

# MICROALGAE HIGH TECHNOLOGY

## INTERVIEW WITH **FIDEL DELGADO RAMALLO**

Interview by ACCI

### CASE STUDY: FARM INPUTS



Fidel Delgado Ramallo



### WHAT IS NEOALGAE AND WHAT DO YOU DO?

We're a bio-technology company located in Gijón and dedicate ourselves to growing and extracting different products from microalgae. We have a 2000 square meter plant with all the required systems for the cultivation of microalgae under a greenhouse. There, we grow different species of microalgae for different purposes and future usage. Over the last few years, we've been particularly focusing on the ingredient sector. Ingredients for agriculture, for the cosmetic industry and nutraceutical ingredients.

All of them from growing microalgae. I always say that microalgae provide more than 50% of the oxygen we breathe in our planet. By consuming Neoalgae products, you'll be mitigating the effects of climate change. As microalgae need CO<sub>2</sub> to grow, so through our crops, we're feeding them with CO<sub>2</sub>.

And we're capturing CO<sub>2</sub> and emitting oxygen to the atmosphere. All our products are completely sustainable. We utilise production systems that are duly recognised by different Quality standards. Therefore, we always work under a fully sustainable mindset.

### YOU PRODUCE A NATURAL FERTILISER, RIGHT? WHAT'S ITS PRODUCTION PROCESS LIKE AND WHERE DO YOU GET ITS RAW MATERIALS FROM?

SPIRAGRO is the generic brand name for the whole product range. It is produced from a bacteria of microalgae and botanical extracts. What does Spiragro have in particular? What's peculiar about it is that, from the moment of its cultivation, we're capturing CO<sub>2</sub>.

## AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IN THE PROCESS, WHEN THE PRODUCT IS APPLIED IN THE FIELDS?

Well, it boosts production in a natural way and without using chemical products. The legislation for production of fertilisers and bio-stimulants has changed. Since last year, the UE has “opened its umbrella”, allowing the inclusion of natural products developed in a natural and sustainable way. And that’s where microalgae have played a relevant role in terms of this change of legislation. As there were many products in the market which could not be commercialised as bio-stimulants because they didn’t have that change made, that has changed since last year.

And from that moment on, every item produced from microalgae and other botanical extracts is able to be sold as a bio-stimulant. Here, we’re trying to stimulate the plant to grow better, in a natural way. With a higher capacity to grow, enhancing its yields as it improves the soil’s characteristics. Within the surface of 1 ha, with one single application we’re using only 5 litres. There won’t be any issues, there won’t be need for any high nitrates added. It’s simply a natural product which will boost and favour the auxinic capacity of the plant therefore generating a higher balance.

## HOW CAN YOUR PRODUCTS BE CONSIDERED A GOOD EXAMPLE OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

Because after all, all the products that we’ve been developing have been inserted within a LIFE project. We’ve developed a biofungicide, which is also something that has changed in the EU.

It’s trying to diminish the use of pesticides and fungicides in the crops so that trophic chains in the ecosystems are not heightened. And we have developed a natural product from different vegetal extracts and different algae extracts which, when applied in a foliar via, will control the emergence of botrytis and mildew, which are the most current fungus and pests present in intensive agriculture, such as the tomato crops, for example.

## WHERE DOES THE ENERGY YOU USE ON-SITE COME FROM?

We have a photovoltaic plant here in our facilities. We produce approximately 60% of the power we consume by means of photovoltaic panels. And the remaining energy, we try to obtain it from suppliers who will only commercialise energy from proven renewable sustainable sources.

