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KWS KASHMIR takes the lead on the grain corn market

Einbeck-based seed company KWS traditionally holds a pole position on the European silage corn market in the FAO 240 maturity group. The highly competitive grain corn market is usually dominated by a handful of the industry’s “big players”. With KWS KASHMIR, the seed breeder has now caught up with the competition: Sales of over 230,000 units for the upcoming sowing season in 2021 have made the grain corn variety a top seller within a very short space of time.

Competition is at its fiercest in the FAO 300 late maturity group, to which KWS KASHMIR also belongs. It is all the more gratifying that we have been able to advance so quickly and successfully with this new variety and the large number of units sold,” says Nicolás Wielandt, Head of the Corn Business Unit at KWS. This achievement is the result of many years of intensive breeding work, and the outcome is impressive: KWS KASHMIR had already been able to gain a relevant market share in Romania, the country with the largest grain corn cultivation area in the EU, when it was first sowed in 2019. Following this successful introduction in Southeastern Europe, KWS KASHMIR then quickly climbed to take third place among the so-called newcomers in Europe in the 2020 sowing season.

The East and Southeast European countries are feeling the effects of climate change particularly strongly. Droughts and weather fluctuations pose a challenge to agriculture and corn cultivation. “KWS has taken a holistic approach to this task,” adds Dr. Andreas Groß, Corn Product Manager at KWS. “With strains such as KWS KASHMIR, we for one thing offer our special Plus4Grain varieties for the high-yield range under optimal growing conditions, while at the same time also supporting farmers with varieties that provide improved drought tolerance under the ClimaControl3 label.” These drought-tolerant grain corn varieties, which are less susceptible to the impacts of drought stress than conventional varieties, come from a research and breeding program specifically designed for this purpose. The substantiated findings of official trials and practical field cultivation in a wide variety of agricultural regions over several years confirm these properties.

With the KWS KASHMIR (FAO 380) grain corn variety, KWS corn breeders have succeeded in achieving a real surge in yields. This is the prelude to a long series of absolutely first-class grain corn varieties that KWS is currently launching onto the markets. KWS INTELIGENS (FAO 420) had already upgraded the slightly later market segment when it was introduced in 2020. KWS HYPOLITO (FAO 350) is the next new variety of a somewhat earlier stage of maturity about to be launched, while further high-performance hybrids are already pending EU approval. They perfectly complement KWS KASHMIR in other maturity ranges – above all for the more stress-prone growing regions in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Dr. Groß: “With further top approvals in Europe, we are expecting KWS to take the leap into the uppermost ranks of the competition with new, high-performance grain corn varieties.”

About KWS*

KWS is one of the world's leading plant breeding companies. In the fiscal year 2019/2020, more than 5,700 employees in 70 countries generated net sales of EUR 1.3 billion. A company with a tradition of family ownership, KWS has operated independently for more than 160 years. It focuses on plant breeding and the production and sale of seed for corn, sugarbeet, cereals, rapeseed, sunflowers and vegetables. KWS uses leading-edge plant breeding methods to increase farmers' yields and to improve resistance to diseases, pests and abiotic stress. To that end, the company invested more than EUR 200 million last fiscal year in research and development.

*All indications excluding the results from the companies accounted for using the equity method AGRELIANT GENETICS LLC, AGRELIANT GENETICS INC. and KENFENG – KWS SEEDS CO., LTD.

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