

Why sustainability is part of the mission “protect for better growth”

WORLD FOOD DAY FMC Corporation uses cutting edge technology and ground-breaking R&D to discover and develop new agricultural solutions that protect crops, the environment and health, as well as contribute to better harvests.



Dr. Duncan T. Aust

Head of Plant Health Global R&D and Director of

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The world's food supply is under threat. Farmers are facing immense pressure to feed a growing global population. They also must address increasingly difficult growing conditions caused by climate change while battling the pests and diseases that threaten to destroy their crops.

For farmers — and, ultimately, for all of us — crop failure is not an option. To do their job effectively, farmers need reliable protection solutions that help safeguard crops and contribute to a good harvest whilst at the same time protect the environment and health, as well as the safety of users and consumers

That's where FMC Corporation comes in. Since it was founded in 1883, FMC's crop protection solutions, applications and products have helped growers and farmers keep their crops secure and disease-free, enable better yields and provide an affordable, healthy and sustainable high-quality food supply.

Research and development programmes for sustainable products

Because agriculture is a fast-moving, ever-evolving industry that increasingly relies on ground-breaking and innovative solutions, strong R&D capabilities are critical. That's why the company — which employs more than 6,500 people around the world — is committed to research and development programmes that are focused on developing new sustainable products to meet the requirements of its global consumer base.

Naturally, new science requires major investment. Several years ago, in addition to the development of its sustainable synthetic active ingredient offerings, FMC decided to develop a new plant health business. To that end, it established a state-of-the-art European Innovation Center (EIC) near Copenhagen, Denmark, to focus on the discovery and development of natural biological pest management products and solutions.

The facility, which opened in 2016, houses microbiology, molecular biology, analytical and formulation laboratories, together with cutting-edge greenhouses and fermentation facilities, and is already rapidly producing exciting results. For instance, the EIC innovation team recently developed the first natural insecticides to control insects damaging seeds and crop roots, plus new bio-fungicides that can protect the leaves and fruits of growing vegetables.

Innovating for progress: pest control solutions offered via mobile apps

After this discovery phase, products are then tested in real conditions at FMC's European Research and Development Center in Alsace, France. Some products have already come to the market. For example, the company's first biological plant protection solutions were launched in Brazil recently — and more are on the way.

“Our R&D centers drive progress and create a promising pipeline of possible biological solutions to be developed in the years to come,” says Duncan Aust, Head of Biologicals R&D at FMC Corporation. “Our Development of plant health offerings and research in plant biologicals demonstrates a true commitment to sustainable agricultural innovation.”

Of course, innovation comes in many forms — and FMC also offers farmers an advanced, 'smart' digital service. By monitoring fields around Europe, the corporation can track the development of different types of insects in different types of crops, and then recommend to growers — via an app and email — the best pest control products to use and when to use them.

Putting the emphasis on corporate social responsibility

Yet innovation isn't FMC's only focus. It is keenly aware that corporate responsibility needs to be at the center of everything the agrochemical industry does, and recognises that it has a special duty to protect the environment, the health and safety of its employees and the population at large. It has therefore prioritised five major global challenges in its strategy for sustainable development: food and health expectation, environmental consciousness, climate change, scarce resources and land competition — all of which shape the way the company does business.

In 2015, FMC also became a signatory to the UN Global Compact, which asks companies to align their “strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance societal goals.” Additionally, FMC recently issued its seventh sustainability report, outlining its commitment to activities and progress in environmental responsibility, safety, human rights, diversity and inclusion, community engagement and product innovation.

Continuing to address global challenges

FMC has been serving the global agricultural markets for over 100 years. Today it is a tier-one agricultural technology company, the fifth-largest crop protection company in the world, and is on a mission to “protect for better growth.”

“With the acquisition in November 2017 of the majority of DuPont's crop protection assets, FMC Agricultural Solutions now has a broader product portfolio, deeper pipeline, greater regional reach and balance and a full-discovery R&D engine,” says Marc Hullebroeck, President Europe, Middle East and Africa, FMC Corporation.

“We will continue our commitment to address global challenges, now with the scale, reach and innovative products to even better help customers feed a growing population in a sustainable way.”

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