Cargill invests in livestock facial recognition technology

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Cargill announced it has made a minority equity investment in Dublin-based Cainthus, a machine vision company developing facial recognition technology to monitor the health and wellbeing of livestock.

Terms of the strategic partnership were not disclosed. Cargill and Cainthus intend to focus first on the global dairy segment, but will expand to other species, including swine, poultry and aqua, over the next several months.

Cainthus’ proprietary software uses images to identify individual animals based on hide patterns and facial recognition, and tracks key data such as food and water intake, heat detection and behavior patterns. The software then delivers analytics that drive on-farm decisions that can impact animal health and management.

The information is used as part of an artificial intelligence-driven mathematical algorithm that conveys imagery into feed and water intake analysis, behavioral tracking and health alerts that can be sent directly to the farmer. Data gleaned from the images is used to anticipate issues and adjust feeding regimens, so that what used to be a manual process that took days or weeks now takes place in near real-time, Cargill said.

“Our customers’ ability to make proactive and predictive decisions to improve their farm’s efficiency, enhance animal health and wellbeing, reduce animal loss, and ultimately increase farm profitability are significantly enhanced with this technology," SriRaj Kantamneni, managing director for Cargill’s digital insights business, said in a statement.