

Joint News Release

BASF and Syngenta join forces with Arisa to address labor standards in the vegetable seeds sector in India

- **Four-year collaboration between multinational companies BASF and Syngenta with NGO Arisa aims to address minimum wage compliance and child labor issues in the vegetable seed sector**
- **28 villages and approximately 500 suppliers in the Indian states of Maharashtra and Karnataka to benefit**

The Netherlands / United States, February 22, 2022 – BASF, Syngenta, and Arisa joined hands in a multistakeholder collaboration called *Wage Improvements in Seed Hybrids* (WISH). WISH will address child labor issues and strive for minimum wage compliance in the vegetable seed sector in India.

The four-year project, cofounded with a grant from the Dutch Enterprise Agency (RVO), consists of two phases: In the first phase, WISH will research whether and where payments are still below minimum wages and/or child labor and the violation of other labor rights occur. This data will be independently collected by two India-based organizations, Glocal Research and MV Foundation, and used by them suggest modes of action to address these challenges. In the second phase, WISH will implement strategies that address the root causes of gaps in the minimum wages and child labor regulations in the vegetable seeds sector.

Various industry reports from Fair Labor Association (FLA) and Arisa indicate that the agriculture sector in India faces several critical and systemic issues related to human and labor rights. Current wages in the sector are often lower than the region's statutory minimum wage, and although child labor has been greatly reduced in the past few years, it remains an ongoing challenge within the agricultural sector.

“In this project, Arisa will use its expertise, knowledge, and network to address labor rights violations in the vegetable seed sector. Due to COVID-19, the issues motivating this project have become even more urgent: the number of children working has increased in the last two years, as schools were closed and families lost income,” says Sandra Claassen, the Director of Arisa.

BASF’s vegetable seeds business started in 2009 an initiative towards a sustainable seed supply in India, which is a successful effort to eliminate child labor. “We achieved this by raising awareness among our seed suppliers to adopt best practices for adhering to a zero tolerance towards child labor, evaluating and monitoring our suppliers as well as promoting school attendance to prevent child labor”, says Rob Huijten, Country Head Netherlands, and board member of BASF’s vegetable seed business. In this next step, BASF will -together with its partners- actively accompany and support this transformation of the entire Indian vegetable seed sector. “We are proud to work together with Syngenta and Arisa to address this complex situation that still affects thousands of families in India,” says Rob Huijten.

“Syngenta has a history of being a positive force for establishing fair labor practices across the world, improving conditions for field workers and addressing challenges like child labor, fair wages, health and safety,” says Jason Allarding, Head of Health, Safety & Environment, Sustainability and Risk Management, Syngenta Seeds. “We understand that meaningful outcomes can best be achieved through collective action from various stakeholders. Through this collaboration, we aim to bring partners together to build a roadmap for wage progression across the vegetable seeds sector.”

About Arisa

Arisa is an independent non-governmental human rights organization that has been working since 1976 to defend human rights in South Asia. Arisa does this by advocacy towards policymakers and companies, research, critical dialogue, and social awareness of human rights violations, including issues in global supply chains. Arisa works closely with local partners and organizations in South Asia, the Netherlands, and other countries. Arisa first published a report

about labor rights issues in the seed sector in 2007 and has since published 10 more reports on the issue. www.arisa.nl.

About BASF's Agricultural Solutions division

With a rapidly growing population, the world is increasingly dependent on our ability to develop and maintain sustainable agriculture and healthy environments. Working with farmers, agricultural professionals, pest management experts and others, it is our role to help make this possible. That's why we invest in a strong R&D pipeline and broad portfolio, including seeds and traits, chemical and biological crop protection, soil management, plant health, pest control and digital farming. With expert teams in the lab, field, office and in production, we connect innovative thinking and down-to-earth action to create real-world ideas that work – for farmers, society, and the planet. In 2020, our division generated sales of €7.7 billion. For more information, please visit www.agriculture.basf.com or any of our social media channels.

About Syngenta

Syngenta is one of the world's leading agriculture companies. Our ambition is to help safely feed the world while taking care of the planet. We aim to improve the sustainability, quality and safety of agriculture with world-class science and innovative crop solutions. Our technologies enable millions of farmers around the world to make better use of limited agricultural resources. With 28,000 people in more than 90 countries we are working to transform how crops are grown. Through partnerships, collaboration and The Good Growth Plan we are committed to improving farm productivity, rescuing land from degradation, enhancing biodiversity and revitalizing rural communities. To learn more, visit www.syngenta.com and www.goodgrowthplan.com. Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Syngenta and www.twitter.com/SyngentaUS.

Media Relations Arisa

Lisanne Beijen

Phone: +61 476 012 362

Email: lb@arisa.nl

www.arisa.nl

Media Relations BASF

Úlia de Domènech

Phone: +31614608815

Email: ulia.dedomenech@

vegetableseeds.basf.com

www.nunhems.com

Media Relations Syngenta

Jason Sparks

Phone: 224-760-8403

Email:

jason.sparks@syngenta.com

www.syngenta.com