



Culiacán, 18 March 2024

## KWS inaugurates new R&D facility in Navolato, Mexico

**On Wednesday 13 March, seed specialist KWS officially opened their new breeding station in Sinaloa, Mexico. There, the company will carry out breeding for tomato and pepper as well as screening activities for cucumber, melon and watermelon. Since its entry into the long-term growth market for vegetable seeds in 2019, KWS has been building a global network of sites to expand its breeding and sales activities across new regions.**

“At KWS Vegetables Mexico, our goal is to provide high quality vegetable seeds for the Mexican market”, Alberto Gonzalez Acuña, National Sales Manager KWS Vegetables Mexico, says. “The new breeding station in Navolato enables us to develop competitive varieties which offer solutions for the main challenges faced by local farmers and strengthen our presence in the market.”

Approximately 70 guests attended the inauguration, which was opened with a presentation by Alberto Gonzalez Acuña. He was followed by Peter Hofmann, Executive Board Member, Simon Walter, Business Unit Head Vegetables, and Coert Engels, Global Head of Breeding Vegetables. Lastly, Francisco Perez Lopez, Tomato Breeder, and Aurelio Bautista, Pepper Breeder, informed the guests about their breeding programs and Victor Zefra, Farm Manager, gave a virtual tour of the new station.

KWS, based in the city of Culiacán has been active in Mexico since 2020 and already has a commercial portfolio for tomato seeds in place. Sinaloa, which is located on the west coast, is one of the nation’s most important areas for vegetables and other crops. The new facility in the municipality of Navolato covers 10,3 hectares and features warehouses, offices, a large area for open field production, as well as greenhouses covering an area of 4,500 m<sup>2</sup> – a number which is supposed to grow by another 5.000 m<sup>2</sup> in the coming years. In parallel with construction, KWS has assembled a team of approximately 45 employees, including experienced breeders, farming experts and seasonal workers.

“The new station will serve as the central hub of our breeding activities for the Mexican vegetable market”, Ailton Ribeiro, Head of Breeding Latin America at KWS Vegetables, explains. “The focus will lie on developing innovative tomato and pepper varieties – two crops of high relevance both for Mexican agriculture and our company.”

### **Background: New business unit for vegetable seeds**

KWS is one of the world’s leading plant breeding companies. With a history of more than 165 years in the seed industry, the company focuses on plant breeding and the production and sale of seeds for corn, sugarbeet, cereals, rapeseed and sunflower. In 2019, the company announced its entry into the long-term growth market for vegetable seeds, based on a greenfield approach which entails organic growth, supplemented by suitable acquisitions and the sales of licensed-in varieties.

This included the acquisition of the Dutch vegetable breeding company Pop Vriend Seeds, a very important player in spinach and beans breeding. In addition, KWS acquired the Italian vegetable seed company Geneplanta S.r.l. (now: KWS Vegetables Italia), a specialist in breeding, production and sales of tomato varieties, in March 2021. In parallel, KWS has been concentrating on staffing the new business division as well as on launching its own breeding activities in Brazil, Spain, Turkey, Italy, The Netherlands and Mexico.

### **About KWS**

KWS is one of the world's leading plant breeding companies. Over 5,000 employees\* in more than 70 countries generated net sales of around \$1,94 billion in the fiscal year 2022/2023. A company with a tradition of family ownership, KWS has operated independently for 165 years. It focuses on plant breeding and the production and sale of seed for corn, sugarbeet, cereals, vegetables, oilseed rape and sunflower. KWS uses leading-edge plant breeding methods to continuously improve yield for farmers and plants' resistance to diseases, pests and abiotic stress. To that end, the company invested more than \$320 million last fiscal year in research and development.

\*excl. seasonal workforce

More information: [www.kws.com](http://www.kws.com). Follow us on X (Twitter) at [https://twitter.com/KWS\\_Group](https://twitter.com/KWS_Group).

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