

# Industry giants to share

By TOM J. BECHMAN

**A**BBOTT and Costello made the baseball comedy routine "Who's on first?" famous. Anyone trying to keep up with all of the interrelationships between seed and chemical companies might think they're in the middle of an Abbott and Costello skit. To top it off, Syngenta and Dow AgroSciences just added another joint agreement that makes updating your industry scorecard a necessity.

The two say they will "cross-license their respective corn events for commercialization within their branded seed businesses." Syngenta gets global, *non-exclusive* licenses with stacking rights to Herculex I and Herculex RW traits. That should give Syngenta the ability to offer hybrids with multiple modes of action on lepidopteran corn pests by as early as 2011.

In return, Dow AgroSciences gets global, *non-exclusive* licenses with stacking rights to Syngenta's Agrisure CB/LL and Agrisure RW events. The licenses also extend to Agrisure Vipitera, a broad-spectrum Lepidoptera event, and to a next-generation event for corn rootworm control.

All this makes an interesting web for Dow AgroSciences. Mycogen, owned by Dow AgroSciences, originally developed Herculex through an agreement with Pioneer, owned by DuPont. Dow



AgroSciences will also supply Herculex to Monsanto for inclusion in SmartStax hybrids, with eight genes stacked together. The first commercial SmartStax hybrids are due out next year.

## Behind the scenes

Sources inside the seed industry believe this recent agreement between Syngenta and Dow AgroSciences could signal a major shift in how the two companies operate. They believe more cooperation between the two industry giants could be in the offing.

Terms of the current cross-licensing agreement weren't revealed. The official statement from Syngenta is simply that "financial terms of the agreement have not been disclosed."

The same sources believe this most recent alliance could be good for smaller seed companies. It could provide a more competitive atmosphere when small companies go shopping for stacked traits in various corn hybrids.

## Reduced-refuge strategy

One trend becoming clearer is that major players in the chemical and seed business are targeting the reduction

of refuge requirements for corn. When Monsanto announced its SmartStax agreement with Dow AgroSciences 18 months ago, spokespeople made it clear that since these new hybrids would carry multiple modes of actions, they hoped to convince regulators to lower refuge requirements below 20%, perhaps as low as 5%. Refuge acres are required to help slow down the potential buildup of insect resistance.

David Morgan, president of Syngenta Seeds Inc., made the company's intent clear as well. In announcing the new Dow AgroSciences deal, Morgan said, "Together with Syngenta Crop Protection and Seed Care technologies, we will be able to offer growers diverse choice for insect control while developing reduced-refuge-product concepts designed for use throughout the U.S. Corn Belt."

## Seed treatment use grows

Data compiled by Monsanto indicate use of seed treatments on soybeans could potentially reach 45% to 50% of all soybean acres planted. A Monsanto source says it could be the highest percentage of seed-treated soybean acres ever planted.

Monsanto is watching the numbers closely because they've introduced the Acceleron Seed Treatment system this year. All Monsanto soybeans with the Genuity Roundup Ready 2 Yield trait sold this year will have the Acceleron system.

## Soil biodiversity amazes science

**T**HE biodiversity in soil is staggering, says Laura Overstreet, a North Dakota State University assistant soil science professor.

"Not only are soil microbial communities large, but they are also very diverse. The scientific community has hardly even begun to understand and classify the diversity of the soil," she says.

Overstreet spoke at the Soil and Water Conservation Society Regional Technical Meeting held earlier this year in Rapid City, S.D. She has been studying how agricultural practices affect the ecology of soil organisms.

There are more than  $10^{16}$  organisms living in one ton of healthy soil. To give you some perspective of how large 10 to the 16th power is, Overstreet says to look up at the sky at night.

There are  $10^{11}$  stars in the Milky Way galaxy.

Source: *South Dakota Natural Resources Conservation Service newsletter*



**YOUR PROPERTY & YOUR LIFESTYLE DESERVE THE BEST.**

**ZXT PRO**

- Floating Front Axle
- 54" or 60" Cutting Widths
- 1" - 5" in 1/4" Increments
- 4 Anti-Scalp Rollers
- Honda, Kawasaki or Briggs & Stratton Engine
- Air Cooled Engine
- 11 MPH Forward Speed
- 12 US Gallon Fuel Capacity
- Two Independent Hydraulic Reservoirs
- Dual Hydrostatic Drive

THE NEW ZXT PRO from Land Pride compliments our Zero Turn Mower line-up, with commercial-duty features like our Accu-Z line, but priced right and sized right to fit both high-end residential and commercial class users.

CONSISTENTLY LEADING THE WAY... [www.landpride.com](http://www.landpride.com)

**MICADA**  
Grain Handling and Storage Equipment

- Retro-fit Hopper Bottoms for any Existing Grain Bin
- Hopper Bottom/bin Complete Combinations
- Aeration Equipment
- Skid Systems
- Bean Ladders
- Catwalks, Leg Towers, etc...
- Will Custom Build

**MICADA TEAM**

1-800-270-2701  
[www.micada.com](http://www.micada.com)

P.O. Box 57 • Hope, ND 58046