

# Feature Story



## Putting customers first

### How BASF develops solutions with growers in mind

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC, September 13, 2017 -- As the old saying goes, "It's going to get harder before it gets easier." When it comes to farming, this certainly holds true. Today's growers are faced with increased complexity that requires personalized recommendations and proven products to help them run a successful operation.

For BASF, this modern farming environment has been a driving force in the company's increasing research and development efforts, expanding facilities, and investing in digital ag tools. The ultimate goal is to provide personalized recommendations to growers that help them make good decisions and accurate applications.

"Our approach to innovation and research is unique, and is one of our key differentiators," said Paul Rea, Senior Vice President of BASF Crop Protection North America.

About 10,000 employees are involved in research and development worldwide, with 30 percent of sales being driven by innovation.

"These numbers might be impressive, but they are only turned into success because we think locally as well," said Rea. "Each customer is unique, and we work hard to ensure that what comes out of our pipeline of innovation has a clear purpose that serves each unique customer."

Each year, BASF tests more than 100,000 molecules knowing that only one will reach the market. Eight hundred requirements need to be addressed and more than 200 studies are filed for the registration of a product.

"That means we really need to understand what our customers need now and in the future," said Rea. "We need to listen to their challenges and demands, and also conduct our own research and analysis on how agriculture will develop in years to come."

Investment is needed in order to do the proper research and development. BASF's Beaumont site received more than \$270 million in capital improvements over the last three years. In addition, more than \$660 million has been invested in BASF's eight other North American agricultural product production sites.

This trend continues into Canada, with BASF investing \$8 million (U.S.) in the expansion of its manufacturing facilities in Saskatoon for biological inoculants production. This will ensure greater production efficiency and operational safety.

Not only has BASF invested in sites and infrastructure, but in digital transformation as well. Growers are looking to IT platforms to provide them with solutions, and BASF has been observing these developments.

"For us, it is about getting the advantages of IT and combining them with our expertise in crop protection to increase value for customers," says Rea. "Our latest investment in this field was the acquisition of the company ZedX."

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A rewarding development for Rea was ZedX's ability to analyze the percent probability of specific precipitation events across key areas of the corn belt during main herbicide applications for corn and soybeans.

"We created 'reliable activation' or information support that helped growers minimize the risk of weed escapes from delayed or failed herbicide activation," said Rea. "It meant they could use their investment and time efficiently. They used less waste, ensured that stewardship was a guiding principle and their crops were protected."

As BASF continues to innovate and invest, growers will remain at the forefront of strategies and solutions made to fit their needs.

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