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Syngenta Biologicals and Lithos Crop Protect collaborate to fight major corn pest in Europe

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Syngenta and Lithos Crop Protect have signed a distribution agreement to supply a sprayable pheromone formulation for mating disruption to control a key pest in corn, Diabrotica virgifera virgifera (Western Corn Rootworm).

This innovative solution features Lithos' patented lithos micro dispenserÂ® technology, which utilizes a natural carrier material with pherolitÂ®-d (the pheromone of Diabrotica v.v. L.), a naturally derived female pheromone that causes mating disruption in corn crops for large-scale use.

The companies have now entered into the next phase of their collaboration to optimize the features and benefits of this innovation and rigorously test for safety and efficacy.

The Western Corn Rootworm poses a significant threat to European agriculture, particularly in regions with continuous maize cultivation and insecticide resistance. Itâ??s increased prevalence poses a significant threat to the industry, with climate change also intensifying its invasion into new territories.

Targeting corn crops, its larvae feeds on roots, stunting plant growth and causing economic losses. Growing insecticide resistance and environmental concerns have increased the need for new, sustainable control methods with a lower environmental footprint.

â??This partnership between Syngenta Biologicals and Lithos Crop Protect represents another significant stride in expanding our biological portfolio with forward-thinking and disruptive solutions, while filling gaps in pest control due to the current EU regulatory landscape,â?• said Matthew Pickard, Head of Europe Biologicals and Seedcare, Syngenta. â??The introduction of this solution will add a new tool to the current integrated pest management (IPM) strategies employed by the growers to safeguard crops and curb the advance of pests.â?•

â??We are actively seeking innovative and sustainable solutions to combat pests such as the Western Corn Rootworm,â??â?? said Lithos Crop Protect Managing Director and Founder Dr.

Franz Reitbauer. â??â??With the active ingredient pherolitÂ®-d, we have the means to naturally disrupt pest mating behaviors, thus maintaining pest populations below the economically damaging threshold, without any negative effects on other organisms or the environment.â?•

The introduction of pherolitÂ®-d for European farmers will be the third pheromone technology in Syngentaâ??s portfolio. Registration in key European markets is expected for 2026.