

Drone solutions for agriculture become a major development focus at the global level

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Initiated in 2014 thanks to the partnership with Airbus Defence and Space and with Arvalis Institut du Végétal via Farmstar, the “agricultural” solutions offered by Delta Drone are being taken to a new level.

I - In France, Airbus Defence and Space renewed its trust in Delta Drone for the development of solutions combining satellites and drones for agricultural purposes

Four years after the start of the partnership between Airbus, Arvalis Institut du Végétal and Delta Drone for the Farmstar services, the complementarity of satellites and drones has been proven. This very progressive approach made possible the creation of long-term professional solutions. Indeed, the work carried out since 2014 has:

- validated the integration of the data acquired via drone in the processing chain developed for over 15 years by Airbus and technical institutes;
- determined the sensors best adapted to ensure the quality of the data collected, particularly in terms of acquisition dates, times and conditions (cloud cover, lighting, vegetation, etc.);
- honed the best “drone” process for data acquisition on an industrial scale: multi-site, multi-date, and in line with regulations, all while taking into account weather conditions in order to meet client needs;
- led to solutions based on service and eclipsing the means of acquisition (satellite or drone). These “100% image-based” solutions guarantee the quality of the service provided by Farmstar’s product, regardless of cloud cover or type of land.

Over 1 200 drone assignments have been carried out, approximately 35% of which concerned land areas subject to regulatory restrictions requiring administrative formalities.

Today, thanks to this partnership, over 16 000 farmers wanting to raise their crops sustainably benefit from a unique agronomic service that helps them in the day-to-day decisions affecting their agricultural practices in order to best balance yield, quality and respect for the environment.

It has also shown that drones are particularly well-suited for monitoring agronomic trials as they make it possible to standardize and digitize measurements, and to increase data collections using a competitive business model compared with “traditional” means of measurement (manual sampling or visual analysis).

This separate area of trial monitoring offered by Farmstar was developed in cooperation with Airbus Defence and Space with technical institutes (Arvalis Institut du Végétal and Terres Inovia). It has been used for various crops: potato, barley, rapeseed.

II – Internationally, the development of “agricultural” solutions relies on technical (TerraNIS) and commercial (Bureau Veritas Afrique) alliances

Following its experience in France, Delta Drone has more recently developed a technical partnership with the TerraNIS company that is focused on sugar cane and grapes. This complements the solutions already implemented by Delta Drone and Bureau Veritas Afrique for banana, rubber-tree and oil-palm crops.

- Sugar cane: a highly innovative solution has been perfected, aimed at sugar producers to monitor the crops in order to manage the supply of sugar cane in terms of volume and quality. It is primarily for the production areas in Africa and Central America. Initially, commercial rollout depends on our partnership with Bureau Veritas, which is known in the industry to the production groups located in Africa. A pilot project will be launched at the end of January to gauge the interest of producers in Côte d’Ivoire.
- Vineyards: our grape-growing solutions rely on TerraNIS’ Oenoview service, combined with drone use. Thanks to drone and satellite mapping, this service makes it possible, in particular, to distinguish homogenous zones in terms of grape ripeness and therefore to allot the harvested grapes intelligently in order to create wines with the desired sensory characteristics. Delta Drone is working on a pilot program for the first quarter on 2018 for the wine-growing region of Cape Town, South Africa.

In 2018, the African continent will be the priority region for the Delta Drone Group’s expansion, aided by the creation of a subsidiary in Côte d’Ivoire, which is already underway and will be called Delta Drone Côte d’Ivoire. This new company will be domiciled in Abidjan, in the offices of Bureau Veritas Afrique, and will have a minority shareholder, the Ivorian company Skytech, which is a drone operator that has been established for several years. Skytech will be responsible for various logistical aspects (pilot training, managing assignments, equipment maintenance, etc.).

It should be noted that the Group is also already present in the Gulf of Guinea, via its subsidiary Rocketmine Ghana, which is dedicated to the mining sector.

About Delta Drone: *The Delta Drone Group a renowned international player in the field of civilian drones for professional use. It offers a complete service, from data acquisition to data processing through a specifically developed information system, including a supply of professional pilots.*

Delta Drone is listed on the Euronext Growth Paris market - ISIN code: FR0011522168

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