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### KWS and Bayer grant first license for herbicide-tolerant sugar beet to SESVanderHave

#### Collaboration for new options in sugar beet cultivation

- Sugar beet seed company SESVanderHave to deploy CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART technology
- CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART enables more flexible and environmentally compatible cultivation

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**KWS SAAT SE and Bayer AG have given access to a long-term license for their new CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART cultivation system for sugar beet to the Belgian sugar beet seed breeding company SESVanderHave. The technology is based on the breeding of sugar beet varieties that are tolerant to herbicides in the ALS inhibitor class with broad-spectrum weed control.**

CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART system will give farmers a new option to make sugar beet cultivation easier, more flexible in terms of the window for herbicide application and at the same time more environmentally compatible. The technology will initially be available next year primarily to farmers in eastern and northern Europe and will then be launched in other key markets such as Germany, France and Poland from 2019/2020.

“The agreement with SESVanderHave is the first license that KWS and Bayer have granted for this new cultivation system. Further licenses of CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART are set to follow,” says Sabine Stolz, Global Segment Manager Soy, Oilseed Rape and Sugar Beet Herbicide at Crop Science. “We want as many breeders for this technology as possible. If major seed providers work together to advance this technology, many farmers will be able to benefit from its advantages. With SESVanderHave, we now have a strong partner with many years of experience in sugar beet breeding and cultivation, who will be able to make a crucial contribution in this regard.”

“We are happy reaching an agreement with Bayer and KWS providing access to the CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART technology,” explains Rob van Tetering, CEO of SESVanderHave. “We shall be introducing our hybrids with CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART technology into the market soon. This new technology will allow sugar beet growers and sugar industry to be more efficient and competitive against sugar cane and other crops.”

Dr. Peter Hofmann, member of the Executive Board of KWS adds: “CONVISO<sup>®</sup>SMART is a real innovation for sugar beet cultivation allowing weed control with lower herbicide volumes and reduced application frequency. We want to allow all breeders to have access to this technology. Ongoing research efforts are needed to keep sugar beet at the top of competitiveness among all sweeteners. Good weed resistance management is vital to maintain the benefits of the system in the long term. We will engage all key stakeholders, such as sugar beet research institutes and advisory services, to ensure the achievement of this goal.”

The new sugar beet plants have a naturally occurring change in an enzyme involved in the biosynthesis of essential amino acids. During development, sugar beets with this spontaneously changed enzyme were specifically selected and used for further breeding.



#### **About Bayer: Science For A Better Life**

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the Life Science fields of health care and agriculture. Its products and services are designed to benefit people and improve their quality of life. At the same time, the Group aims to create value through innovation, growth and high earning power. Bayer is committed to the principles of sustainable development and to its social and ethical responsibilities as a corporate citizen. In fiscal 2016, the Group employed around 115,200 people and had sales of EUR 46.8 billion. Capital expenditures amounted to EUR 2.6 billion, R&D expenses to EUR 4.7 billion. These figures include those for the high-tech polymers business, which was floated on the stock market as an independent company named Covestro on October 6, 2015. For more information, go to [www.bayer.com](http://www.bayer.com).

#### **About KWS\***

KWS is one of the world's leading plant breeding companies. In fiscal 2015/16, 4,850 employees in 70 countries generated net sales of EUR 1,037 million and earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) of EUR 113 million. A company with a tradition of family ownership, KWS has operated independently for 160 years. It focuses on plant breeding and the production and sale of seed for corn, sugar beet, cereals, rapeseed and sunflowers. KWS uses leading-edge plant breeding methods to continuously improve yield and resistance to diseases, pests and abiotic stress. To that end, the company invested EUR 182 million last fiscal year in research and development, 17 percent of its net sales. For more information: [www.kws.com](http://www.kws.com). Follow us on Twitter® at [https://twitter.com/KWS\\_Group](https://twitter.com/KWS_Group).

\*All figures exclude the companies carried at equity AGRELIANT GENETICS LLC., AGRELIANT GENETICS INC. and KENFENG – KWS SEEDS CO., LTD.

#### **About SESVanderHave**

SESVanderHave is a global player in the sugar beet seed industry. More than one in four sugar beets worldwide grow from SESVanderHave seeds. Over 600 members of staff in 23 international establishments are managed by headquarters in Tienen, Belgium. One in three employees in the international group works in R&D.

SESVanderHave is specialized in each aspect of the production of sugar beet seeds: ranging from the development of new varieties and resistances in the test fields to the final finished seeds in the factory. Each variety is developed with an eye to the requirements of individual markets, all over the world. SESVanderHave is represented by a branch or a local agent anywhere in the world where sugar beets are grown.

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