

Agriculture's resilience has been tested by COVID, making fighting climate change even more vital than ever, says Syngenta Group

Media Release

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- Ipsos MORI survey: 72% of farmers have significant concerns about the impact climate change will have on their ability to grow food over the next five years
- In Europe 46% of farmers say the additional pressure of the coronavirus pandemic has had a substantial impact on their business
- Syngenta Group CEO Erik Fyrwald launches new Good Growth Plan and says post-Covid agriculture needs accelerated innovation to recover better and fight climate change

A global survey of large scale farmers in the USA, France, China, Brazil, India and across Africa for Syngenta Group found 72% are worried about the impact climate change will have on crop yields, animal health and their ability to do business over the next five years.

Farmers everywhere have also had to deal with unparalleled upheaval because of the Covid-19 pandemic. A separate survey of European farmers found 46% said their businesses had been significantly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. However, 53% said climate change was still the immediate priority and 63% agreed climate change would have a greater impact on their business than Covid-19 over the next five years.

The Syngenta Group today launched its new Good Growth Plan, placing the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss at the core of agriculture's recovery from the economic and social effects of the Covid-19 restrictions.

The new Good Growth Plan includes bold new commitments to reduce agriculture's carbon footprint and to help farmers deal with the extreme weather patterns caused by climate change.

Erik Fyrwald, Chief Executive Officer at the Syngenta Group said: “Since its launch the Good Growth Plan’s principles and priorities have become deeply embedded in the way we do business at Syngenta. The plan was of course, just the start.

“The coronavirus pandemic has revealed the fragility of the agriculture ecosystem. Like a pandemic, climate change is an inevitable threat that we must address before it is too late. As the economy and agriculture begin to build back with the gradual easing of the Covid-19 restrictions, we need to support a recovery for farmers that puts the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss at its core.”

The survey by Ipsos MORI for Syngenta Group found more than four in five farmers surveyed believed climate change has had at least some impact on their ability to grow food and most (59%) believed reducing greenhouse gas emissions would make their farms more financially stable or competitive.

Syngenta Group today reveals it has achieved or exceeded all the targets from the original Good Growth Plan launched in 2013, including bringing more than 14 million hectares of farmland back from the brink of degradation and enhancing biodiversity on more than 8 million hectares of farmland.

Under the new Good Growth Plan, Syngenta Group is committed to invest \$2 billion in sustainable agriculture by 2025 and to deliver two technological breakthroughs to market each year. The specific commitments in the new plan are divided into four areas:

- Accelerate innovation for farmers and nature
- Strive for carbon neutral agriculture
- Help people stay safe and healthy
- Partnering for impact

This includes a commitment to reduce the carbon intensity of its operations by 50% by 2030 to support the goals of the Paris Agreement on climate change. Syngenta’s commitment has been validated and endorsed by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). Syngenta Group also recently signed up to SBTi’s commitment to prevent a global temperature rise of over 1.5 degrees.

Alexandra Brand, Chief Sustainability Officer at Syngenta Group said: “When we speak to farmers, we see they are the first to be harmed by climate change and biodiversity loss. Now the Covid restrictions could also have long lasting effects on the food and agriculture sector.

“That’s why the significant levels of investment in innovation that you see in the new Good Growth Plan are needed to fight climate change and provide for a food system working in harmony with nature.”

An example which demonstrates the depth of the commitment that Syngenta Group is making is the announcement of a partnership with the Solidaridad Network. Its objective is to implement sustainable solutions at scale that empower farming communities to achieve food security in a number of developing regions. One such project is focused on coffee in Colombia, which aims to help smallholders increase their incomes by 25% by tackling the coffee borer beetle.

Heske Verburg, Managing Director of Solidaridad Europe, says: "We believe that sustainable agricultural production should be the norm. Our partnership with Syngenta aims to support farmers in developing countries to improve their livelihoods, while producing in balance with nature. The products of Syngenta are a daily reality for many farmers across the world, our partnership will deliver important insights into achieving sustainable production at scale."

This is in addition to an already established partnership with The Nature Conservancy announced in October 2019 on the Reverte project in Brazil, which aims to regenerate 1 million hectares of degraded farm land over the next 5 years.

Jennifer Morris, Chief Executive Officer at The Nature Conservancy said: "Climate change and biodiversity loss, coupled with growing demand for food, are putting increasing pressures on the planet and eroding the productivity and resilience of farms, ranches, and fisheries around the world. The impacts of COVID-19 make addressing these challenges even more urgent. Reversing these troubling realities will require working across sectors for smart, scalable solutions that ensure a future where people and nature thrive. TNC recognizes the role producers around the world have in building solutions and is pleased to collaborate with Syngenta Group on the ambitious pursuit of a food system that works in partnership with nature."

Erik Fyrwald will participate in an online event organized by Euractiv at 14:30CET today. You can follow the event [here](#)

About Syngenta Group

[Syngenta Group](#) is one of the world's leading agriculture innovation companies, with roots going back more than 250 years. Its 48,000 people across more than 100 countries strive to transform agriculture through breakthrough products and technologies that play a vital role in enabling the food chain to feed the world safely, sustainably and with respect for our planet. Swiss headquartered and Chinese-owned, the Group draws strength from its four business units – [Syngenta Crop Protection](#) headquartered in Switzerland, Syngenta Seeds headquartered in the United States, [ADAMA](#) headquartered in Israel, and Syngenta Group China – that provide industry-leading ways to serve customers everywhere.

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