

Buying and selling

Bayer acquires Aventis CropScience

Bayer has acquired Aventis CropScience for EUR 7.25 bn, the purchase price includes debts of EUR 1.9 bn. The deal will make Bayer No. 2 in crop protection after Syngenta.

BASF sells insecticide line

BASF has sold its mevinphos insecticide (Phosdrin) operations to AMVAC Chemical, a wholly-owned subsidiary of American Vanguard. All active registrations are included in the deal, together with access to data relating to registration and trademarks.

Nippon Kayaku buys propentaphos

Novartis Animal Health has sold the commercial rights to its propentaphos insecticide to Nippon Kayaku. The active ingredient has been produced by Nippon Kayaku and supplied to Novartis Animal Health. The organophosphate is the only one that has maintained permission for its use in the USA. It has low volatility and high efficacy and safety levels. It is used in the environmental health and veterinary sectors with global supplies currently 90 tonne/year based on the active ingredient. In the environmental health sector, it is used to control cockroaches. Under the trade name Blowtick, it is sold, primarily in Oceania, Iran and the CIS, for control of sheep ticks and blow fly.

Ishihara Sangyo in Europe

Through ISK Bioscience Europe, the 10% stake in Belchim Crop Protection, Belgium, held by Ishihara Sangyo has been increased to 25%. It has also acquired a 10% stake in Celanova Handles, Austria.

SNPE in talks with DuPont

DuPont is in negotiations with SNPE over the sale of its herbicide plant in Loon Plage, Dunkirk, France. SNPE is owned by the French government and, should the company acquire DuPont's plant, the state will provide SNPE with funds amounting to FFR 500 M.

Marketing and distribution

Sankyo to expand exports

Sankyo is planning to launch its

milbemectin insecticide on the US market under the Mesa trade name, for treatment of ornamentals and citrus fruits. It will be distributed by Gowan, with a sales target of Yen 1 bn/y. Sankyo is also planning to introduce the product into the EU. Sales of Matrik (chlomafenozid) in Japan have been proceeding satisfactorily since it was launched last season. The insect growth regulator was jointly developed with Nippon Kayaku. The product is to be introduced to customers in the EU and South East Asia.

Monsanto's take-all treatment

Monsanto has been criticised by some UK agrochemical distributors for the insufficient supply of their new seed dressing silthiofam (Latitude) for autumn use. Silthiofam was recently approved for the control of take-all in wheat. The latest independent field trials show that adding the product to the basic seed treatment increased turnover by about £37/ha over that from wheat treated with the basic seed treatment alone.

Green Guard goes global

Green Guard, a biological pesticide based on *Metarhizium* fungus, developed through collaboration between the Australian Plague Locust Commission, CSIRO and SGB Australia Pty Ltd, is being developed in world markets for control of locusts and grasshoppers.

Plant closures

Syngenta plans closures and job cuts

By 2004, Syngenta plans to close 10 of its 47 manufacturing sites and 6 of its 12 R&D centres. 3000 jobs will be lost saving a total of \$525 M/year. Eight sites have already been closed with the loss of 1500 jobs. The production divisions in Dielsdorf (Switzerland), Yalding (UK) and Grimbsy (UK) will close. The toxicology operation in Stein, Switzerland, will also close.

Plant expansions

Syngenta develops at Grangemouth

Syngenta has developed its facilities at Grangemouth, UK, further. Modular construction specialist and Portakabin

subsidiary, Yorkon, was chosen to provide a new, purpose-designed office scheme, which would reflect the company's strong image. Yorkon has also completed a second contract at the site as part of Syngenta's multimillion pound investment in a new plant for second generation strobilurin fungicide.

New BASF strobilurin plant

BASF has commissioned a new plant in Schwarzheide, Germany, for the production of crop protection active ingredient F500, a strobilurin fungicide.

Collaborations

Two insecticide partnerships

Devgen and FMC have extended their insecticide development collaboration beyond the original three years by up to a further a five years. Devgen will supply FMC with insecticide targets developed using Devgen's novel highthroughput technology and screened using FMC's compound libraries. The complementary skills of the two companies will enable them to create a new generation of insecticides.

Elsewhere, AgraQuest and Dragoco have begun a partnership to develop a natural mosquito repellent using a patented AgraQuest discovery.

Syngenta and Aquaartis

Syngenta and Aquaartis have signed an agreement covering research into active ingredients for agrochemicals. Under the terms of their contract, Aquaartis will receive scheduled payments as well as royalties on any resulting products in return for allowing Syngenta access to its technology. Syngenta will have worldwide rights to any discoveries. Aquaartis will provide its PhycoScreen HTS databank of prefractionated extracts from micro algae and cyanobacteria for screening in agrochemical trials. Syngenta will be responsible for downstream structural studies, optimisation work, development and marketing.