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# Monte do Pasto expansion to include pig farming

By LUSA



The president of CESL Asia – which bought Monte do Pasto, Portugal’s largest beef producer – said that the 37.5 million euro (MOP331.9 million/US\$41 million) investment in the business would also include pork production.

“The decision has not yet been made” as to how Monte do Pasto’s production expansion will be made, António Trindade said in remarks to reporters in Lisbon on the sidelines of the Portugal-Macau platform presentation ceremony.

CESL Asia – Investimentos e Serviços group **acquired** the Monte do Pasto Group, located in the municipalities of Cuba and Alvito, in Alentejo, through its subsidiaries Focus Platform and Focus Agriculture.

The businessman admitted that pig production, in addition to traditional cattle production, “is a possibility,” noting that China “consumes 60 to 70 percent of the pigs in the world and is facing a very serious African swine fever.”

However, António Trindade emphasized that since this scenario can represent “an opportunity,” this does not mean that pig production can be done on Monte do Pasto.

“There is a lot to do, because in Portugal there are no large swine farms,” he acknowledged, adding that, “in the next four to five years Monte do Pasto will generate at least a 10 to 15 million euros in investment.”

“As funders, we are delighted that we are facing a company that is healthy today and very important to the region’s ecosystem. Because it is also a set in the value chain of more than 100 producers, which is an important support for development” of all cattle in the region,” said the executive chairman of Novo Banco, a financing entity for the Monte do Pasto debt restructuring and recovery project.

CESL Asia was part of the Monte do Pasto team, as well as an asset comprising 3,700 hectares of agricultural land, mainly used as pasture.

This asset will be developed and enhanced with additional agricultural activities, taking advantage of its natural conditions and access to water from the Alqueva dam, the company said when it announced the purchase of Monte do Pasto in a statement.

Thus, with Monte do Pasto, “CESL Asia wants to develop a Portugal-Macau platform that leverages existing production, allows the launch of new sustainable agricultural and livestock activities and contributes to the development of the entire Alentejo region and the Portuguese economy” Trindade added when he announced at today’s event.

CESL Asia’s goal is also to intensify exports to the Macau and China markets and seize the opportunities to be created by the Macau platform for social and economic cooperation between China, Portugal, and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

According to the outlined economic and financial plan, CESL Asia plans to increase its turnover to around 70 million euros by 2021, with some 550 employees, of which over 100 are based in Portugal.

“It is undoubtedly the beginning of a new era in the investment of Macau’s private companies into prosperous Portuguese companies. It is also up to CESL Asia Group to consolidate the growth strategy and the path to excellence in our Macau Platform for financing, business management and operation in the Greater Bay Area and Portuguese-speaking countries,” said António Trindade.

According to the businessman, “The strategic cooperation agreement in force between the Bank of China Macao subsidiary and the CESL Asia group is extremely important, and the Bank of China has shown enthusiastic acceptance and firm support for our platform strategy” he added.