

Press release

Ellwangen – Germany & Escalquens – France
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Naïo Technologies and VARTA join forces to revolutionize agricultural robotics solutions

Naïo Technologies, expert in agricultural robotics solutions, and VARTA, leader in innovation and key battery technology, collaborate to create an autonomous transportable charging station for robots to offer higher performing robotics solutions to farmers. The first prototype will be presented at the FIRA 2020 from 8th to 10th December 2020. The event will be hosted online.

The objective of this collaboration is shared by both companies: providing end-to-end solutions allowing for a remote charging station where no connection to the electricity grid is necessary. This will be possible due to wireless solar or regenerative solutions, reducing the user interaction during operation. When robots run out of battery, they will navigate to their charging trailers by themselves. Both Naïo and VARTA aim to provide farmers with the possibility to make use of a robot for 24 hours without worrying about power supply. This will be a major advantage especially during high farming season.

VARTA sees agricultural robotics as an emerging growth market: *“Bringing our expertise and experience to agrobots means that Naïo Technologies as a market leader can focus on their core strength: making the combination of robotics and farming a full success. VARTA will enable the robots to work more efficiently, as our power management solution will make charging faster, more flexible and much easier, while our advanced battery technology will allow for higher performance,”* underlines Steve Saunders, Key Account Manager UK & France at VARTA.

Two proofs of concept have been launched to test the solutions feasibility: The first one will integrate VARTA's batteries in Oz, the first robot of Naïo Technologies dedicated to market gardeners and already used by more than 120 farmers. The robot is targeted to gain greater than 30% more autonomy. The second proof of concept consists of creating a solar charging station which can be used directly in the fields. These field charging stations will be a world first for agricultural robotics.



“Thanks to our historical background in the agricultural robotics environment, we can easily exchange with VARTA about the existing challenges from a user point of view. As for all our robots, our priority is to offer to the end users, the farmers, an easy solution with the fewest possible constraints for their daily activities. Thanks to VARTA's renowned

expertise, we are really excited to continue moving forward in this direction,” concludes Gaëtan Severac, co-founder of Naïo Technologies.

The first prototype will be presented at the FIRA 2020, International Forum of Agricultural Robotics, taking place from 8th to 10th December 2020 on a digital platform.



PHOTOS

Please download pictures here: <https://we.tl/t-pQCa5kmSs8>

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ABOUT NAÏO TECHNOLOGIES



Created by robotics engineers Gaëtan Séverac and Aymeric Barthes in 2011, Naïo Technologies is an Agtech company based in Toulouse which designs, manufactures and markets agricultural robotics solutions co-built with farmers and consumers. Being people- and environmentally-friendly, these weeding robots can, in particular, compensate for the lack of an agricultural workforce, reduce the drudgery linked with some agricultural tasks and limit the need for chemical inputs. To date, nearly 150 robots are in circulation worldwide, including Oz, designed for diversified market gardeners, Dino for weeding mound-grown vegetables and Ted, for wine growing.

Further information available at:
www.naio-technologies.com.

ABOUT VARTA



VARTA AG produces and markets a comprehensive battery portfolio, ranging from microbatteries, household batteries, energy storage systems to customer-specific battery solutions for a wide range of applications, and, as a technology leader, sets industry standards in key areas. As the parent company of the Group, it operates in the business segments "Microbatteries & Solutions" and "Household Batteries".

The "Microbatteries & Solutions" segment focuses on the OEM business for microbatteries as well as on the lithium-ion battery pack business. Through intensive research and development, VARTA sets global standards in the microbattery sector and is a recognized innovation leader in the important growth markets of lithium-ion technology and primary hearing aid batteries. The "Household Batteries" segment comprises the battery business for end customers, including household batteries, rechargeable batteries, chargers, portable power (power banks) and lights as well as energy storage devices. The VARTA AG Group currently employs almost 4,000 people. With five production and manufacturing facilities in Europe and Asia, and distribution centres in Asia, Europe and the USA, VARTA AG's operating subsidiaries are currently active in over 75 countries worldwide.