

Bayer Crop Science: The Innovators Club with a Responsible Mission in the Corporate Innovation Transfer Project

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The eighth annual meeting of the representative, authentic, and emblematic format, also known as the creative workshop, composed of 100 successful agricultural producers from across the country, all with strong professional backgrounds and key competencies, took place at the end of last year at the representative "Primorets" hotel in Burgas. A special guest at this landmark forum was Prof. Svetoslav Bobev from the Agricultural University in Plovdiv, a leading phytopathologist, actively engaged in defining forecasts, diagnostics, strategies, and tools for combating diseases in agricultural crops.

The message to the authoritative representation was: "We believe that together we can achieve anything. Together we can make things better!"

The one hundred members of the prestigious club are representatives of the new generation of successful Bulgarian agricultural managers – individuals with agronomic qualities and a high professional standard. They demonstrate bright individuality, change the environment in a constructive way, and tangibly move things forward. Individuals with charisma and presence, who truly solidify their positions and maximize the utilization of their tools for influence.

The Innovators' Club has another characteristic, whose value generates a high success index. Bayer CropScience relies heavily on the expertise of its partners. In the groups formed on a geographical principle – Western and Eastern Northern Bulgaria, Western and Eastern Southern Bulgaria – a discussion was held on two topics: crop protection technologies in cereals and corn with Bayer CropScience products. Each club member shared their experience, their opinion, their reservations, and expectations. The atmosphere was creative, requiring solid doses of motivation and concentration. The academy for thinking and capable individuals usually heats up, people want the floor, they speak, argue, defend their theses with arguments... Bayer CropScience shows in every possible way that these professional farmers are special to the company. It relies on their assessments, positions, and critical thinking, identifies and capitalizes on the important steps that will move the business forward, will strengthen the chances for long-term success, competitiveness, and sustainable growth, and will give rise to further good ideas and benefits. The future belongs to companies that do not let time simply pass them by, but think, seek collaborators, and act! Club members have the great privilege of direct access to science. At this year's meeting, Prof. Svetoslav Bobev informed the representatives about the latest manifestations of disease potential in cereal crops. He motivated the necessity of agronomic knowledge in forecasting, diagnosis, and formulating correct control solutions. Prevention, according to the authoritative scientist, is an important part of the overall plant protection technology. Prof. Bobev drew attention to several epidemiological cases of pathogen pressure, which until now have not been the subject of particular interest. One such case is net blotch on barley, caused by the fungus *Drechslera teres*, which caused damage to crops in many regions of the country in the autumn. Early symptoms of the disease are found on the first leaves in the form of rounded brown spots, often transitioning into irregular areas limited by the veins with the characteristic net-like, darker brown patterning of the disease. Control measures and the timing of fungicide treatments are dictated by two main epidemiological features: first, preservation in seeds and plant residues, and second, possible infection throughout the entire vegetation period. When barley cultivation is accompanied by prolonged rainy periods, it is usually treated twice – during early stem formation and approximately 3-4 weeks later. In seasons with medium-intensity rainfall, one treatment after stem elongation until the appearance of the flag leaf gives a good result.

According to the assessment of the distinguished scientist, Bayer CropScience, in its capacity as a leading global company in the agrochemical industry, offers an exceptionally effective, highly competitive fungicide format in cereals against all manifestations of the infectious background,

abiotic factors, and other force majeure circumstances. Among other things, the German company's products activate excellent physiological effects on plant development, improve crop quality, and increase yield. He welcomed Bayer CropScience's commitment to informing its clients and partners as objectively as possible about the qualities of the products in its commercial portfolio. If you want to succeed, you must be different from everyone else, you must do things that others do not do. According to Bayer CropScience's marketing policy, Club members must first and foremost structure their own informed choice. Open communication implies that Bayer CropScience's privileged partners are at the forefront of the information wave. The objective, impartial, and advertisement-independent way guarantees direct access to exclusive, correct, and forward-looking information. However, these people are not indifferent, passive consumers of information. They are active, with their own opinions and personal positions! At this year's Club meeting, Zhecho Murzov presented a broad overview of the situation and trends in the domestic pesticide market. In 2013 compared to 2012, the sale of plant protection products increased by 8-9%. Several segments are driving the domestic market upward. In cereals, the use of fungicides and herbicides is growing. The share of anti-cereal herbicides is showing growth and the parameters are of a lasting nature. It is worth noting the fact that about half of all crops (wheat and barley) are treated with Sekator and Falcon, mainly due to the extremely attractive package – Sekator + Falcon, offered by Bayer CropScience in 2013. Two of the best products in their segments at an exceptional price! The anti-cereal herbicides Puma Super, Hussar Max, and Pacifica are also selling successfully. The promo package, composed of the herbicide Sekator and the fungicide Falcon, created a real market sensation! In this case, the successful launch of the broad-spectrum fungicide Prosaro, containing the 3rd newest generation triazole – prothioconazole, deserves special attention. Due to the high degree of synergy between the two active substances, Prosaro has an exceptionally high spectrum of controlled diseases, including the highly problematic **Fusarium** and **Septoria** in wheat, **Sclerotinia** and **Cylindrosporium** in rapeseed, making it suitable for use in various problematic phytosanitary situations. Club members are already convinced of its crushing competitive advantages. The only reservation regarding this exceptionally classy product remains the price. Attendees at the forum were the first to learn that a correction in this sensitive point is being discussed. Bayer CropScience will take the next step to make Prosaro reach more users. This will be a signal that the company is investing in its large-scale innovations for Bulgarian agriculture. The landmark Merlin Flex, the soil herbicide in corn against broadleaf and some grass weeds, whose formula is composed of the active base isoxaflutole+antidote/cyprosulfamide/. There is no other definition, even if it doesn't sound particularly original. In just two years, this product made a massive breakthrough in the interpretative discussions regarding the place and role of soil herbicides in corn. Today it is clear: Merlin Flex changed the perspectives in plant protection practices. And before our eyes, in no time, it became the No. 1 soil herbicide in corn. "We can state," noted Zhecho Murzov, "that the leadership of Merlin Flex together with the legendary Laudis and Equip in corn against the entire weed association is indisputable!" The German company presents another very large-scale surprise in the concept of weed control in corn. Yet another proof, yet another positive signal, that the discovery institution of Bayer CropScience is an engine with a continuous cycle of action - it fills deficits, activates multifunctional, inimitable potential in structural and top novelties. Adengo

received a "roadmap" to officially appear on the Bulgarian pesticide market. And this means that after Merlin Flex follows a new, big, large-scale option in the calendar of Bayer CropScience's activities. Another masterpiece! The main advantage of Adengo/isoxaflutole+thiencarbazone/, the next soil herbicide in corn, is its higher efficacy against annual grass weeds, including species of **Setaria**, **Echinochloa crus-galli**, **Digitaria sanguinalis**, etc. It manifests its powerful herbicidal action at lower levels of soil moisture. Adengo is the more suitable product for early vegetative treatment. What are the next steps of Bayer CropScience to increase the quality and intensity of plant protection? What are the challenges in formulating new technological multifunctional concepts and strategic directions? "We have news," stated Zhecho Murzov categorically. Big news! In cereals in 2014, two completely new fungicides will premiere. Sphere Max/trifloxystrobin+cyproconazole/ is a broad-format, multi-spectrum product against **Septoria** on leaves and ears, rusts, powdery mildew, net blotch. That is why it is exceptionally suitable for application from the flag leaf phase to flowering of cereals, reliably protecting them, even from stubborn diseases like **Septoria**, **Fusarium**, and rust species. The product has a long-lasting effect, an additional "extra" is the greening effect. Sphere Max is a combination of two different active substances. The microcrystalline formulation, a novelty in global practice, ensures very good coverage and maximally activates protection. Zantara is a unique two-component fungicide/bixafen+tebuconazole/. Bixafen is a basic substance from a completely new generation, one level above strobilurins. It exhibits physiological action on agricultural crops, the result of which is increased plant tolerance to unfavorable climatic factors and anomalies, increases yield and its quality. And more. The new active substance sets a new standard for protecting wheat and barley from all stem and leaf diseases, unequivocally the most effective agent against net blotch and **Septoria**. Zantara's profile includes even faster initial action and prolonged protection of the crop plant. The use of the two new products is fully justified in any situation, because if it is dry and there are no conditions for pathogen development, the physiological greening effect which the two new products induce helps the crop overcome stress more easily, which in turn leads to higher yield; if, on the other hand, there are ideal moist and warm conditions, our crop receives the most reliable protection from diseases + greening effect.

Falcon, Prosaro, Sphere Max, and Zantara – this is the powerful fungicide portfolio of Bayer CropScience in cereals for 2014. A respectable, impressive presence of the new avant-garde high-tech production of Bayer CropScience, the world leader in the agrochemical industry.

The German company Bayer CropScience has enormous growth potential and time confirms that this horizon is endless. Because its business is linked to the production of agricultural crops, whose consumption on a global scale is growing exponentially. And in this market environment, it is a factor worldwide. Ralitsa Yanakieva announced another BIG NEWS. The management of Bayer CropScience has decided that over the next 10 years, a huge financial resource will be invested in the company's discovery scientific complex. The goal is high – creating active substances for formulating new plant protection products and breeding hybrid agricultural crops with previously unknown qualities. As is known, recently Bayer CropScience acquired the German

breeding firm RAPS, which is a signal of its intention to also enter the seed business. In the corporate cause "Science for a Better Life," an additional dose of relevance, scale, and visionary mission has been generated. Can you imagine what this means? Once the German machine starts, there is no stopping! Bayer CropScience is the strongest brand on the Bulgarian pesticide market. The strongest brand does not at all mean only a powerful advertising status. Bayer CropScience is an institution in our national agriculture due to the main role it plays in plant protection – with quality, identity, innovation, intensity, remarkable ecological characteristics, and respectable results. Bayer CropScience has maximally recharged its commercial project with positive and product-based technological energy, diversified its emphases and priorities. "2014 will be of key importance for the company's team and for our business," announced Ralitsa Yanakieva before the highly authoritative audience. She marked the directions – new products, new promo packages, price adequacy, new information arrays, including foreign visits for Bulgarian farmers to exchange experience as part of the general transformation of the Extra Premium program. These are strong messages! Bayer CropScience is fully ready to meet the high expectations of Bulgarian agricultural producers and declares it will do so in a remarkable way with many creative ideas it wants to develop in all directions! This is very exciting, this is different from everything that has happened so far on the Bulgarian pesticide and seed market!/PP/