



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FYFFES OPENS NEW €25 MILLION BANANA RIPENING CENTRE IN BALBRIGGAN**

A new banana ripening and distribution centre, owned and operated by Irish banana distributors, Fyffes has opened and commenced operations in Balbriggan, North County Dublin.

Representing an investment by Fyffes in the order of EUR25 million, the new centre is located in the M1 Business Park at Courtlough, immediately south of Balbriggan. When operating at full capacity the centre will have an output of over 7 million bananas per week – approximating to over 60,000 tonnes annually – all for supply to Irish retailers, wholesalers and food providers, north and south.

Adjacent to the M1 motorway with convenient access to the national motorway network, the new facility was commissioned in November 2019. Constructed on a 10-acre site, it comprises the 8,500 sq. metres ripening and distribution centre and an adjacent 1,750 sq. metres two-storey office and administration block, with requisite loading bays, truck and customer parking and ancillary services areas. Replacing the company's former facility in Swords, it has the capacity to accommodate a staff of 120 persons at peak.

Serviced directly from Cork Port – through which most of Fyffes produce arrives directly into Ireland from Central and South America – the new facility will be an essential link in the Fyffes distribution chain, its primary function being to ensure that bananas are delivered to consumers at the perfect point of freshness and quality.

Constructed in line with new building regulations, the new plant is likely to be regarded as one of the most sustainable buildings of its kind in Ireland. With the potential to use some 60% less energy than the building it replaces, some of its energy will be supplied by roof-mounted photovoltaic panels whilst both the office heating and cooling systems will be fed via a Ground Source Heat Pump (GSHP). Rainwater harvesting systems have been installed to help conserve and reduce water consumption.

The building uses energy efficient LED lights throughout and features generous window glazing and external 'brise soleil' to provide passive shading and reduce overheating. A green roof system has been installed for growing flora and encouraging pollinators. Other amenities include staff showers, changing facilities and drying rooms, bicycle parking spaces and charging points for electric vehicles.

Speaking to guests and officials at an event held to mark the opening of the new centre, Fyffes Chief Executive Officer, Helge Sparsoe said: “the new development will have a very positive impact on Fyffes by delivering even greater productivity and strengthening its ability to service the needs of our customers”.

Describing the new plant as “a commitment to securing Fyffes future operations in Ireland,” Mr. Sparsoe pointed to the benefit it will bring to the economy in North County Dublin through employment and the number of jobs it will sustain.

Founded in 1888 by Edward Wathen Fyffe, Fyffes is the world’s oldest fruit brand. Steeped in a rich Irish heritage, the Company has grown to become the largest importer of Fairtrade certified bananas in the world.

Acquired in 1986 by Dundalk fruit importers, McCanns – and now part of the Japanese Sumitomo Corporation – Fyffes is a multinational brand with an annual turnover of €1.2 billion. In addition to its new Balbriggan facility, Fyffes also has a base in Dundalk and employs over 100 people in Ireland. Globally, the organisation employs over 10,000 people and has offices in 12 countries.

Designed by Irish architects Scott Tallon Walker and built by Monaghan-based construction firm, Meegan Builders, the refrigeration fit out was provided by the Cross Group.

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### **About Fyffes**

For over 130 years, Fyffes has brought a choice of tropical produce to countless millions around the world. We achieve the highest quality by nurturing relationships with our growers, supporting our employees, and diligently serving each link in the chain: production, procurement, shipping, ripening, distribution, and marketing. This approach has earned Fyffes leadership across multiple markets; today we are the largest importer of Fairtrade certified bananas in the world. We are also one of the largest banana and pineapple importers in Europe and the biggest melon importer in North America. We became part of the Sumitomo Corporation in 2017, advancing our industry leadership in many exciting ways.

For more information, please visit [www.fyffes.com](http://www.fyffes.com)

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