

## Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation, French pôle de compétitivité reaching European excellence !

Unique network dedicated to innovation in the agri-food sector in South-Western France Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation is proud to announce that it has been awarded the "European Gold Label of Cluster Management Excellence" and the European Secretariat for Cluster Analysis (ESCA). The Gold Label acknowledges the excellence of the cluster's management and the team's day-to-day work with its members, partners and public authorities.

Thirty-one performance indicators and hundreds of pieces of data were scrutinized by 2 independent experts during an audit of the entire management team. Internal management, ecosystem activities and leadership, services, financing, R&D projects tracking performance, success stories, French and international influence - all the cluster's components were analyzed. For each indicator, a critical threshold is defined, and the "Gold" label is awarded if a minimum rate of 80% is reached. Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation was awarded this label with a score of 92 %, testifying to the excellence of the cluster's management. The label is valid until September 2025.

With this recognition, Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation is now one of the four French "Pôles de compétitivité" to hold a Gold label. Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation is also one of the seven agri-food clusters in Europe to have been awarded the Gold label, out of 148 Gold-labeled clusters all sectors included from 20 European countries.

The award of this "Gold" label strengthens our credibility and legitimacy at European level and incentivizes us to continue developing our network and our European influence, for the benefit of our members.

With a dedicated European team of 3 people a range of associated services and an implication in several EU projects covering the whole agri-food value-chain the cluster confirms today its European strategy to become a "European Agri-food Innovation Hub".



*Laurent Augier, Managing Director of Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation, comments: "The award of this European Gold label is the crowning achievement of a team and a governance structure that have been committed on a daily basis and for many years to supporting our members involved in the future of agriculture and agrifood. The label rewards not only the efficiency of cluster's activities, but above all their performance; and that's why Agri Sud-Ouest Innovation is very attached to it. It gives us the possibility to benchmark our practices with those of the best clusters in Europe to grow and be always more effective for our members."*