



Keynote Session	Leading Pilot Facilities for the Bioeconomy (Pilots4U)
Title	Food Pilot, towards any application in food and feed
Company	ILVO
Speaker	Karen Verstraete
	Geert Van Royen
Keywords feedstock (max 2)	Agricultural, fermentation-based
Keywords technology (max 2)	Extraction, formulation
Keywords End-Product (max 2)	Food, feed
Abstract:	
Food Pilot is an open pilot facility for food and feed located in Belgium, equipped with processing machinery and expertise. It supports companies, labs, and policymakers in developing food and feed products and processes, acting as a one-stop shop for pilot-scale processing, lab analysis, and troubleshooting. Solutions are developed through a co-creative process with each company. Food Pilot is embedded within ILVO, the Flemish research institute, and co-owned in collaboration with Flanders' FOOD. Food Pilot offers more than 100 pilot-scale machines for transforming raw materials and biomasses into ingredients and into a wide variety of end products. It's state-of-the-art extraction line enables the isolation of proteins, fats, fibers, and other components through multiple techniques of cell disruption, separation, filtration, drying, extrusion, and other. Protein quality can be analyzed thoroughly, including flavor, odor, binding, foaming, emulsifying, and gelling capacity. Further, product formulation is conducted both at lab and pilot scale, covering nearly all food categories, including dairy and meat products, plant-based and hybrid analogues, vegetable, fruit, and potato products, bakery products, sauces, chocolate, snacks, and animal feed. In addition, a dedicated feed processing pilot plant will be launched in April 2026, supplying test batches for existing pilot facilities with cows, pigs, poultry, and aquaculture. Today, Food Pilot has a team of 100 food experts and a broad industrial and academic network. Each year, it conducts 500 pilot trials, performs over 20,000 food analyses, and provides more than 200 advisory services, supporting hundreds of companies from both within and outside Europe.	