

Job opportunity

(Senior) Scientist Downstream Processing

The increased attention to food safety and sustainability impose more and more restrictions on the agricultural practices, while there is a demand for an increased food supply. Therefore, improving production efficiency in a sustainable way, without causing irreparable damage to our environment or depleting valuable resources, is essential. AgroSavfe has the ambition to contribute to a safer production and healthier food. AgroSavfe is focusing on biological molecules to tackle pests and diseases using camelid binding domains (Agrobodies®), directed against pests' and pathogens' essential molecules, to develop the next generation of biological control agents.

Agrobodies® have the advantage of acting directly and uniquely on the target organisms. As such, Agrobodies® combine a highly specific mode of action with a minimized risk of effects on wildlife, bees, growers and consumers. Agrobodies® can be produced in a cost-effective manner by industrial-scale fermentation and be applied as a spray-on biopesticide or in a seed coating to protect crops and harvested products from infections.

Our first research program has resulted in a series of Agrobodies® with anti-fungal activity, against a broad range of fungi, as demonstrated by the protection of plants in lab assays and under greenhouse and field conditions. We are now moving these Agrobodies® through the development phase, focusing on the commercialization of biofungicides for applications on fruits, vegetables and other crops.

The challenges we face are substantial but so are the rewards, as we are taking a whole new approach for the development of biopesticides. AgroSavfe is a highly dynamic company welcoming creative, innovative entrepreneurs and providing ample opportunities for personal development, in an open, positive team spirit.

The manufacturing group at AgroSavfe is looking for an experienced (Senior) Scientist who will be leading the Downstream Process function (DSP) responsible for all in-house protein purifications, the interaction with service providers as well as the development of commercially viable downstream processes for the large-scale production of Agrobodies® development candidates.

AgroSavfe Role Profile

Role title: (Senior) Scientist Downstream Process

Reports to: Head Manufacturing Platform

Location: Ghent, Belgium

Role purpose

Lead the in-house Downstream Process function, interacting with Upstream Process and Analytics teams and external service providers, to develop commercially viable downstream processes for the large-scale production of Agrobodies®.

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Accountabilities

- Responsible for the planning, coordination, approach and results within the scope of assigned project activities;
- Purification of Agrobodies® and other proteins in the context of all projects running at AgroSavfe;
- Uses state-of-the-art equipment for the development of DSP operations;
- People management: drives recruitment, training, development and performance management of (senior) research associates and researchers;
- Strongly interacts with the Upstream Process and Analytics teams to streamline the work flows;
- Interacting with contract manufacturing organizations in the context of the large-scale production of material for use in technology development, lab scale assays and greenhouse/field trials;
- Represents the DSP function in product development meetings;
- Reports about the results and progress to the Head of Manufacturing Platform, Product Development Manager, project team, and/or external parties in a clear and concise manner; provides strategic guidance where needed;
- Provides constructive challenge to ensure scientific integrity and prioritisation of work and build a culture of innovation within the organization;
- Prepares reports, summaries, manuscripts and other documents as required;
- DSP-related activities to support the registration process.

Knowledge, experience and capabilities

Critical knowledge

- Hold a PhD or MSc in Biology, Biotechnology, (Bio)Chemistry, or Bio-engineering;
- Deep knowledge of scalable production technologies applied in the development of innovative (protein based) products, their scale-up and manufacture, with specific emphasis on the DSP, to increase product level efficacy, stability and delivery in line with the field biology of the targeted pests and diseases.

Critical experience

- Have experience in purification of proteins and knowledge of DSP development; experience with the Design-of-Experiments (DOE) approach is a plus;
- Experience of working in fundamental areas of biological product development technology, and translating these into the manufacturing of innovative, high quality products;
- Previous experience in Ag-biotech is a plus;
- Experience in quality assurance or quality control is an advantage;
- People leadership of a team of high performing technology professionals;
- Relevant industry experience (6 - 10 years).

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Critical technical, professional and personal capabilities

- Be a team player, enthusiastic and flexible, able to build bridges between groups;
- Ability to inspire and motivate others;
- Ability to build strong networks;
- Proven sense for initiative, detail and scientific rigor;
- Ability to manage different work-streams simultaneously with strict timelines for delivery;
- Excellent reporting and communication skills (fluent in English, written and spoken).

Critical leadership capabilities

- Creates an environment that supports creativity and sparks innovation;
- Is dedicated to meeting the expectations and requirements of internal and external customers;
- Gains commitment of individuals and stakeholders in a compelling way;
- Collaborates effectively across organizational and functional boundaries, and complement internal expertise with external technologies.

Critical success factors, key challenges & responsibilities

- Establish a validated manufacturing process for Agrobody®-based crop protection products that meets the industry high standards and is cost-effective-;
- Create and protect company IP that secures competitive advantage;
- Driving the development of functional excellence within the Manufacturing Platform;
- Management of a small in-house team for productions and downstream processing;
- Relationship with service providers for fermentation and downstream processing.

Our offering

We offer you a challenging job in an exciting environment, working for top innovators in the Agro-Biotech industry, developing the next generation biologicals. You can be part of a very dynamic, young and growing team in a highly innovative environment. Your input is highly appreciated. Of course we offer you a fitting compensation package.

Interested?

Please apply by e-mail and send your CV and motivational letter to HR@agrosavfe.com.

For more information visit the AgroSavfe web site: www.agrosavfe.com.