**PRESS RELEASE**

**Insect-based ingredient production made possible by innovative vertical farms: French biochemist selected as finalist for the European Inventor Award 2023**

* **Antoine Hubert and his team at Ÿnsect are working to reduce CO2 emissions linked with traditional agriculture and impact food scarcity worldwide**
* **Ÿnsect’s methods produce thousands of tons of ingredients a year, used as food, feed and fertiliser**
* **They are the first company to receive European Union clearance for a fertiliser made from insects, and they are finalizing the construction of the world’s largest vertical insect farm in Amiens**

**Munich, 9 May 2023** – Nearly 30% of the world’s population is currently food insecure, according to the United Nations. In an era where sustainability and innovation are at the forefront of global concerns, Antoine Hubert, a French biochemist, and his team have pioneered an innovative approach with their vertical insect farms to produce food for human beings, **fertiliser for plants, components for gourmet pet food and feed for fish**. **Hubert and his team are finalists in the ‘SMEs’ category of the European Inventor Award 2023** in recognition of their promising work. They were selected from over 600 candidates for this year’s edition.

**Reinventing the food chain, inspired by nature**

Ÿnsect produces its ingredients (including protein, oil and fertilizer) by breeding mealworms in tall, modular farms stacked on top of one another. **This vertical system uses 30 times less land surface,** emits 40 times less CO2 emissions than cattle farming, and uses 40 times less water than pork. Hubert explains the company’s mission, “*with Ÿnsect, we are contributing to a more sustainable food system by reinventing the food chain with insect-based ingredients. Today, we sell our ingredients on very high-value markets such as plants, pets and human nutrition*”. Their products have been shown to be highly nutritious for animals, plants and humans: containing up to 72% protein, as well as essential amino acids, vitamins, and minerals.

Hubert and his team explained how their sustainable solution to food security took inspiration from nature, namely from silkworms, and the ancient practice of farming them. After caring for the insects in the vertical farms, traditional food processes are used to extract the nutritional content and convert this into oils and powders. Uses include meat alternatives and confectionery products, as well as in the sports sector. This invention presents a pioneering approach to addressing critical issues such as food scarcity, and environmental degradation.

**A project driven by environmental activism**

Before starting his company, Hubert and his fellow environmental activist and colleague, Alexis Angot, started an environmental charity in 2007 called Worgamic to improve the management of food resources.

Through this endeavour, Hubert and his cofounder realised that **insects were one of the most environmentally friendly ways to feed the world**, and so they founded Ÿnsect in 2011 along with Jean-Gabriel Levon and Fabrice Berro. Since its time as a small start-up, the company has secured large-scale investments and more than 380 patents. The company is finalising the construction of the world’s largest vertical farm near Amiens, France. It’s now the world-leading producer of insect protein and serves an array of industries. By leading the way in the normalisation of insect farming and the concept of insects as a legitimate food source, Hubert hopes to **reduce** **CO2 emissions linked with traditional agriculture** **and positively impact food scarcity worldwide**.

Hubert and his team are one of three finalists in the ‘SMEs’ category of 2023’s European Inventor Award. **The winners will be announced at a hybrid ceremony on 4 July 2023 in Valencia, Spain**. This ceremony will be broadcasted online [here](https://inventoraward.epo.org?mtm_campaign=EIA2023&mtm_keyword=EIA-pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) and is open to the public.

Find more information on the invention’s impact, the technology and the inventors’ stories [here](https://new.epo.org/en/news-events/european-inventor-award/meet-the-finalists/antoine-hubert-and-team?mtm_campaign=EIA2023&mtm_keyword=EIA-pressrelease&mtm_medium=press&mtm_group=press).

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**About the European Inventor Award**

The European Inventor Award is one of Europe's most prestigious innovation prizes. Launched by the EPO in 2006, the award honours individuals and teams, who have come up with solutions to some of the biggest challenges of our time. The finalists and winners are selected by an independent jury comprising former Award finalists. Together, they examine the proposals for their contribution towards technical progress, social and sustainable development, and economic prosperity. All inventors must have been granted a European patent for their invention. Read more [here](https://new.epo.org/en/news-events/european-inventor-award?mtm_campaign=EIA2023&mtm_keyword=EIA-pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) on the various categories, prizes, selection criteria and livestream ceremony to be held on 4 July 2023.

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