

Skolkovo and Rusagro Run the First Largescale Agritech Competition

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The Skolkovo Foundation (VEB.RF Group) and the Rusagro Group of Companies have begun selecting innovative projects in the crop, meat, oil & fat, and sugar business. Applications for the competition [Rusagro Tech Challenge](#) are being accepted up to October 20. The winners will launch pilot projects with Rusagro worth up to 100 million rubles (€1.1 million).

The competition aims to find innovative projects and technologies to integrate into Rusagro's production processes. Startups are invited to participate, along with science-education organizations and scientists with a team of 2+ people with products and technologies ready for pilot implementation.

The selection takes place in four areas of Rusagro's business in which innovative technologies allow for increased efficiency in food production:

- Crops – from solutions for the support and increase in soil fertility to agri-robots for field conditions;
- Meat sector – from the control of swine health to technologies for creating alternative meat and plant substitutes to animal products;
- Fat and oil sector – from the production of complex fats using biosynthesis method to creating biodegradable food packaging;
- Sugar sector – from the creation of new generation sweeteners, including "sweet proteins," to technologies for utilizing low-calorie viscous mixtures.

Kirill Kaem, the senior vice president of innovations at the Skolkovo Foundation, stated: *"The Rusagro Tech Challenge is a landmark event for the sector. First of all, the scale is impressive – the four areas in which they are selecting innovative technological projects include thirty-two even narrower technology segments. Among others, the production of plant components to create alternative meat is one of the most high-tech and sought after technologies. Rusagro's broad spectrum of interests reflects the advanced development of an entire branch in agriculture. Skolkovo's high-level expertise is a strong foundation for organizing a largescale competition for agricultural technologies. We hope that the result of Rusagro's program will achieve the most accurate map of innovations in agritech and will be able to implement effective solutions into its businesses."*

Based on the competition results, the winners can integrate their respective solutions into Rusagro's production chain and launch pilots valued at up to €1.1 million. In addition, project participants will receive help in finding financial and investment tools and mentor support from Skolkovo Foundation and Rusagro experts for further project concept development and gaining Skolkovo resident status. The most outstanding competitors will also have the opportunity to visit existing Rusagro production sites.

To participate in the project, participants must offer concrete advantages to their product compared to existing analogs, justify the economic effect of Rusagro's implementing such developments, and prove the solution's applicability.

Maxim Basov, CEO of Rusagro: *"The swift technological changes and the scale of the Rusagro business are opening up huge opportunities for developing new agri-industrial technologies and for their adoption in all of the company's business units. Founded on our own successful experience in implementing digital and innovative projects, Rusagro has decided to increase investment into developing technologies significantly. The company plans to use different tools, including creating startups from scratch and investing in existing projects. We hope that the first Rusagro-Solkovo startup competition will allow us to advance this quickly and to find the optimal solutions that solve our problems and will support our company's quick and sustainable growth."*

Applications to participate in the [Rusagro Tech Challenge](#) are being accepted up until October 20 at rusagrotech@sk.ru.

The competition final takes place on December 1, 2021, at Skolkovo Technopark.

Additional information

Rusagro is the leading Russian vertically integrated agricultural holding. The geographical location of the company's assets includes 12 subjects of the Russian Federation. The products are sold in 62 countries under 23 retail brands.

Sugar:

Rusagro is one of the leading Russian sugar producers (№2 in sugar production in Russia and №1 on cube white sugar market in 2020) and the leading world betaine producer. The company produces sugar from sugar beet at nine production sites in four regions. Product mix includes white and brown cube sugar and packaged sugar sold under the brands Russkii Sakhar, Chaikofsky, Mon Cafe, Horoshiy and Brauni. Sugar segment is vertically integrated and sugar beet is supplied by Rusagro's Agriculture segment, which ensures a consistent supply of raw material. Sugar segment also operates a cereal plant and sell buckwheat and rice under the brand Tyoplye Traditsii.

Meat:

Rusagro is the third largest pork producer in Russia in 2020. It operates commercial pork complexes with correspondence to high biosecurity standards, has its own compound feed production, slaughterhouses, and meat processing plants in Tambov and Belgorod Regions, and Primorskiy Krai. Since 2016 Rusagro sells retail products under its own brand Slovo Myasnika (Butcher's word).

Agricultural:

Rusagro currently controls one of the largest land banks among Russian agriculture producers, with 688 thousand hectares of land under control located in the highly fertile Black Earth region of Russia (in the Belgorod, Tambov, Voronezh, Kursk, Orel and Saratov regions) and in the Far East Primorie Region. Land and production sites are strategically located within the same regions to optimize efficiency and minimize logistical costs. Rusagro is one of the major sugar beet producers in Russia, but it also produces wheat and barley, sunflower seeds and soybeans.

Oil and Fat:

Rusagro is the leading crude sunflower oil and consumer margarine producer, second largest industrial fats and mayonnaise producer in Russia with products sold under eight key brands, such as EZhK, Schedroye Leto, Mechta Khozyaiki, umbrella brand Ya lublu gotovit (includes Moskovskiy Provansal, Novosibirskiy Provansal, Saratovskiy Provansal), Rossiyanka and Saratovskiy Slivochniy. Also, the company produces dry industrial mixes, cheeses, butter and cream sold under three brands: Milie, Buterbrodnoe utro and Symaya Kultura.Rusagro. Rusagro operates (including through ownership and the lease) four crushing and two oil & fats plants and two milk processing plants. Own sunflower and soy oil production allows to control the source of the vegetable oil required to produce oil and fats products.

Website: <https://www.rusagrogroup.ru/en>

The Skolkovo Foundation

A non-commercial organization founded in 2010, the Skolkovo Foundation functions as the managing Company of Skolkovo Innovation Center. The goal of the Foundation is to support technological entrepreneurship in Russia and commercialize the results of scientific research activities.

The number of Skolkovo residents already exceeds 3000, and the Foundation provides them with an array of necessary services to roll out developments onto the Russian and international markets. Resident status gives a company tax and customs privileges. In 2019, residents' revenue amounted to over 100 billion rubles, and the amount of investment raised amounted to 13 billion rubles. Since 2019, legislation has allowed any organization conducting research activities in Russia to access the Skolkovo Innovation Center's services and benefits.

Located at Skolkovo Innovation Center is the Skolkovo Institute of Science and Technology (Skoltech), which is listed in the Nature Index "Top-100 Young Universities" list. The Innovation Center infrastructure comprises, among other things, research centers belonging to industrial partners and the largest Technopark in Europe.

In 2019, three new partner R&D centers belonging to Sibur, TMK, and Tatneft opened at the Innovation Center. As a result, a total of 750,000 square meters of residential buildings, research, and educational centers have been put into operation on Skolkovo territory, and extrabudgetary investment in infrastructure exceeds 100 billion rubles.

Development Institutions of the Russian Federation

The Government of the Russian Federation is currently reconfiguring the system for development institutions, allowing for their integration into VEB. RF's management sphere. A centralized investment block is being created at VEB.RF to implement projects that will contribute to achieving national development goals. The priority of VEB.RF and the development institutes under its coordination is to consolidate public and private investment resources towards making a breakthrough in the country's development and increasing living standards. We participate in the development of the Russian economy together with other development institutions VEB.RF Group: Rusnano, Industrial Development Fund, Russian Export Center, SME Corporation.