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## **Louis Dreyfus Company, ING, Societe Generale and ABN Amro complete the first agricultural commodity trade through blockchain**

**The enhanced Easy Trading Connect (ETC) blockchain prototype reduces time spent on processing documents and data from hours to minutes, and allows for a larger trading scope**

Louis Dreyfus Company (LDC), Shandong Bohi Industry Co., Ltd (Bohi), ING, Societe Generale and ABN Amro have successfully completed the first full agricultural commodity transaction using a blockchain platform.

For the first time ever in the agricultural commodities sector, this trade included a full set of digitalised documents (sales contract, letter of credit, certificates) and automatic data-matching, thus avoiding task duplication and manual checks. The transaction, which mirrored the paper-based process, demonstrated significant efficiency improvements for all participants in the chain. Time spent on processing documents and data has been reduced fivefold. Other benefits include the ability to monitor the operation's progress in real time, data verification, reduced risk of fraud, and a shorter cash cycle. The platform's success demonstrates the immense potential of distributed ledger technologies to advance commodity trading and financing.

The Easy Trading Connect (ETC) platform was designed to digitalise and standardise commodity transactions. It was first validated with an [oil cargo transaction](#) in February 2017, with the subsequent launch in November 2017 of an [energy consortium](#) aiming to offer 'blockchain-based' services to the energy sector. The same principle was then applied to develop a blockchain-based platform tailored to agricultural commodities trading, in collaboration with the various participants in such transactions. This new, adapted ETC platform accommodates the agricultural sector's complex and rigorous documentation chain flows, covering not only the financing aspects, but also the full set of relevant documents pertaining to a transaction, such as the signing and processing of the sales contract at the start.

In this test, the enhanced platform was used to execute a soybean shipment transaction from the United States to China and covered the full complexity of the operation, including a larger number of participants and a broader scope. The transaction involved user participation on the blockchain-based platform by teams from Louis Dreyfus Company as the seller and Bohi as the buyer, with banks issuing and confirming the letter of credit. Russell Marine Group and Blue Water Shipping also participated in the process, issuing all required certificates. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provided valuable insights on how to include phyto-sanitary certificates in the process.

ING, Societe Generale, ABN Amro and other major industry players such as LDC have a long-term ambition to improve security and operational efficiency in the commodity trading and finance sector through digitalisation and standardisation.

"One thing is clear: the digital revolution is transforming the commodities sector," said Gonzalo Ramírez Martiarena, Chief Executive Officer of Louis Dreyfus Company. "Distributed ledger technologies have been evolving rapidly, bringing more efficiency and security to our transactions, and immense expected benefits for our customers and everyone along the supply chain as a result. The next step is to harness the potential for further development through the adoption of common standards, and welcome a truly new era of digital trade flow management on a global level."

ENDS

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## Company profiles

### About Louis Dreyfus Company

Louis Dreyfus Company is a leading merchant and processor of agricultural goods. We leverage our global reach and extensive asset network to serve our customers around the world, delivering the right products to the right location, at the right time – safely, responsibly and reliably. Our activities span the entire value chain from farm to fork, across a broad range of business lines (platforms). Since 1851 our portfolio has grown to include Oilseeds, Grains, Rice, Freight, Finance, Coffee, Cotton, Sugar, Juice, Dairy, Fertilizers & Inputs and Metals. We help feed and clothe some 500 million people every year by originating, processing and transporting approximately 81 million tons of products. Structured as a matrix organization of 6 geographical regions and 12 platforms, Louis Dreyfus Company is active in over 100 countries and employs more than 21 000 people globally at peak season. For more information, visit [www.ldc.com](http://www.ldc.com) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

### About ING

ING is a global financial institution with a strong European base, offering banking services through its operating company ING Bank. The purpose of ING Bank is empowering people to stay a step ahead in life and in business. ING Bank's more than 51,000 employees offer retail and wholesale banking services to customers in over 40 countries.

ING Group shares are listed on the exchanges of Amsterdam (INGA AS, INGA.AS), Brussels and on the New York Stock Exchange (ADRs: ING US, ING.N).

Sustainability forms an integral part of ING's strategy, which is evidenced by the top 10 position among 395 banks ranked by Sustainalytics. ING Group shares are being included in the FTSE4Good index and in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (Europe and World) where ING is among the leaders in the Banks industry group. For more information visit [www.ing.com](http://www.ing.com) or visit us on Twitter or LinkedIn

### About Societe Generale

Societe Generale is one of the largest European financial services groups. Based on a diversified and integrated banking model, the Group combines financial solidity with a strategy of sustainable growth, and aims to be the reference for relationship banking, recognised on its markets, close to clients, chosen for the quality and commitment of its teams.

Societe Generale has been playing a vital role in the economy for 150 years. With more than 145,000 employees, based in 66 countries, we serve on a daily basis 31 million clients throughout the world. Societe Generale's teams offer advice and services to individual, corporate and institutional customers in three core businesses:

- **Retail banking in France** with the Societe Generale branch network, Credit du Nord and Boursorama, offering a comprehensive range of multi-channel financial services at the leading edge of digital innovation;
- **International retail banking, insurance and financial services to corporates** with a presence in developing economies and leading specialised businesses;

- **Corporate and investment banking, private banking, asset management and securities services**, with recognised expertise, top international rankings and integrated solutions.

Societe Generale is currently included in the main sustainability indices: DJSI (World and Europe), FSTE4Good (World and Europe), Euronext Vigeo (World, Europe and Eurozone), Ethibel Sustainability Index (ESI) Excellence Europe, 4 of the STOXX ESG Leaders Indices, MSCI Low Carbon Leaders Index.

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#### **About ABN Amro**

ABN AMRO is a Dutch based bank for retail, corporate and private banking clients. We are a relationship-driven, knowledgeable and digitally savvy bank, active in Northwest Europe and with expertise in selected sectors globally. Headquartered in Amsterdam, ABN AMRO is located in 20 countries and employs over 20,000 people worldwide. Internationally, we serve our Dutch client base abroad in selective markets. In sectors where we have a leading position, such as commodities financing, asset based lending, Clearing and diamonds & jewellery, we serve an international client base.

ABN AMRO is a global financial services provider for its Energy, Commodities & Transportation Clients. The bank provides financial services and advice to global clients in sectors such as commodity finance, shipping, agriculture, oil & gas and offshore services. Headquartered in Amsterdam, ECT Clients has offices in major harbor cities.

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