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# Malteries Franco-Belges considers shifting Belgian specialty malt production to Pithiviers in January 2027

The proposal would absorb Malterie du Château's activity into the French maltster, part of Soufflet Malt's European rollout of Country Malt Group

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Malteries Franco-Belges said on Tuesday, November 10, that it is considering a plan to expand its production and distribution capacity for specialty malts by taking over the activity carried out by Malterie du Château in Belgium and moving its industrial production to Pithiviers, France, starting in January 2027.

The announcement came in a regulatory statement issued from Nogent-sur-Seine by the French maltster, a subsidiary of Soufflet Malt. The company said the proposed move is tied to Soufflet Malt's decision to launch the Country Malt Group brand in Europe, which it described as a more targeted distribution model designed to be closer to the needs of craft brewers and distillers.

According to the statement, the plan would shift Malterie du Château's activity to Malteries Franco-Belges, known as MFB, with production concentrated at the Pithiviers malting plant. The company said the change would allow MFB to optimize and strengthen its specialty malt production capacity while continuing to grow its distribution business for craft brewers across Europe. It added that the effort would build on the established brand and technical know-how of Malterie du Château.

The company framed the proposal as a response to a more competitive craft market. Specialty malts are a key ingredient for brewers seeking distinct color, flavor and aroma profiles, and they are also used by distillers. Any reorganization of where those malts are made and how they are distributed could affect supply routes, delivery times and sourcing options for beverage producers in Europe, especially smaller breweries that depend on regular access to a wide range of malt varieties.

Malteries Franco-Belges did not disclose the financial terms of the proposed transfer, the expected investment required at Pithiviers, or whether the plan would affect employment in Belgium or France. The statement also did not say whether consultations with workers, local authorities or other stakeholders would be required before the project could proceed.

Soufflet Malt is one of the largest global malt producers. In the statement, the group said it operates 35 malt houses in 20 countries across Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and the Americas, with annual production capacity of 3.6 million metric tons of malt. It said it employs more than 2,200 people and supplies large global brewers, craft

brewers, distillers and other food and beverage manufacturers.

The group already uses the Country Malt Group distribution brand in North America and Cryer Malt in Asia, according to the statement. By bringing Country Malt Group to Europe, Soufflet Malt appears to be aligning its distribution approach more closely across regions while linking it to its production footprint. The proposed transfer from Belgium to France suggests a broader effort to streamline how specialty malts are produced and delivered within its European network.

Malteries Franco-Belges said it currently owns four malt houses in France and holds minority stakes in some Soufflet Malt subsidiaries in Central and Eastern Europe. The company is listed on Euronext Paris under the ticker MALT.

The announcement did not indicate that a final decision had been made. The company described the transfer as a project under consideration and said the industrial move could begin in January 2027. That leaves open the possibility of changes to the plan before implementation.

For brewers and distillers, the proposal is notable because specialty malt supply is closely tied to product development and production planning. Craft brewers often use tailored malt bills to create specific beer styles, and a shift in production from Belgium to France could eventually alter ordering patterns and logistics even if the product range remains the same. For distributors and beverage makers, the launch of Country Malt Group in Europe also points to a more centralized commercial strategy by Soufflet Malt in a market where service levels and product availability can be as important as price.

The company’s statement presented the plan as a way to reinforce capacity rather than reduce it. Still, the practical effect for customers will depend on how quickly production can be transferred, whether the full Malterie du Château portfolio will be maintained, and how distribution is organized once the Country Malt Group brand is in place across Europe. Those details were not provided in Tuesday’s release.