

Feature Story



BASF: Dedicated to Research

Farming today is more complex than ever, and there is an increased need for effective crop protection products that growers can rely on to help them succeed. BASF dedicates significant research and development efforts to providing innovative crop protection solutions for growers.

By working closely with growers and university partners, BASF researchers strive to understand the problems growers face in their fields and their evolving needs. But they don't stop there. BASF research also focuses on developing products that are part of sustainable application practices, helping growers—and the industry—be good stewards of the land.

This past fall, BASF opened the doors of the new Application Technology Center at its Crop Protection division headquarters in Limburgerhof, Germany.

“The new Application Technology Center is another step to further improve our formulations. Through the evaluation of the application process in a commercial large-scale sprayer, we can optimize the application properties of products toward higher robustness,” said Lars Wittkowski, Vice President of Global Formulation Development & Analytics at BASF's Crop Protection division.

The facility offers a large-scale commercial sprayer setup, capable of conducting controlled tests of new products under realistic farming conditions. The new equipment strengthens efforts to develop highly robust formulations and foster easier, more effective application.

“Growers will be able to achieve better spraying results. This is important to us, as we want growers to be able to produce food of higher quality, more efficiently and safely,” said Wittkowski.

Every year while spraying, growers face logistical and time challenges that better processes—like faster filling or improved product handling methods—can help address. The Application Technology Center allows for handling and spraying tests to be conducted with new products, making it a vital asset to BASF R&D.

The new center is only one addition to the BASF research and development assemblage. For years, Research Triangle Park in North Carolina has been home to the Agricultural Products Center, where research trials are conducted daily. This is where new products are born, beginning at the molecular level.

Once researchers hone in on the right molecule, it takes 8 to 10 years to develop, test, register and launch a product. A typical investment in such development can range between \$250 million to \$300 million. Research continues after launch, utilizing a network of research farms across the U.S. and Canada. This permits further testing under relevant conditions across a variety of crop types, leading to a better understanding of the environments and challenges growers face.

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Facilities like research farms and the new Application Technology Center give BASF an opportunity to view what it takes to create success in the field. With a dedication to research, BASF continues to develop crop protection innovations that meet the needs of growers.