

Institutional Action Plan  
**2021-2025**

A higher education and research institution for training veterinarians, agricultural engineers, and veterinary public health inspectors

# CONTENTS

**A WORD FROM OUR  
DIRECTORS**  
page 3

**ABOUT  
VETAGRO SUP**  
page 4

**OBJECTIVES**  
page 5

**OUR FOUR PRIORITY  
AREAS**  
page 6

**HOW THE PLAN WAS  
DEVELOPED**  
page 7

**AXIS 1**  
One Health—combining  
excellence and  
interdisciplinarity to address  
global health challenges  
page 8

**AXIS 2**  
Innovation—the institution’s  
driving force  
page 11

**AXIS 3**  
VetAgro Sup as a catalyst of  
transitions  
page 14

**AXIS 4**  
Opening the door to excellence  
page 17

# A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTORS

**How can VetAgro Sup effectively train future veterinarians, agricultural engineers, and veterinary public health inspectors? How can VetAgro Sup match up its research and expertise with the expectations of the public and socioeconomic stakeholders? How can VetAgro Sup improve the well-being of its staff and students? These are key questions the institutional action plan seeks to answer.**

Over the next 30 years, the world's population is expected to reach 10 billion, increasing by one-third. VetAgro Sup remains cognisant that solutions must be found for this challenge. Some researchers predict that, consequently, food needs may continually climb, increasing by more than 50% compared to 2010. They have also stated that related pressing concerns will emerge, notably environmental, dietary, and health issues related to food production, processing, and consumption. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored that we must take a global approach to health, such as the one embodied in the One Health concept, which tackles the philosophical, ethical, social, and political dimensions of public health concerns. Everyday citizens will continue to demand more and more information about the broader implications of burgeoning technological breakthroughs related to artificial intelligence, robotisation, nanotechnologies, and smart objects, which are already revolutionising the professions for which VetAgro Sup provides training. Such developments have given rise to great uncertainty and many concerns. Indeed, we are seeing major ecological, energetic, digital, economic, ethical, and social transitions. Such shifts will translate into a need for innovations and skill sets that can facilitate the changes to come, such as the movement of production systems towards agroecology; radical transformations in food systems; improved management of health risks; better quality of life and health; and novel perspectives on relationships between humans and animals. We must also develop systemic and interdisciplinary approaches for analysing complex situations and mastering new technologies. These are all challenges that VetAgro Sup is uniquely qualified to confront by virtue of its constitution, fields of expertise, and broad spectrum of skills.

At the national level, the institution must recruit greater numbers of students, as there is a lack of qualified professionals capable of dealing with the above issues. Additionally, the institution must navigate shifts in student demographics. VetAgro Sup needs to adapt to current circumstances while also continuing to provide high-quality training.

The four axes described herein were identified as VetAgro Sup prepared for its HCERES evaluation. The entire VetAgro Sup community—administrative staff, teaching staff, and students—participated in several rounds of internal discussion that helped jointly construct the plan. This work gave rise to the plan's concrete measures, 19 actions and 72 subactions, which were approved by the board of directors on December 4, 2020.

**Emmanuelle Soubeyran,  
executive director of  
VetAgro Sup**

**Jean-Yves Parisot,  
chair of the VetAgro Sup  
Board of Directors**

# ABOUT VETAGRO SUP

VetAgro Sup is a higher education and research institution under the aegis of the French Ministry for Agriculture and Food. The institution is dedicated to training tomorrow's professionals, performing high-quality research, and promoting innovation transfer. It is tackling health challenges head on with a multidisciplinary approach that is unparalleled in France. Its global approach to health issues draws upon the biological sciences, biotechnical sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

VetAgro Sup trains **veterinarians, agricultural engineers, and veterinary public health inspectors** to confidently cope with diverse situations. Its trainees find jobs in a variety of domains. While some go into private practice or choose alternative forms of self-employment, others work for private companies, non-profit organisations, consular bodies, local governments, or the national government.

VetAgro Sup's educational programmes are enhanced by the institution's dynamic scientific research. Its holistic multidisciplinary work on major public health issues takes place within 12 defined units: it directly runs three research units and helps supervise nine joint research units; it has ties with another six units due to the affiliations of certain associate professors. All 12 units are products of academic partnerships with a variety of educational institutions (UCBL, UCA, AgroParisTech, ENS Lyon, ESC Clermont, INPG) and research institutes (ANSES, CNRS, INRAE, INRIA, INSERM).

VetAgro Sup's work fuels innovation, thanks to close collaborations with industry professionals and a wide range of socioeconomic stakeholders. It also has eight centres of expertise.

# OBJECTIVES

VetAgro Sup has dedicated itself to addressing the world's most pressing challenges. Drawing upon its technical facilities, centres of expertise, research teams, and scientific collaborators, it will utilise its inherent strengths, student body, and expert staff to position itself as

**a major facilitator  
of global transitions,  
making maximum use of  
its expertise in holistic**



VetAgro Sup has thus defined four strategic axes that prioritise both the pursuit of excellence in teaching and research as well as the well-being of staff and students. These axes, and their accompanying actions, will be carried out locally, nationally, and internationally.

# OUR FOUR PRIORITY AREAS

The excellence of VetAgro Sup's three degree programmes—in the veterinary sciences, agricultural sciences, and veterinary public health—is manifest in the institution's list of national and international accreditations. A member of the prestigious French association Conférence des Grandes Écoles, VetAgro Sup has been granted accreditations for its programmes in veterinary medicine (from AEEEV and AVMA) and agricultural engineering (from CTI and EUR-ACE). Most of the institution's technical facilities have received some form of certification or accreditation or are committed to quality assurance in their area of specialty.

The coexistence of these three degree programmes at VetAgro Sup fosters interdisciplinarity, uniquely positioning the institution to help solve complex global challenges, a task that includes grappling with tremendous uncertainty.

Thanks to this expertise, VetAgro Sup is performing cutting-edge work in four priority areas:



## **COMPARATIVE MEDICINE AND PATHOLOGY IN ANIMALS AND HUMANS**



## **EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES**



## **SUSTAINABILITY AND MULTIFACETED PERFORMANCE OF AGROECOLOGICAL STRATEGIES IN AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS, FOOD SYSTEMS, AND REGIONS**



## **INTERACTIONS BETWEEN ANIMALS AND SOCIETY**

# HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

To develop its institutional action plan, VetAgro Sup relied on its strategic priorities committee. It also sought contributions from its community, using a participatory approach that employed three collaborative methodologies:

### GENERAL MEETINGS

Four general meetings were held to present the plan, allowing community members to rework its form via their informed contributions.

### OPEN ONLINE SURVEYS

In May 2020, VetAgro Sup staff and students were invited to respond to an online survey with a view to jointly constructing the action plan. Moreover, students on the two campuses distributed a questionnaire to gather additional helpful information.

### THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

In June 2020, four thematic workshops (one per axis) were held. They were open to the public and helped build a list of actions to promote the institution's objectives.

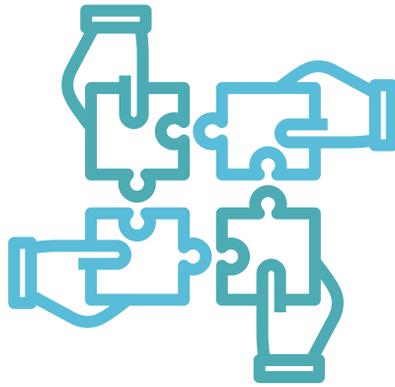
### ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL

The institutional action plan was submitted for approval to VetAgro Sup's various administrative bodies. It was discussed by the faculty board, the council for teaching and student life, the scientific advisory board, and the technical committee before being officially approved by the board of directors in **December 2020**.

### PLAN LAUNCH

In **January 2021**, the institutional action plan was launched by implementing the preliminary phases of the plan's 19 actions. Working groups were formed to flesh out concrete, measurable, and functional subactions. The latter are occurring according to specific timetables, and their performance will be clearly quantified.

# ONE HEALTH—COMBINING EXCELLENCE AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY TO ADDRESS GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGES



In its 2016–2020 Institutional Action Plan, VetAgro Sup embraced its responsibilities as a major player in public health and adopted the One Health approach. Over the next five years, the institution intends to further invest itself in this role. VetAgro Sup’s broader objective is to become a leading contributor in the field, thanks to its transdisciplinary exploration of the interactions between human health, animal health, and environmental health.

In all its training, research, and consultancy work, the institution will continue to boost interdisciplinarity by combining diverse perspectives, passing along the benefits to students, the scientific community, socioeconomic stakeholders, and society in general. Notably, it will create an amalgamation of approaches from the biological, biotechnical, clinical, and social sciences as well as the humanities. Against this backdrop, VetAgro Sup will continue to advance in its areas of excellence, maintain its accreditations, build international influence, and establish a global reputation.

*The complete action plan, approved by the board of directors, can be found at [actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr](http://actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr).*

## **ACTION 1**

### **Cement VetAgro Sup's leadership role in Global Health/One Health work in France and abroad**

VetAgro Sup's research teams jointly pursue a global approach to health and interact extensively with the world outside the institution. Within the VetAgro Sup community, the goal is foster collaboration while reinforcing a sense of belonging and shared values. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored why the One Health approach is essential, giving it a major boost. This approach is at the heart of VetAgro Sup's training and research efforts, both at home and abroad.



## **ACTION 2**

### **Enhance the multi- and interdisciplinary expertise of the two campuses and the three degree programmes to better serve students and professionals**

Current and future professionals are facing societal, environmental, and economic challenges that require qualifications beyond just the basic training in their respective fields. They also need to be capable of applying transversal and interdisciplinary perspectives. Within its degree programmes, the institution possesses synergistic forms of expertise and will continue its efforts to consolidate and disseminate its knowledge.



## **ACTION 3**

### **Maintain the institution's national and international accreditations as enrolment increases**

VetAgro Sup's range of accreditations and certifications are testaments to the quality of the institution's work. Thus, the institution is aiming to maintain the accreditations granted to its degree programmes in veterinary medicine (from AEEEEV) and agricultural engineering (from CTI and Eur-Ace); ENSV-FVI's designation as an OIE Collaborating Centre; and the accreditations and certifications given to its technical and training facilities.



## **ACTION 4**

### **Create partnership chairs and centres of expertise to promote the institution's four priority areas**

VetAgro Sup plans to create a centre to promote and support clinical research projects; to bolster its existing centre for veterinary, agricultural, and wildlife expertise; more firmly establish the chairs in veterinary public health and animal welfare; and create a chair in agroecology.





## Innovation—the institution’s driving force



Education and research inherently drive and are driven by innovation. Fostering innovation is essential if the institution wishes to meet the ambitious objectives and high standards it has set for itself. VetAgro Sup must nourish the creativity of its students, giving them space to develop their ideas and projects. To this end, it needs to fuel innovation, by such measures as personalised courses, research-based training, and exposure to professional experiences. Simultaneously, the institution has to strengthen existing ties between teaching and research. VetAgro Sup is also committed to generating value from its research for the benefit of its public and private partners.

VetAgro Sup is holistically structuring its activities to encourage innovation within its teams. This approach is the same regardless of whether the concern is teaching practices, equipment, management regimes, or infrastructure (e.g., the future university veterinary hospital, with premises well suited to creative collaborations). This work will promote personal and professional development and increase both well-being and quality of life at work for staff and students.

*The complete action plan, approved by the board of directors, can be found at [actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr](http://actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr).*

## ACTION 5

### Transform infrastructure on the two campuses to reflect the institution's strategic priorities

The increase in student enrolment is a challenge that can be dealt with by optimising the current use of space. To promote sustainable development, infrastructure on the two campuses must be redesigned to align with the transformations taking place at VetAgro Sup. Innovation and quality of life at work must be key considerations in the institution's training, research, and consultancy activities. New workspaces will be flexible and equipped with smart technologies, promoting exchange and creativity within the student body and among personnel. This action will help improve quality of life for staff and students. It will be designed with a participatory approach so that the entire community can contribute.



## ACTION 6

### Renovate the University Veterinary Hospital and rethink its activities

The University Veterinary Hospital is a flagship for VetAgro Sup. It is where the institution welcomes the public (i.e., individuals seeking high-quality animal care) and trains students and veterinary health professionals. It is also a site of professional interactions. As described in the upcoming state-region planning contract, the infrastructure programme's objective is to transform this facility to incorporate new technologies and meet environmental standards with a view to better training veterinary students and health personnel, providing excellent animal care, and hosting the public. The programme will include off-site teaching and work at a permanent urban facility accessible to people in the greatest need. This type of solidarity is an important part of our veterinary responsibilities.



## ACTION 7

### Implement innovative pedagogical approaches and adapt curricula to meet student and employer expectations

Societal changes, expansions in knowledge, and burgeoning digital technologies—these factors are profoundly affecting teaching methods, skill acquisition, and learning styles. The future graduates of VetAgro Sup must possess a core set of competencies: an openness to other cultures across the globe, an ability to adapt to novel conditions, an aptitude for teamwork, and a holistic approach to diverse situations. Even on these shifting sands, the institution must continue to customise its coursework and pedagogical perspectives.



## **ACTION 8**

### **Transform management regimes**

There is an urgent need to transform policymaking. From a managerial standpoint, this transformation must be accompanied by furnishing better support to administrators; encouraging more reflexive practices; emphasising the benefits of contrasting viewpoints; and using targeted training and communication. In these ways, administrators will gradually adopt new methods for directing and managing organisations. VetAgro Sup has a responsibility to foster a management culture that values community, innovation, and performance.



## **ACTION 9**

### **Encourage research-based training and become accredited to deliver PhDs**

To improve the research-based training of its students, VetAgro Sup has been working with its scientific advisory board to plan effective research and scientific outreach activities targeting its students; events like the Science Festival or the Science Café will be expanded to encourage students to consider research from different perspectives.

During its next HCERES evaluation period, VetAgro Sup will focus on adding to its current educational opportunities (i.e., master's degrees and professional bachelor's degrees) by creating a PhD programme, with course modules to be run by the institution's assistant professors. The goal of this action is thus to obtain authorisation to grant PhDs and to receive joint accreditations with doctoral programmes at other sites.



## **ACTION 10**

### **Establish an innovation transfer plan**

VetAgro Sup's research and innovation policy seeks to generate innovations and other forms of value from its research, primarily by transferring its results to socioeconomic stakeholders. The institution must thus strike the right balance between training and research. It must also find a way to create products with economic value while simultaneously protecting the intellectual property of VetAgro Sup's staff. This process involves controlling innovation transfer from research units to industrial partners.



## VETAGRO SUP AS A CATALYST OF TRANSITIONS



VetAgro Sup performs work that grapples with profound societal changes, parlaying its findings into support for public policies. We are witnessing major ecological, energetic, digital, economic, ethical, and social transitions. Such shifts will translate into a need for innovations and skill sets that can facilitate the changes to come, such as the movement of production systems towards agroecology; radical transformations in food systems; improved management of health risks; better quality of life and health; and novel perspectives on relationships between humans and animals. It is the institution's responsibility to train future professionals as effectively as possible. To this end, VetAgro Sup will first identify the major issues related to ongoing transitions and then ensure that they are addressed in course content. In this way, students will enter their careers prepared to act. VetAgro Sup is dedicated to providing lifelong training in its areas of specialty, with the objective of helping professionals navigate the major transitions we are observing.

Finally, the institution must show a clear and abiding commitment to sustainable development. In particular, VetAgro Sup must participate in energetic and agroecological transitions—integrating them not only into its course content but also into its campuses, in line with the Prime Minister's guidelines in the Memorandum of February 2020 that described how to make public institutions more environmentally responsible.

*The complete action plan, approved by the board of directors, can be found at [actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr](https://actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr).*

## **ACTION 11**

### **Identify the expectations of socioeconomic stakeholders via a job observatory and detect new professional needs/career paths**

Professions are ever changing, and we can expect that new career paths will appear in the coming years. It is essential for the skills of future VetAgro Sup graduates to evolve in tandem. To this end, a job observatory will be jointly set up with other institutions. For each programme, an advisory council will be created to bring together institution representatives and external partners. Furthermore, relationships with alumni will be cultivated.



## **ACTION 12**

### **Embrace the digital transition**

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored that VetAgro Sup's digital strategies must be overhauled. To keep pace with a constantly changing world, institutions need to adapt their use of digital technologies to better fit each new generation of staff and students. The institution's digital transformation must respond to the needs and expectations of professionals, everyday citizens, and society itself.



## **ACTION 13**

### **Emphasise alternative approaches to production and consumption in VetAgro Sup coursework**

The French Ministry for Agriculture and Food has implemented an action plan to promote the agroecological transition. Its central tenet is that we must alter our approaches to production and consumption. Future directions need to be decided in a more participative manner and by employing a bottom-up strategy. A key part of this work will be exchanges within educational settings and the broader dissemination of knowledge. VetAgro Sup will do its part to promote change and sustainability in agricultural systems by taking direct action on its campuses and indirect action via its partnerships.



## **ACTION 14**

### **Lead by example in the ecological transition**

The Transitions Collective is composed of VetAgro Sup staff and students. Its goal is to help the institution adopt more environmentally responsible decisions related to work travel, catering services, and campus life. Given its position at the interface between animal, human, and environmental health, VetAgro Sup must espouse a leadership role in the ecological transition, demonstrating through its daily operations that it takes its environmental responsibilities seriously.





## OPENING THE DOOR TO EXCELLENCE



VetAgro Sup must embrace an outward-facing vision to foster excellence, drive innovation, and facilitate global transitions. This perspective will be espoused at all institutional levels and by all VetAgro Sup stakeholders. It will also promote greater diversity in student recruitment. The desired result is stronger interactions with various networks at the local level (university campuses, CHEL[S]), the national level (ties between educational institutions specialising in veterinary vs. agricultural sciences, Agreenium), and the international level. Such an approach will also open the door to partnerships with socioeconomic stakeholders at various spatial scales (e.g., partnership chairs, hosting of start-ups). These mutual exchanges will help the institution thrive. Our aim is also to seed our global approach to health in the sectors where it could have the greatest impact. To this end, three types of actions will be pursued. The institution will (i) strengthen the international dimension of its training and research programmes; (ii) develop collaborations with a view to informing policymaking; and (iii) enhance its visibility, improve its attractiveness, and participate more fully in networks of excellence.

*The complete action plan, approved by the board of directors, can be found at [actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr](http://actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr).*

## **ACTION 15**

### **Promote a more diverse student body**

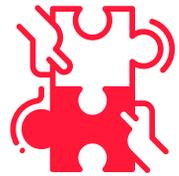
It is important to recruit a broader range of students, both because of the inherent value of diversity (e.g., in gender, background, and socioeconomic status) and to offer equal opportunities to all. At present, the way in which individuals gain access to VetAgro Sup degree programmes in veterinary medicine and agricultural engineering acts as a significant filter on the student body. To obtain a more diverse applicant pool, it is crucial to expand the population from which future students are drawn and to render it less homogeneous. In particular, VetAgro Sup wants to establish a common first-year curriculum at all of France's veterinary schools and strengthen the ties between vocational, professional, and academic post-secondary training in the agricultural sciences via the PASTAURA programme.



## **ACTION 16**

### **Build formal partnerships with socioeconomic stakeholders**

To advance, VetAgro Sup must openly seek out well-structured partnerships with socioeconomic stakeholders. These efforts will be based on new partnership models already being used at France's universities and grandes écoles. The result will be novel, structured, and long-lasting exchanges that bolster the work of our partnership chairs.



## **ACTION 17**

### **Increase the visibility of VetAgro Sup's technical facilities and centres of expertise**

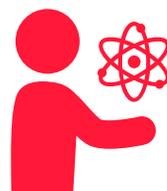
The institution's technical facilities and centres of expertise boast state-of-the-art scientific and technological equipment. Their expert staff provide a range of training, research, and professional services—from directly producing results, with or without scientific support, to successfully launching partnerships. More will be done to shine the spotlight on VetAgro Sup's expertise and technical resources to make their existence known to academic partners, policymakers, socioeconomic stakeholders, and the informed or uninformed public.



## **ACTION 18**

### **Promote open science**

As a publicly funded institution, VetAgro Sup is committed to making science as open as possible to all of civil society and the general public. In 2020, the institution created a portal to HAL, France's online open archive, through which its scientific work can be freely and openly accessed. The aim of this action is to promote the proper training of researchers as well as to make research more accessible to society. To this end, it is important to normalise the idea that scientific discoveries should be explained and popularised so that they can be understood by non-specialists (e.g., everyday citizens, students, journalists, politicians). Another goal is to more strongly encourage members of civil society to help produce scientific knowledge. At a broader scale, VetAgro Sup will adopt a new communication strategy to better disseminate the results of its work: it will invest more heavily in its relationships with the press, to ensure that its research comes up more frequently in mass media. It will also organise conference series and other events that will be open to all; they will take place and/or be relayed via social media.



## **ACTION 19**

### **Strengthen the institution's new international strategy**

This action aims to help cement the three pillars of VetAgro Sup's official international strategy: incorporating an international dimension into the institution's educational programmes; expanding collaborations focused on training, research, and consultancy to better inform public policies; and bolstering formal partnerships to create a strong network of international collaborations framed by the One Health approach.

It will be important to apply this international vision to the various actions described herein. It is also crucial to promote this perspective within the VetAgro Sup community of staff and students, keeping it in mind when new curricula and research projects are being developed. Finally, for this strategy to be successful, it is important to provide a range of tools (e.g., press kits, multilingual versions of the VetAgro Sup website, course modules taught in English, dedicated educational platforms, and partnership networks).





# VetAgro Sup

a major facilitator  
of global transitions,  
making maximum use of  
its expertise in holistic  
approaches to human  
and animal health

THE COMPLETE INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLAN IS AVAILABLE  
AT

[ACTIONPLAN.VETAGRO-SUP.FR](https://actionplan.vetagro-sup.fr)