New Companies

Since the last article on this topic in last winter's issue, further consolidation has occurred in the agricultural chemical industry.

The most recent major change was announced in a press release by Bayer on October 2, 2001 when they confirmed that a purchase agreement was signed for the Bayer acquisition of Aventis CropScience, following successful completion of negotiations with owners Aventis (76%) and Schering (24%). The crop science activities are being organized as a separate legal entity named “Bayer CropScience.” The acquisition will make Bayer a world leader in crop science, close behind the world leader Syngenta. Bayer CropScience will be headquartered in Monheim, Germany. As part of the deal, Bayer won’t take on liabilities associated with lawsuits linked to CropScience’s genetically modified corn StarLink - these will remain only with Aventis.

Another consolidation in 2001 was the purchase of Rohm and Haas’s agricultural chemical business by the Dow Chemical Company which was officially announced in March and finalized by the end of the 2nd quarter. By terms of the agreement, Dow AgroSciences, headquartered in Indianapolis, IN, acquired all of Rohm and Haas’s fungicide, insecticide and herbicide lines, including other product lines, trademarks and license to all agricultural uses of its biotechnology assets. The agrochemical sections at Rohm and Haas’s Philadelphia headquarters and its nearby research laboratory at Spring House, PA, have been wound down.

As of January 1, 2001, the Agricultural Chemicals Division of Elf Atochem became Cerexagri, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Atofina Chemicals, Inc. (formerly Elf Atochem N.A., Inc.). This company’s history dates back to 1932 when it began selling cryolite as a pesticide, followed by development of endothall salts in the ’50’s, partnership with Nippon Soda in the ’60’s, and acquisitions in the ’70’s and ’80’s. Today, Cerexagri is a global provider of crop protection, post-harvest and aquatic products. In May 2001, Cerexagri moved to its current headquarters located in King of Prussia, PA, northwest of Philadelphia.

As new developments in the world of crop protection chemistry come to our attention, we will continue to revise our list of official company contacts. Through all these consolidations, IR-4 continues to successfully help develop products to keep the minor crop growers’ pest management toolbox full of new tools!

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