

Feature Story



Investing in the future of agriculture

BASF continues strong partnership with ag education programs

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC, January 9, 2018 — Looking back at 2017, it was a busy year for BASF's U.S. Crop Protection division. While the company had plenty to talk about when it came to topics such as disease control and weed resistance, BASF employees were hard at work ensuring the future of agriculture is filled with dedicated, bright and passionate leaders.

"I'm proud to work for a company that helps prepare our future leaders by interacting with students and educators," said Amy Baldwin, BASF's Community Relations and Customer Events Manager. "We want to help prepare our future leaders, and the students who participate in ag and science education are our future."

When it comes to helping equip future ag leaders, it's important to start at the source: teachers. Giving teachers access to ag information for students interested in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), makes it more likely a student will learn about the ag industry, and maybe get excited about a career in ag at an early age. According to the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE), there are approximately 12,000 ag educators, with over 800,000 students participating in formal agricultural education instructional programs. However, the demand still outstrips the supply.

The National Teach Ag Campaign is an initiative that brings attention to the career of agricultural education. This campaign gets students thinking about a possible career in ag education, and supports current agricultural teachers in their careers. BASF scientists have conducted hands-on science experiments in elementary school classrooms and participated in education outreach and mentorship initiatives as part of this campaign.

As young students become interested in agriculture, there are many useful and helpful organizations BASF works with to develop students for future ag careers.

Future Farmers of America (**FFA**) is a student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership. BASF participates throughout the year with local and national efforts, such as working with student leaders, providing awards and scholarships, and sponsoring events.

"When you meet FFA students you know after speaking with them a short time that they're with FFA," said Baldwin. "They're impressive young adults, and FFA focuses not just on the ag piece but they focus on leadership development as well."

Many BASF employees were members of FFA in high school, which helped set the stage for success in their future agricultural careers.

Chuck Benson, BASF's Senior Market Intelligence Manager, said, "My involvement in FFA in high school is the reason why I wanted to be part of the agricultural industry. Whether it was serving in various leadership roles, participating in public speaking events, or attending state and national conventions, all of these experiences gave me the foundation that I needed to excel in a career at BASF. It is also the reason that I enjoy investing time today with FFA members and supporting the organization as a board member of the North Carolina FFA Foundation."

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As these students move on to further their education after high school, Agriculture Future of America (**AFA**) is a program that sets them up for continued success. This program offers leadership and career development training, in addition to academic scholarships for those pursuing a career in an agriculture-related field. BASF began sponsoring AFA in 2017 and will continue to invest in the careers of future ag leaders.

In addition to ag education, increasing diversity in the ag industry is important to BASF. Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (**MANRRS**) promotes academic and professional advancement by empowering minorities in agriculture, natural resources and related sciences. It supports endeavors that foster and promote agricultural sciences and related fields in a positive manner among ethnic minorities.

“It’s important to us, having the connection to MANRRS,” said Baldwin. “We interact with MANRRS students throughout the country, whether it’s a recruitment fair or particular colleges.”

BASF partnered with MANRRS in a number of ways in 2017, but are excited to be co-sponsoring their Annual Career Fair and Training Conference in 2018.

Whether a student is interested at a young age or later in life, these ag education initiatives are here to help them in their future endeavors. BASF will continue to aid future ag leaders for many years to come.

About BASF’s Crop Protection division

With a rapidly growing population, the world is increasingly dependent on our ability to develop and maintain sustainable agriculture and healthy environments. BASF’s Crop Protection division works with farmers, agricultural professionals, pest management experts and others to help make this possible. With their cooperation, BASF is able to sustain an active R&D pipeline, an innovative portfolio of products and services, and teams of experts in the lab and in the field to support customers in making their businesses succeed. In 2016, BASF’s Crop Protection division generated sales of €5.6 billion. For more information, please visit us at www.agriculture.basf.com or on any of our social media channels.

About BASF

BASF Corporation, headquartered in Florham Park, New Jersey, is the North American affiliate of BASF SE, Ludwigshafen, Germany. BASF has more than 17,500 employees in North America, and had sales of \$16.2 billion in 2016. For more information about BASF’s North American operations, visit www.basf.us.

At BASF, we create chemistry for a sustainable future. We combine economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility. The approximately 114,000 employees in the BASF Group work on contributing to the success of our customers in nearly all sectors and almost every country in the world. Our portfolio is organized into five segments: Chemicals, Performance Products, Functional Materials & Solutions, Agricultural Solutions and Oil & Gas. BASF generated sales of about €58 billion in 2016. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA) and Zurich (BAS). Further information at www.basf.com.