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Press Release

Accelerating new food scale-up

GEA invests EUR 18 million in technology center for alternative proteins in the USA

- GEA is to establish an EUR 18 million technology center for sustainable alternatives to meat, dairy, seafood and egg in the USA
- Significant demand for technology in the fast-growing U.S. new food market
- Ground-breaking in spring 2024; opening planned for 2025

Düsseldorf, February 14, 2024 – GEA is investing EUR 18 million (USD 20 million) in a technology center for alternative proteins in the state of Wisconsin, USA. The new food tech hub will pilot microbial, cell-based and plant-based foods. and GEA state-of-the-art technologies and a team of biotechnology experts form the basis for scaling new food for industrial production, which is increasingly in demand in the USA. Groundbreaking at the new GEA campus in Janesville is scheduled for spring of 2024, with the opening to follow one year later.

Technology boost for the U.S. new food market

The USA is one of the countries promoting the development of sustainable food options through favorable regulation and openness to innovative food technologies. For example, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) already approved cell-cultivated chicken meat in 2022 and last year confirmed that the use of precision-fermented milk proteins in foods is safe.

“A number of new food pioneers in the USA are already writing innovation history. When it comes to industrial production, the market is still on the starting blocks. GEA’s new food center bridges a gap in the innovation landscape, driving forward the development of complementary proteins through technology,” says Dr. Reimar Gutte, Senior Vice President Liquid and Fermentation Technologies, leading New Food at GEA.

“Most new food companies are located in North America and the bulk of the investments in alternative proteins flow into this region. Consequently, there is an urgent need for scaling facilities like ours,” says Arpad Csay, who leads GEA’s North American new food business. “The GEA platform in Janesville will enable manufacturers to conduct their scaling and testing work without the need to invest in their own capital-intensive infrastructure. In this way, we will help overcome scaling challenges and accelerate the industry’s growth.”

Biologization of the food industry creates need for new food training

Beyond testing and validating processes, GEA also intends to promote the training of biotechnology specialists in the 10,000 square-meter building. Attached to the GEA site for homogenizers, separators, pumps and valves, which opened in December 2023, the new food experts will enhance knowledge sharing with other disciplines.

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This project marks GEA's second investment in a new food hub, which fast-tracks innovations from the lab to commercial-scale manufacturing. Prior to this, GEA inaugurated its technology center focusing on cell cultivation and fermentation in Hildesheim, Germany, in June 2023.

New food: growth driver for GEA and the food industry

As one of the food industry's leading technology providers, GEA is at the forefront of the novel food movement, which addresses the challenges posed by the megatrends of climate change, food security and ethics as well as healthy nutrition. That is why new food has been identified as one of the growth drivers in the GEA Mission 26 strategy. One dedicated business line is working on technologies and full production lines for microbial proteins or proteins cultivated in bioreactors, plant- or fungi-based foods, as well as innovative hybrids combining plant-based products with proteins produced using biotechnology.

Download link for high-resolution images

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Figure 1: The new food innovation center on the GEA Campus in Janesville, USA, will be used to evaluate processes for the production of new food on a transferable pilot scale as well as to test production using cell cultures and microbial fermentation in conjunction with upstream and downstream process steps. The 10,000 square-meter facility will be housed in an extension to the existing GEA building. Source: GEA

Figure 2: In June 2023, GEA inaugurated its New Food technology center in Hildesheim, Germany, as a development center for a more sustainable food industry. Source: GEA/Mike Henning

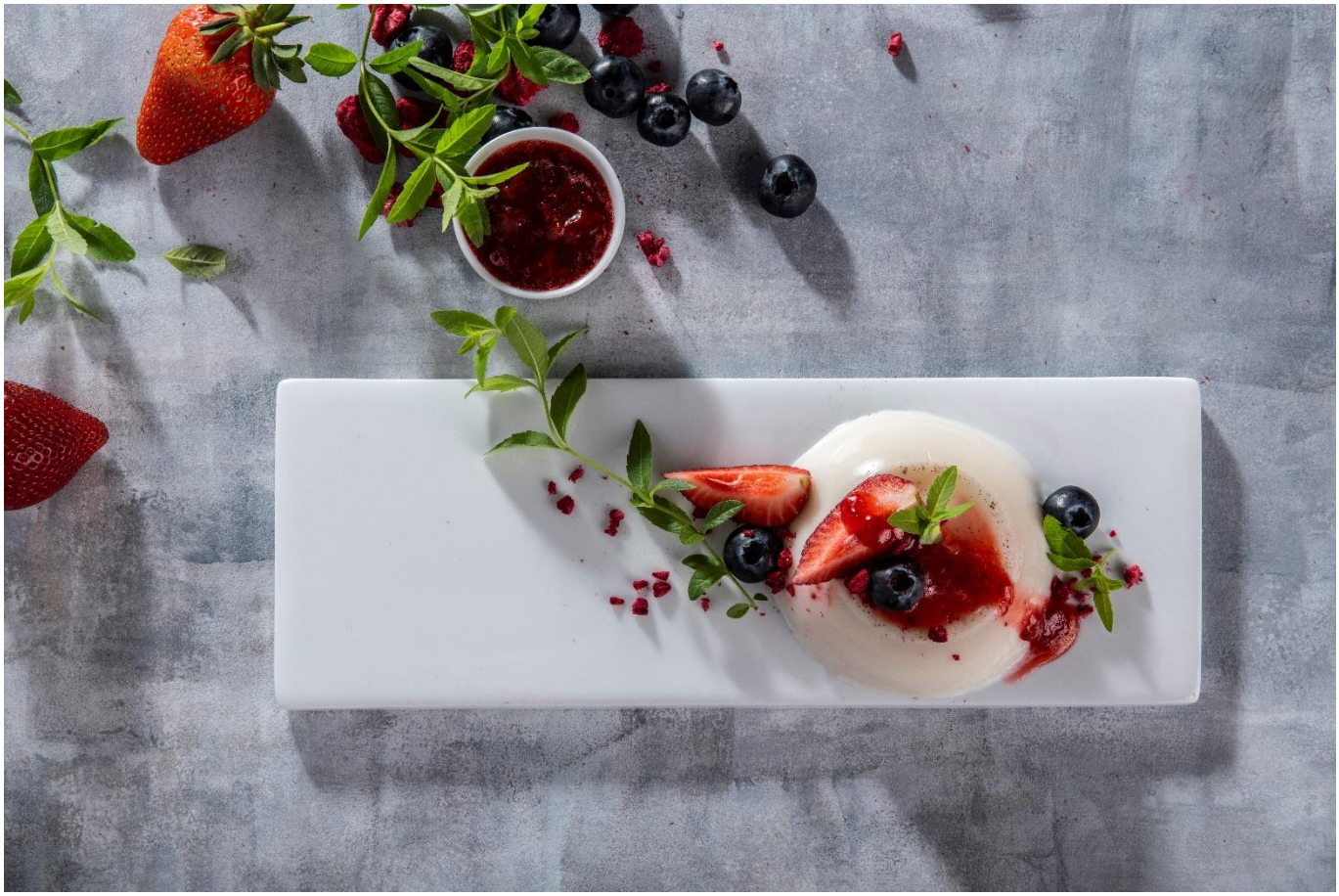

Figure 3: New food customer Imagindairy, Israel, uses precision fermentation to produce milk proteins that have the same taste, functionality, mouthfeel and nutritional value as milk. Source: Panna Cotta, Imagindairy/Ilya Melinkov

NOTE TO EDITORS

GEA's new food technology center in Janesville, Wisconsin, USA, will be home to an end-to-end process line. It includes GEA's multifunctional fermenters or bioreactors together with high-shear mixing, sterilization, homogenization, cell separation and filtration equipment. The system can freely alter the sequence of the various steps and add or repeat process stages to test cultivation and fermentation strategies along with product synthesis. At the ATC, GEA helps the industry accelerate process development for a wide range of new food applications.

The innovation center complements GEA's new food centers of excellence: the full pilot line in Hildesheim (Germany) and the technology center for bioreactors (Skanderborg, Denmark), cell separation (Oelde, Germany) and plant-based foods (Bakel, Netherlands).

- Feature: **How technology backs alternative proteins industry (gea.com)**
- **GEA's report New Food Frontiers featuring the alternative protein industry, with chef survey**

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About GEA

GEA is one of the world's largest suppliers of systems and components to the food, beverage, and pharmaceutical industries. The international technology group, founded in 1881, focuses on machinery and plants, as well as advanced process technology, components, and comprehensive services. With more than 18,000 employees working across five divisions and 62 countries, the group generated revenues of more than EUR 5.1 billion in fiscal year 2022. GEA plants, processes, components, and services enhance the efficiency and sustainability of production processes across the globe. They contribute significantly to the reduction of CO_2 emissions, plastic usage, and food waste. In doing so, GEA makes a key contribution toward a sustainable future, in line with the company's purpose: "Engineering for a better world".

GEA is listed in the German MDAX and the STOXX® Europe 600 Index and is also among the companies comprising the DAX 50 ESG and MSCI Global Sustainability and the Dow Jones Sustainability Europe Indices.

More information can be found online at **gea.com**.
If you do not want to receive any further information from GEA, please send an e-mail to **pr@gea.com**.