



*Estrées, July 10, 2019*

*Behind the scenes of the Bonduelle Group's agro-industrial model:*

## **From field to plate: an expert production channel based on the know-how of farmers and Bonduelle's agronomic expertise.**

*A well-tested organization and the most up-to-date expertise are required to ensure that consumers can enjoy high quality vegetables grown respectfully and harvested at peak ripeness.*

*From field to plate: the Bonduelle Group has developed an expert production channel which, for years now, has been working to develop plant-based production that increasingly respects the environment and its people.*

### **Expertise from beginning to end**

Although everyone has their own role, expectations and constraints within the channel, the challenge is a shared one. The goal is to eventually feed nine billion people while protecting the soil, the people who farm it, the products and the consumer.

Bonduelle's agro-industrial model is a winning and virtuous triangle. It benefits farmer partners, who receive support and agronomic expertise from the Group, Bonduelle, which supplies its sites with quality vegetables that meet a very strict set of specifications, and the end-consumer, who can enjoy high-quality vegetables all year round.

The Bonduelle Group currently farms nearly 128,000 hectares of land around the world and works with 3,100 farmer partners, 1,500 of which are in France. Its expertise, its agronomic knowledge and its experience in crop techniques acquired over decades enable it to assist its partners in implementing alternative farming practices. Examples include strip till, which is used in Russia, plant cover, mechanical weeding, plot monitoring by drone

to water exactly the amount needed, where needed, and more. This sharing of experience helps to change practices by reconciling yields with resource conservation.

### **Cutting-edge agronomic know-how**

The agronomic department developed by the Group since its beginnings provides technical crop support to farmers. The department has over 260 experts, engineers



and technicians (field supervisors, cultivation supervisors), of whom 160 can be seen in the fields daily. This organization enables us to stay in close contact with our farmer partners to help them when needed, from planting through harvest. This expertise also meets the needs of a very precise industrial schedule which is concentrated in just a few weeks and consists in the continuous supply of processing plants with ripe, seasonal vegetables during harvest periods.

### ***The field supervisor: an expert day-to-day partner to farmers***

Vincent Dupire - Field Supervisor, Nord Picardie

*"Field-grown vegetables require very technical cultivation and farmers need a large amount of know-how. Our role is to assist them with their crops by providing our agronomic expertise to help them produce quality vegetables grown in a responsible way and harvested at maturity. Vegetables only remain at their peak ripeness for a few hours! We monitor the crops carefully every day to observe, advise, assess and, especially, to harvest at the right time. It's rare that more than five hours go by between the time we harvest our peas in the fields and when we package them at the processing plant.*

### **A virtuous agricultural model**

In order to produce high-quality vegetables that are affordable for all, Bonduelle devised a sourcing model that prioritizes producer groupings (76% of the Group's total cultivated surface areas). This predominant sourcing model is based on an annual contract with the farmers. It guarantees plot rotation, which is essential to ensure that soils are not exhausted, the production of the right amounts based on sales projections, to minimize waste and to schedule planting and harvests to optimize industrial production.

This model also has a number of benefits for farmers who are members of groupings:

- Independence: generally speaking, Bonduelle does not account for more than 20% of their income;
- Security: thanks to prices guaranteed several months in advance and independent of global raw material price fluctuations;
- Remuneration based on a sustainable model which takes climate risks into account;
- Access to the expertise of over 260 Bonduelle agronomy professionals: engineers and technicians (field and cultivation supervisors) who share their expertise and know-how with farmers.

The foundations of this model were formalized in the 1990s with the creation of a special agronomic charter available in seven languages and distributed everywhere Bonduelle is present. 96% of our farmer partners have signed the charter, which commits all of the Group's stakeholders to complying with Bonduelle's requirements for both product quality and responsible farming.

### **Focus on the Nord Picardie region**

Bonduelle has a long history in the Nord Picardie region. The Group developed its first relationships with its farmer partners in this area. Some have been farming for Bonduelle for several generations.

From just a few hectares in the early days, Bonduelle now has 18,000 farmed hectares in the region and just over 1,200 farmer partners. The region produces over 30 types of



vegetables which are processed at the Renescure (Nord), Vaulx Vraucourt (Pas-de-Calais) and Estrées-Mons (Somme) sites.

Bonduelle works with two producer organizations: OPLVERT and OPLINORD, with which it has forged strong, long-term partnerships.

OPLVERT, chaired by Eric Legras, brings together over 800 farmers and 14,000 hectares of crops, which are primarily processed at Estrées and Vaulx-Vraucourt. The partnership with Bonduelle, built up over the years, is based on strong, sustainable principles.

The organization's goal is to secure the farmers' income, obtain quality products thanks to farming that respects the environment and regulations and to support Bonduelle in new markets such as organic and specialty product lines.

### **Land farmed in a more ecologically-friendly way**

The Bonduelle Group has set itself a goal for 2025: 100% of land farmed with an appropriate combination of alternative cultivation techniques. In Nord Picardie, for example, different techniques are used to:

#### ***Protect the soil:***

- 100% of plots use extended rotation,
- 100% of plots have been geolocalized for the past eight years,
- A long-term trial has been in place with Vegesol since 2010, which highlights the value of plant cover during long rotation periods,
- Bonduelle works with the Innovaterre network, a group of farmers who exchange innovative practices and ideas (for example, multi-species cover suited to the specifics of vegetables);

#### ***Conserve water resources:***

- Water assessments have been carried out for the past 15 years,
- Connected decision-making tool for improving water efficiency as well as agronomic know-how, which enables varieties with well-developed root systems to be favored whenever possible;

#### ***Implement natural plant protection:***

Over 300 insect traps,

- 17 networked field supervisors monitor the crops and advise farmers,
- Controls are carried out on 100% of farmers via analyses,
- A crop monitoring bulletin is issued weekly.

**The Estrées site in a few figures:**



Year of construction

1963



Around 900 permanent employees

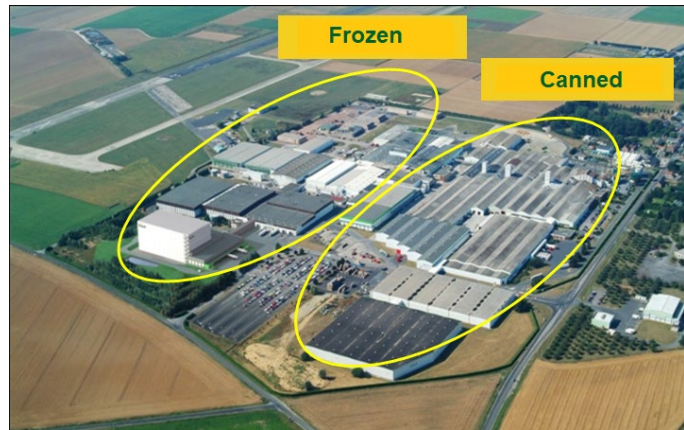


area of the site

50 hectares including 20 covered



x 2 during the campaign with seasonal workers



Canned products: 15 canning lines: over 200 million cans

Frozen products: nine freezing lines: 76,000 tonnes of products

**About Bonduelle**

Bonduelle is a family company created in 1853, whose ambition is to be "the world reference in 'well-living' through plant-based food". With innovation and a long-term vision driving its business, the Group has diversified its business activities and geographical locations. Its vegetables, cultivated over 128,000 hectares, are sold in 100 countries under various brands, through different distribution channels and across all technologies. With its unique agro-industrial know-how and 56 production or agricultural own-production facilities, Bonduelle produces its food in the best growing areas and as close as possible to its customers.

[www.bonduelle.com](http://www.bonduelle.com)

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