have been recognized as safe for human consumption by the European Commission – provide a complete protein source with all essential amino acids, vitamins, and minerals. At the same time, commercial insect farming is considered to have a low environmental footprint, requiring minimal water, energy, and land resources. It also supports circular food systems, with insect bioconversion potentially allowing for around a third of the EU's annual food waste to be safely upcycled.

Kęstutis Lipnickas added: "Edible insects have a key role to play as we move toward a more resilient and sustainable food system. Our new facility will help food brands tap into this fast-growing, high-potential sector with high-quality protein ingredients for premium food products."

Divaks, which was founded in 2020, is now approaching the closing stages of its Series A funding round. It has already secured a substantial part of its EUR 67 million target but remains open to new investors.

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About Bühler

Bühler is driven by its purpose of creating innovations for a better world, balancing the needs of economy, humanity, and nature. As a relevant solution partner for the food and mobility industries, Bühler has developed a pathway to achieve a 60% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in its operations by 2030, meaning Greenhouse Gas Protocol Scopes 1 & 2, against a 2019 baseline. It has committed to having solutions ready to multiply by 2025 that reduce energy, waste, and water by 50% in the value chains of its customers. Billions of people come into contact with Bühler technologies as they cover their basic needs for food and mobility every day. Two billion people each day enjoy foods produced on Bühler equipment; and one billion people travel in vehicles manufactured using parts produced with Bühler technology. Countless people wear eyeglasses, use smart phones, and read newspapers and magazines – all of which depend on Bühler process technologies and solutions. Having this global relevance, Bühler is in a unique position to turn today's global challenges into sustainable business. Bühler contributes to safely feeding the world and is doing its part to protect the climate, producing solutions that make cars, buildings, and machinery more energy efficient.

Bühler spends up to 5% of turnover on research and development annually. In 2022, some 12,700 employees generated a turnover of CHF 3.0 billion. As a Swiss family-owned company, Bühler is active in 140 countries around the world and operates a global network of 105 service stations, 30 manufacturing sites, and Application & Training Centers in 23 countries.

www.buhlergroup.com

About Divaks

Based in Vilnius, Lithuania, Divaks is a fast-growing food-tech company developing high-quality insect-derived ingredients for the food industry. Its fully automated, vertically integrated approach focuses on building a fully managed process from insect breeding to individually crafted products for human consumption. The company's goal is sustainability and traceability in every step, with a commitment to only use environmentally friendly by-products from local agriculture and food industry. For more information, visit: <https://www.divaks.com>