



ETAT DE FRIBOURG  
STAAT FREIBURG  
STATE OF FRIBOURG

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Media release

## **Agri & Co Challenge – Expanding Fribourg’s international reach**

*Today, the State of Fribourg launched the Agri & Co Challenge, an international call for projects aimed specifically at innovative firms working in the food, agriculture and biomass industries. Through Agri & Co Challenge, the canton wants to exploit the benefits of its status as a leader in the Swiss agrofood sector to extend its international reach. The 15 most promising projects will share prize money of almost CHF 500,000. Applications can be sent from 1 March to 31 May 2018. For more information, please go to the initiative’s designated site: [www.agricochallenge.org](http://www.agricochallenge.org)*

The Cantonal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Marie Garnier, and Cantonal Minister of Economic Affairs, Olivier Curty, also attended today’s launch. As Olivier Curty explains, “The canton’s acquisition of the 100-hectare St-Aubin Innovation Space, with its extensive laboratory and office space, as well as technical facilities, is an additional asset and unique source of opportunity.”

The canton of Fribourg will use Agri & Co Challenge to expand its network of innovative and sustainable firms, foster synergies between different economic sectors, and introduce new value chains, especially with emerging markets. The Agri & Co Challenge’s judging panel will include representatives from leading industry names – and initiative partners – Nestlé, Cremo, Fenaco and Micarna.

Funding for the Agri & Co Challenge comes from the canton itself (CHF 561,000 spread over several years), the federal government’s New Regional Policy (CHF 109,000), and private sponsors (CHF 50,000).

### **Different programs for different needs**

The Agri & Co Challenge is divided into two distinct programs: ‘Relocation’ and ‘Remote Collaboration’. Applicants are free to choose their preferred option. By offering a choice, the initiative is able to cater to the needs of a much wider range of firms, and thereby maximize its innovation and collaboration potential.

Under the ‘Relocation’ program, winning companies will be offered premises free of charge for two years at the St-Aubin Innovation Space. They will also each receive a cash prize of CHF 30,000, as well as bespoke mentoring and coaching.

Under the ‘Remote Collaboration’ program, winning companies that do not wish to relocate to the St-Aubin Innovation Space, but are nonetheless interested in breaking into the Swiss market, are given the opportunity to find out more about the agrofood network in the canton of Fribourg and Switzerland generally, with a view to forging long-term partnerships with local stakeholders.

Applications for the Agri & Co Challenge can be submitted from 1 March to 31 May 2018. The winners will be announced on 7 November 2018 during the official Canton of Fribourg Innovation Award ceremony.

Participation and information [www.agricochallenge.org](http://www.agricochallenge.org)

LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/company/agricochallenge>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/agricochallenge>

#### Information

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