



## Joint press release

January 20, 2010

### **KWS and BASF collaborate to develop high-yielding sugar beet**

- **15 % higher yield and better drought tolerance through plant biotechnology**
- **New varieties expected on the global market from 2020**

Limburgerhof and Einbeck, Germany – January 20, 2010. BASF Plant Science and KWS SAAT AG announced today a collaboration in plant biotechnology. The objectives for the long-term project are developing sugar beet varieties for the global market with higher sugar and energy yields as well as greater drought tolerance. The partners aim to bring the new varieties with 15 % higher yields to the market from 2020 onwards.

"Within this cooperation, KWS and BASF will bundle their breeding and biotechnology skills to develop genetically enhanced sugar beet. This shows our company's clear commitment to the sugar beet crop and is a meaningful addition to our classic plant breeding work," said Dr. Günter Strittmatter, Head of Research at KWS SAAT AG.

"This step will help strengthen our position on the global market. We are aiming for increased yields of 15 %, which will make the cultivation of sugar beet considerably more competitive and enable farmers to enjoy further cost benefits. As a result, yields of 20 tons of sugar per hectare will become standard," added Dr. Peter Hofmann, Head of the Sugar Beet Division at KWS.

"We are very happy to enter into this partnership with KWS, the market leader in sugar beet and a global seed company," said Marc Ehrhardt, Group Vice President at BASF Plant Science. "This agreement is another example of BASF's strategy in plant biotechnology. As a technology partner to the seed industry, we want to combine the best genetic traits with the best germplasm in each crop. This will allow farmers around the world to benefit from high-yielding varieties and thus gain efficiency," he added.

Through the agreement, BASF Plant Science is expanding its biotechnology work into the sugar beet industry. KWS is a leading global player in plant breeding and world market leader in sugar beet seed. Last year, the company achieved a market share of 70% in North America with genetically improved herbicide resistant sugar beet varieties.

While BASF is bringing validated yield genes and plant biotechnology know-how to the table, KWS is contributing experience in sugar beet breeding through conventional and biotechnological methods and is transferring the selected genes into the best varieties.

Financial details of the collaboration were not disclosed.

#### **About KWS SAAT AG**

KWS SAAT AG is one of the world's leading plant breeding companies. More than 3200 employees in 70 countries generated in the fiscal 2008/09 net sales of approx. €720 million. Main areas of its work are the breeding of varieties and the production and sale of seed for sugar beet, corn, cereals, potatoes and oil-seed rape for the temperate climates. 15 % of its annual sales is invested in research and development. KWS uses state-of-the-art plant breeding methods to continuously improve variety yields and resistance to diseases, pests and abiotic stress. Further information on KWS is available online at [www.kws.com](http://www.kws.com).

#### **About BASF Plant Science**

BASF Plant Science – a BASF group company - is one of the world's leading companies providing innovative plant biotechnology solutions for agriculture. Today, about 700 employees are helping farmers meet the growing demand for improved agricultural productivity and healthier nutrition for humans and animals. BASF Plant Science has developed an unparalleled gene discovery platform focusing on yield and quality traits in crops such as corn, soybean and rice. Jointly with leading partners in the seed industry BASF Plant Science is commercializing its products. Current projects include higher yielding row crops, nutritionally-enhanced corn for animal feed or higher content of Omega-3's in oil crops for preventing cardiovascular diseases. To find out more about BASF Plant Science, please visit [www.basf.com/plantscience](http://www.basf.com/plantscience).

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