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ABA Chemical plans production shift towards Cyantraniliprole at Jiangsu Facility

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The proposed revamp would introduce 500 tonnes of cyantraniliprole technical capacity while reducing chlorantraniliprole output, reflecting evolving demand in the post-patent anthranilic diamide insecticide market

ABA Chemical (Nantong) has initiated environmental approval procedures for a manufacturing expansion that would introduce 500 tonnes per annum (tpa) of cyantraniliprole technical production while restructuring its existing chlorantraniliprole manufacturing capacity. The proposal reflects the company's strategic response to shifting opportunities in the global post-patent crop protection market, where demand for generic anthranilic diamide insecticides continues to grow.

The proposed project, currently under public consultation as part of China's environmental impact assessment (EIA) process, would be implemented at the company's production facility in Yangkou Chemical Industrial Park, Rudong County, Jiangsu Province. Regulatory approvals remain pending, and construction has not yet commenced.

Under the proposal, cyantraniliprole would be manufactured using the existing Phase III chlorantraniliprole production infrastructure, supported by shared utilities, storage and environmental management facilities. As part of the operational realignment, annual chlorantraniliprole technical capacity would be reduced to 1,500 tonnes, while the project is also expected to generate approximately 171 tonnes of ammonium sulphate annually as a by-product.

Beyond capacity adjustments, the investment includes a comprehensive technology upgrade of the site's 2,000 tpa bromopyrazole acid (BPP) production unit. Although production volumes will remain unchanged, the company plans to modernise key hydrolysis, cyclisation and bromination processes while strengthening clean manufacturing practices and intrinsic process safety. Bromopyrazole acid serves as a critical intermediate in the synthesis of chlorantraniliprole, making the facility strategically important within the broader diamide insecticide value chain.

The proposed expansion comes at a pivotal moment for the global agrochemical industry. Chlorantraniliprole and cyantraniliprole, originally developed by FMC Corporation and commercialised under the Rynaxypyr and Cyazypyr brands, are among the world's most successful diamide insecticides, targeting insect ryanodine receptors to deliver highly effective pest control across multiple crops. Combined, the two active ingredients generated approximately $1.5 billion in FMC revenues during 2024.

With composition-of-matter patents for chlorantraniliprole beginning to expire from late 2022 and those protecting cyantraniliprole following in 2024, manufacturers worldwide are positioning themselves to capitalise on expanding opportunities in the generic crop protection market. Industry observers view ABA Chemical's proposed investment as a strategic portfolio adjustment towards second-generation diamide chemistry, which is expected to witness stronger commercial growth over the coming years.

The company already occupies a significant position within the global chlorantraniliprole supply chain through its production of bromopyrazole acid intermediates. Industry estimates suggest ABA Chemical accounts for a substantial share of China's production of this critical intermediate, supplying customers primarily through contract development and manufacturing (CDMO) arrangements. The company has not disclosed whether the proposed cyantraniliprole technical production will support existing contract manufacturing relationships or target broader commercial markets.

If approved, the expansion would further strengthen China's manufacturing footprint in advanced insecticide active ingredients while reinforcing the country's role as a leading supplier of post-patent crop protection technologies to global agricultural markets.