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Press Release

EcoXtract® wins 2021 Pierre Potier award for its innovative and sustainable bio-based solution for the extraction of lipids, proteins and natural ingredients which contributes to a safer global food supply

Dunkirk, October 20, 2021 – EcoXtract®, a business unit of the Minafin Group, today announces its award of the 2021 Pierre Potier prize. EcoXtract® (2-methyloxolane) received the award for the sustainable solution it proposes for the extraction of oils, proteins and natural ingredients. **Contrary to the traditional and reference petro-based solvent largely used by the industry, EcoXtract is a bio-sourced solvent which repurposes plant waste, notably corn cob or sugar cane residue.**

The award ceremony has taken place today, October 20, in Paris, France.

New food safety threats emerged during Covid-19 through a combination of factors such as global warming, pollution as well as harmful agriculture practices and food waste. The production of the 2-methyloxolane using sugarcane and corn stalk by-product **does not require any additional agricultural exploitation**. It is therefore naturally compliant with the European Commission's [Bioeconomy Strategy](#) to improve and scale-up the sustainable use of renewable resources and address local and global sustainable development. Furthermore, 2-methyloxolane which **is already being safely used for pharmaceutical and cosmetic applications allows to produce oil and protein which offer an excellent food safety for consumers.**

Today the vegetable oil and related protein sectors use petroleum-based hexane to extract oil from plant materials. This old technology results in the dispersion of neurotoxic and reprotoxic hexane residues in the human food chain and in the environment. EcoXtract® purpose is firstly to propose a safer alternative to hexane which can be used in facilities initially designed for hexane with limited modifications.

Oilseeds account for about one-fifth of global crop production. More and more, consumers and younger generations value that agri-food companies address the societal impact of production processes.

"EcoXtract® is immensely honoured to have received the Pierre Potier award, one of the highest industry distinctions for international chemistry professionals and academia," said Laurence Jacques, Managing Director. "We thank the experts panel for its recognition of our bio-based solution to substitute hexane and their support to a safer and petroleum free food chain. **We are dedicated to improving the global food safety and supply and fight against food waste.** Our commitment has become the ethic of EcoXtract® which lies into a sustainable-oriented mindset that we nurture for ourselves and consumers.

“The agri-food sector plays a huge role in the sustainable development of our world which is why we have operated this switch in green chemistry within Minafin Group. It is now part of the DNA of our company” added Gust Desmedt, CEO of the Green Chemistry Division, Minafin Group.

About Minafin Group

The Minafin Group is a leading developer and manufacturer of fine chemicals with three main areas of expertise: health chemistry, green chemistry and challenging chemistry. Minafin operates six industrial manufacturing sites across Europe and North America. They provide customers in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, agriculture and hi-tech with a range of proprietary products, custom manufacturing, industrial process development and services, and multi-purpose green chemistry formulations. Minafin invests significantly in R&D to create value for customers by specializing in innovations and eco-friendly solutions that bring a competitive edge and sustainability. Its strong industrial capabilities are consolidated through seven business units: Minakem, Pennakem, Minasolve, Minagro, EcoXtract, Minascent and Pressure Chemicals, which generated over €243M in revenue in 2020. Founded in 2004 as a privately-held industrial company, Minafin is headquartered in Belgium and employs 900+ staff.

About the Pierre Potier Prize

Created in 2006 by the French Ministry for the Economy, Finance and Industry, and now maintained by the Maison de la Chimie Foundation and France Chimie, the Pierre Potier Prize highlights and rewards chemistry initiatives encouraging sustainable development and the development of eco-responsible approaches in the sector. Awarded by a panel of key figures in research, industry and ministries, this prize has become an important benchmark for business support organizations. Pierre Potier and his colleagues received accolades for having created tools for drug development in the 1970s that have led the field in testing a drug’s capacity to inhibit cell division and thus of its potential anticancer activity; such as Taxotere.

www.francechimie.fr/prix-pierre-potier (in French)

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