

Ohio News Watch



SHOVELS IN HAND: The recent groundbreaking for the expansion of Syngenta's North America Seedcare Institute drew a range of dignitaries, including (from left) Palle Pedersen, seedcare product marketing; Ravi Ramachandran, head of the North America Seedcare Institute; Rep. John Kline, R-Minn.; Ponsi Trivisvavet, president of Syngenta Seeds; Wade Cowan, president of the American Soybean Association; Bob Wernimont, facility manager at Stanton, Minn.; Chip Bowling, president of the Corn Board, National Corn Growers Association; Tim Kroenke, head of seedcare for North America; and Matthew Wohlman, assistant commissioner with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Expansion is \$20 million investment in seed care

BY WILLIE VOGT

NESTLED in the township of Stanton, Minn., is a key research facility for Syngenta and its seeds business. And by the end of 2016, it's going to be a lot bigger. Recently, the company broke ground on a \$20 million expansion of its North America Seedcare Institute that will bring a new 38,000-square-foot building to the research farm. This expansion brings a new level of research and training.

"This is an important day for us," says Palle Pedersen, head of seedcare product marketing. "Seedcare products provide plants with a healthy start and help to achieve increased yield, crop quality and profit potential."

The groundbreaking event was the start of significant continued investment in seed care, a business Syngenta entered in 1979.

The new facility will house high-tech laboratories for research and development, treating, plantability, dust-off and quality assurance. It will also include a scale-up treating area, a treating equipment performance area to simulate real-life experiences for customers, a training facility, a seed warehouse, an office and meeting space.

Seed treatment expansion

Pedersen notes that as many as six active ingredients are now applied to seed, which pushes up the need for research into maximizing the technology.

Ponsi Trivisvavet, regional director of North America and president of Syngenta Seeds, points to the company's Good Growth Plan, a global sustainability initiative focused on six corporate commitments. "This expansion shows our focus on the first of the six: Make crops more efficient," she says. "Farmers' challenges are becoming increasingly complex."

Trivisvavet notes the corporate investment of \$1.3 billion in research and development annually, with this latest expansion showing Syngenta's future commitment.

The six commitments of the Good Growth Plan are: Make crops more efficient; rescue more farmland; help biodiversity flourish; empower smallholders (small farmers); help people stay safe; and look after every worker.

Ravi Ramachandran, head of the North America Seedcare Institute, adds: "Our customers require highly specialized products and services from us. As a result, the solutions we work on today are much more sophisticated than they were five to 10 years ago. The seed treatment business has evolved, and the products we develop require an increased level of training for our seed company customers, ag retailers, applicators and farmers."

Syngenta operates 10 Seedcare Institutes globally, but an 11th will open in Singapore soon. The global network allows the company to fine-tune application rates and match products to specific markets.



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