

Syngenta merger approved

The creation of Syngenta through the combination of Zeneca's agrochemicals business and Novartis' agribusiness operation has been approved by the European Commission (EC). The firms aim to finalize the deal by the end of 2000, although the US Federal Trade Commission has yet to approve the merger. The approval was granted by the EC after the two firms agreed to license out or sell several of their crop protection products with sales of \$340 M. The figure is equivalent to 5% of the overall pro forma sales of Syngenta. The sale of its worldwide strobilurin business has been initiated by Novartis, which is also selling or licensing cyproconazole and other fungicides, propaquizafop and tauflualinate, in some regions of Europe. Zeneca Agrochemicals aims to divest its worldwide flutriafol cereal fungicide and its European sulcotrione corn herbicide business. The firm also intends to drop its global business for acetochlor corn herbicide.

Strobilurins

...subsidies for strobilurin production in Germany

BASF Schwarzheide GmbH in Brandenburg, Germany, has received DM 77 M in government subsidies for the construction of a new strobilurin production facility. The EU Commission in Brussels approved the subsidies representing 35% of the investment costs since 200 new jobs will be created.

...strobilurin use in UK

In the UK in 2000, a record cereal area was treated with strobilurin fungicide, despite difficult early season spraying conditions. According to Novartis, there has been a lot of septoria in wheat and high levels of rhynchosporium and net blotch in barley. In 1999, strobilurins were used on 35% of the cereal area, accounting for 55% of the overall fungicide cost. In 2000, they are likely to have been used on 40% of the crop, valued at 55% of the cereal fungicide market.

Valent USA and Valent BioSciences

The future organization of Valent USA Corp and Valent BioSciences Corp has been determined. The parent company for both organizations, Sumitomo Chemical Co, has decided that Valent BioSciences sales and local marketing functions, except for the Forestry and Public Health products, will be the responsibility of Valent USA Corp beginning 1 January 2001. Valent BioSciences will remain an independent global manufacturer and supplier of all branded products. The company will also serve as Sumitomo Chemical centre for worldwide discovery, acquisition, development and commercialisation of all biological/biorational-based products and will be located in Libertyville, Illinois. (<http://www.valent.com>)

Aventis CropScience

...Aventis CropScience has launched several cereal seed treatments in the UK based on the newly approved active ingredient triticonazole. Robust for barley and Premis for wheat are broad-spectrum products based on triticonazole. Premis combines triticonazole with guazatine to target bunt and fusarium and to provide some septoria control.

...Aventis CropScience SA in Lyon has sold the herbicide active ingredients carbetamide and dimefuron to German company Feinchemie Schwebda in Eschwege; the contract includes manufacture, registration, formulation and trade marks. The active ingredients have been marketed for more than 30 years in France, Germany, the UK, Poland and Benelux under the Legurame, Carbetamex, Pradone and Dribble brands. These herbicides are mainly used on rape, peas, sunflowers and chicory and achieved a turnover of EUR 6 M in 1999.

Snippets

...Crop Care and Profarma, UK agrochemical suppliers, are to merge to form Agrovista UK, which will begin trading from 1 Jan 2001. It will supply about 25%

of the UK arable crop protection market. The new company will place a strong emphasis on customer service, technical innovation and research-driven consultancy.

...Avecia will construct a £4.5 M multi-product pesticide intermediates plant at its site in Grangemouth, UK, to support its LifeScience Molecules fine chemicals operation. The operation recently received an outsourcing contract from an unidentified agrochemical business in Europe. The plant will initially give large-scale capacity for substituted phenyl hydrazines when it goes onstream in early 2001. The compound is used as a building block for numerous crop protection products.

...Novartis Crop Protection has recently been granted a patent in the USA on their new thianicotinyl insecticide, thiamethoxam. The broad spectrum insecticide, seen as a possible replacement for organophosphates, has been granted an expedited review by the US Environmental Protection Agency and registration is expected in autumn 2000. It is likely that the company will market the compound as Flagship in glasshouse and nursery markets and as Meridian in turf and landscape. Structural uses may be registered by July 2001.

...The first US patent for biocontrol to increase plant resistance to disease and to stimulate growth has been granted to AgriHouse Inc. A biological technique is employed by the company to increase the plant's immune response. The product consists of natural materials and it is applied directly to the soil.

AgriHouse, Inc. have announced that the US Patent Office has granted to AgriHouse its patent for an all natural Organic Disease Control (ODC) biocontrol technology that increases plant growth, crop yields and disease resistance. (<http://www.agrihouse.com>)

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