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Bühler opens Insect Technology Centre to support customers in the feed and food industries

The opening of the Insect Technology Center is a major milestone in our journey. Over the last years, we have gained expertise and maturity to serve different customers in the insect industry with the most adequate and reliable solutions. With our new facility, we extend our services and can even better support our customers in installing an industrial insect plant,” says Andreas Baumann, Head of Market Segment Insect Technology at Bühler.

At the heart of the Centre there are two insect growth chambers that can mimic industrial production conditions. These chambers have a sophisticated climate control system and are equipped with numerous sensors that give valuable process insights. Based on the collected data, the right parameters and practices can be determined to finally ensure an efficient insect production at industrial scale. At the ITC, it is possible to work with the two most relevant insect species for industrial production, namely black soldier flies and mealworms.

“A company that wants to build an industrial insect plant needs to cover several operational aspects. It includes finding the correct feedstock to rear the larvae, making sure that there is a strong and suitable insect strain to grow, defining suitable climate settings in relation to the larvae growth cycle, or getting emission data required for the permitting process,” says Andreas Baumann. All these topics are essential for a successful insect plant project and can be addressed in Bühler's new Insect Technology Center. In addition to the services offered to customers, Bühler's team will run its own tests, thereby constantly improving the technology and services for the insect market.

Accelerating insect plant projects

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might not need to invest into expensive pilot plants to demonstrate technological feasibility. Seeing the industrial insect technology in action makes it tangible, which allows customers to directly envision commercially attractive plant sizes. Since the insect growth chambers are mobile, they can be sent to any location, thus making the infrastructure accessible to customers worldwide. “In combination with the operational know-how exchange, we see enormous potential to reduce the overall time from the project idea to a successfully performing plant,” says Mr Baumann.

Contributing to a circular economy

Bühler is committed to ambitious targets that will help mitigate climate change and build a more sustainable food system. Insects are a healthy and sustainable source of protein for food and feed. In addition, their frass can be used as a fertiliser, contributing to a circular economy model of production. The insect feed protein market is expected to reach half a million metric tons in 2030. By then, the pet food sector is projected to take 30 percent and aquaculture 40 percent of the total insect protein volumes. “We are devoted to supporting the industry in reaching its full potential. Over the last years we have gained maturity and built the skills for helping the industry to further develop. With proven technologies in our portfolio, we are ready to enable our customers in bringing insect-based products to the market,” explains Mr Baumann.