



Volume: 11 Issue: 16



**In a survey of 400 corn growers,**

#### **DNA LANDMARKS AND ADVANTA INDIA PARTNER**

Advanta India Limited and DNA LandMarks Inc. have formed a strategic partnership in marker-assisted breeding. The program will encompass both vegetable and row crops. Together, the two companies aim to achieve dramatic improvements in the breeding process. Services will include marker-assisted selection, accelerated marker-assisted backcrossing and genetic mapping of key traits for Advanta's program. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **VILMORIN STRENGTHENS POSITION**

Vilmorin has acquired GenTropic Seeds, a Guatemalan breeding company specializing in tropical tomato and pepper hybrids. The purchase agreement of GenTropic Seeds research programs was signed in December 2008 and the incorporation of the germplasm was done at the beginning of 2009. This program allows Vilmorin to incorporate new resistances to viruses, new fruit typologies and a germplasm adapted for areas with high disease pressure, features that would otherwise demand years of research to obtain. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **U.S. AND EU ENFORCE IP TRADE POLICY**

Protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights is emerging as the dominant priority in international trade policy for the EU and U.S., based on communications from trade officials. The prevailing perception is that their intellectual property rights represent a significant and sometimes the only competitive advantage they have in negotiations with trading partners. Both governments are focused on raising protection levels in other

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countries for their industries' IP rights through bilateral and regional trade agreements. They are also actively working to accomplish this through other channels including fighting counterfeit products through the World Health Organization and World Customs Organization, and also through the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **SCHILLINGER GENETICS EXPANDS SEED RESEARCH**

Schillinger Genetics is opening a new southern Illinois research station this May at their new facility located in Vandalia, Illinois. Schillinger already has research stations in Maryland, Iowa and Argentina. The new research station will focus on developing unique and elite non-genetically modified soybean products, which will be targeted for food and feed markets and marketed under their eMerge Genetics brand. Future plans for the research station include the addition of a molecular lab in 2010, which will offer the ability to develop and select unique food and feed-grade products. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **WYFFELS HYBRIDS NAMES NEW DIRECTOR OF MARKETING**

Wyffels Hybrids has hired Jeff Hartz as Director of Marketing. In his new position, Hartz will oversee all strategic marketing and public relations efforts on behalf of the seed corn company and will be responsible for the continued development of the Wyffels brand and related marketing and communications strategies. He will work closely with growers, seed representatives and the field sales force to develop programs and materials that meet their needs. Most recently, Hartz served as a division manager in market development for John Deere Credit. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **SYNGENTA APPOINTS INDUSTRY VETERANS TO NEW ROLES**

Syngenta has promoted Jack Bernens to the newly created position of Head of Technology Acceptance in North America, and has named Rex Martin his successor as Head of Industry Relations, effective June 1. In his new position, Bernens will work with public, private and government institutions seeking understanding and support for Syngenta seeds and trait technologies. Martin will manage the company's involvement with the award-winning Leadership At Its Best program. The specialized training develops key groups of agricultural leaders around the country who can effectively address Congress and the media on policy issues impacting farmers. For more information, click [here](#).

#### **MONSANTO TAKES ACTION OVER BAN OF CORN TRAIT**

Monsanto has filed suit against the German government for their decision to ban a genetically modified corn. MON810, a Bt corn has been approved for animal feed in the European Union since 1998 and in Germany since 2005. However, German Agriculture Minister Ilse Aigner says she has "legitimate reasons" to believe the corn is a threat to the environment and has banned its use in the country. Monsanto says the move is an "arbitrary ban" and in violation of E.U. rules which state a member country can only ban an approved



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product if new scientific evidence comes to light. France, Austria and Hungary have also banned MON810 saying new evidence does exist however, a recent review by the European Food Safety Authority determined that claim was not legitimate. For more information, click [here](#).

### **DEVGEN AND MONSANTO UPDATE TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT**

Devgen N.V. and Monsanto Company have modified the scope of their research and technology agreement signed in 2007. Monsanto now has broader rights to Devgen technology. In exchange, Devgen receives 20 million Euros. "We welcome the additional interest of Monsanto in broadening its access to Devgen trait technology in selected crops," says Thierry Bogaert, CEO of Devgen. "This agreement strengthens our cash position without affecting Devgen's rights in its crops of interest and reinforces Devgen's ability to execute its downstream trait and seed business plan." For more information, click [here](#).

### **CLIMATE CHANGE COULD BE POSITIVE FOR MIDWESTERN AG**

Climate change is taking place, and it may be occurring at a faster pace than some experts previously estimated. That assessment comes from Gene Takle, Iowa State University Agronomy Professor and Director of the ISU Climate Center. However, Takle says that, in the short-term, climate change is not necessarily bad for Midwestern agriculture. "We are already seeing some changes," he says. "Farmers are planting earlier in the spring and they're able to use longer-season hybrids. In the Midwest, the balance of changes are positive for agricultural production so we shouldn't overlook that and we should be taking advantage where we can." Takle says geneticists and plant breeders will need to modify crops to meet the new climate challenges. "If we could design crops that were drought tolerant for those regions that will be drought-prone but also are able to tolerate water-logged soils those would be good," he says. For more information, click [here](#).

### **NDSU RECOMMENDS FUNGICIDE TREATED SEED**

Less than ideal planting conditions may challenge the establishment of crops this summer. One common concern plant pathologists have in these conditions is stand and yield loss due to seedling blights and root rots. Poorly drained and wet or cold soils will slow crop germination and favors soil-borne pathogen activity. "Sometimes the greatest yield loss from root rot occurs in years that begin wet and become dry," says Sam Markell, North Dakota State University Extension Service Plant Pathologist. Many broad-spectrum seed treatment fungicides are available to protect against soil-borne fungi, as well as protect against seed-borne diseases. Many contain mefenoxam or metalaxyl fungicides that protect the seedling against water mold fungi, such a Pythium or Phytophthora. They also contain a fungicide, such as triazole or strobilurin that acts against most fungi other than the water molds. "A product that contains a

combination of chemicals with different targets (broad-spectrum seed treatment) generally is recommended under these disease-favoring conditions," says Markell. For more information, click [here](#).



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