
PRESS RELEASE

From orange powder from dried orange peels and sulphur comes a revolutionary organic-mineral fertiliser - for LIFE RecOrgFert Plus, SBS Steel Belt Systems chooses Warrant Hub - Tinexta Group

The EU-funded LIFE project has developed a new product that manages to reverse desertification of land and replace dangerous chemical fertilisers.

Varese, Correggio (RE), 10 March 2022 - Engaged in the design and construction of industrial stainless steel belt systems, **SBS Steel Belt Systems SRL** has chosen the professional skills of **Warrant Hub (Tinexta Group)** - leader in consulting on concessional finance for companies and provider of support for innovation and development projects - for support in its role as coordinator of €4.0 million European LIFE project RecOrgFert Plus.

Warrant Hub, in particular, supports SBS through the activity of its highly specialised European Funding Development (EFD) area, which helps companies and public- and private-sector entities participate in European Research and Innovation projects, also assisting them with the project management. More specifically, it has already been involved in the project proposal drafting stage and in the establishment of the consortium of partners, taking advantage of the pan-European network of relationships it has built. It also assists with project management activities, as well as work for the communication and scientific dissemination of the results, for example through the website just created, which can be found at <https://www.life-recorgfertplus.eu/it/>.

The goal of the EU project

Having received over €1.7 million in non-repayable funds from the European Union under the LIFE program, the LIFE RecOrgFert Plus project has developed an innovative production process to convert waste peel and pulp from orange processing and industrial sulphur waste generated by the desulphurisation of natural gas and petroleum into a high quality organic-mineral fertiliser. The new discovery will be able to counteract the desertification process that is already affecting 8% of European land¹ - especially those in southern areas - by restoring fertility and productivity to soils which have become alkaline and been despoiled by climate change and intensive farming.

The innovative production process - which is carried out in a pilot plant in Sicily - is based on two patents held by SBS, whose specific equipment enables it to produce up to 20,000 tonnes/year of fertiliser "continuously"; during the LIFE Project 3,000, tonnes will be produced which will prevent 1,320 tonnes of wet orange waste ending up in disposal facilities and allow 2,400 tonnes of sulphur to be salvaged.

The fertiliser will improve soil health and crop yield while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions as it recycles the materials contained in the fertiliser; not only that, it will be used to replace chemical

¹ Source: European Agency for the Environment

fertilisers currently in use which - in line with recent EU directives - will no longer be usable from the year 2030.

Over a two-year cycle, its effectiveness will be verified on different crops (peppers, tomatoes, onions, broccoli and durum wheat) grown over a total area of 27 hectares located in Calabria, Abruzzo, and the Greek region of Central Macedonia (city of Thessalonica).

The consortium of partners

LIFE RecOrgFert Plus, which has a duration of 42 months and ends in February 2025, brings together a consortium of five partners: in addition to SBS (which acts as coordinator and is handling the construction of the pilot plant at its site in Villafranca Tirrena, Messina), other companies involved include Zolfital S.p.A. (which acts as a link between the production of the sulphur and its use for the new organic-mineral fertiliser) and F.Ili Branca SpA, which supplies the organic waste to be used in the process. In addition, the American Farm School in Greece and the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria both contribute by, respectively, conducting field tests in Greece and preparing, performing, and validation of the tests of the new fertilisers, including the scientific, chemical, and biochemical analyses on the soils treated, followed by the characterisation and certification of the product.

*"Our expertise in the development of innovative machinery means we are ideally placed for partnership in a project with such high environmental, ethical, and financial objectives", says engineer **Giovanni Calamarà, chairman of SBS Steel Belt Systems S.r.l.** "The support of Warrant Hub is undoubtedly precious as it allows us to contribute to the success of the initiative and help achieve the results expected".*

*"We are grateful to SBS and the trust it has placed in us because it has allowed us once again to collaborate, with our experience in the management of international projects, in a significant European initiative which could prove decisive for the development of sustainable farming practices and for the promotion of a circular economy", said **Isella Vicini, Director of European Funding Development at Warrant Hub - Tinexta Group.***

Warrant Hub S.p.A.

Founded in 1995 by Fiorenzo Bellelli, **Warrant Hub** is a leading name in concessional finance and consulting services for SMEs and large businesses. In addition to the head office in Correggio (RE), Warrant Hub has branches located in: Milan, Piosasco (Turin), Casalecchio di Reno (Bologna), Rome, and Naples. It joined Tinexta Group in November 2017, in the innovation and marketing services business unit, and has over 300 professionals on its books, as well as more than 7000 client companies nationwide. Warrant Hub offers advice on the following areas to companies in all industries: Concessional finance (regional, national; automatic incentives; NRRP), European funding (through the European Funding Development, Warrant Hub supports companies within the European Framework Program in Research and Innovation - Horizon Europe), corporate finance, training (consulting and finance services to support company training), sustainability (consulting and finance services to assist companies with their ecological transition), energy ("110% Superbonus" subsidy for work to render buildings more energy-efficient - energy diagnoses - energy subsidies), as well as innovation, digital transformation, and technology transfer (through the subsidiary "Warrant Innovation Lab S.r.l."). In 2020, Warrant Hub also acquired a 60% share in PrivacyLab s.r.l., leading name in the sale of licences, consulting, and training on GDPR compliance, and created the subsidiary Trix S.r.l., the exclusive owner of the first cloud platform with the ability to perform checks to establish technological innovation levels in patents.

Warrant Hub also boasts a growing presence abroad, where it operates in the European financing area through the companies "beWarrant" (Belgium), Euroquality SAS (France), Europroject OOD (Bulgaria), and Evalue Innovation SL (Spain), the last of which is also extremely active in the field of concessional finance.

SBS Steel Belt Systems

Based in Venegono Inferiore (VA), **SBS Steel Belt Systems Srl** was established in 1984 and operates in the design and production of industrial stainless steel belt systems and, more specifically, continuous process machinery for a wide range of applications in industries such as chemicals, petrochemicals, food, and powder coatings. SBS has reached a total of over 500 solutions installed all over the world thanks to an offer of increasingly reliable, ergonomic, and innovative products, providing a turnkey service including both installation and the monitoring, control, and maintenance of its machinery resulting in high levels of satisfaction among its customer (most of which are multinational corporations). SBS currently has 53 employees on its books and a turnover including 80% of sales made abroad.

In the powder coatings industry, SBS supplies all the major Italian and international producers via its work in the second Villafranca Tirrena facility, located in the province of Messina, Sicily. As regards the fertiliser industry, it fosters a significant working relationship begun with the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria in 2014, more specifically with the Department of Agriculture and Prof. Adele Muscolo, which ranks among the top 1.5% for soil science specialists worldwide (classification by Stanford University).

SBS also assists customers worldwide through its vast network of agents located in the areas where the systems are installed.

For more information:

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