



Better Life Storypool – Toolbox Food Chain Partnership
January 2016

FAQ Food Chain Partnership

What is Bayer's Food Chain Partnership about?

The Food Chain Partnership initiative was launched in 2005. It is an innovative business model developed by Bayer in which growers, traders, processors and retailers work together according to sustainable agricultural principles. The Food Chain Partnership aims to implement best agricultural practices to meet customer requirements regarding food quality, food safety and traceability.

The projects focus on more than 50 different crops, mainly fruit and vegetables. In the various Food Chain Partnership Projects, Bayer offers customized, integrated solutions based on high-quality seeds, effective chemical and biological crop protection products, and complementary services and expertise in environmental protection, efficiency and safety. These integrated crop solutions are backed by proactive stewardship measures in order to ensure product integrity, the protection of people, and environmental preservation.

How big is the international Food Chain Partnership team and how does it support farmers on site?

There are about 70 Bayer Food Chain Managers who work together with farmers in 30 countries around the world: from Spain and Greece in Europe, China, India and Australia in the Asian Pacific area to projects in Africa such as Morocco and South Africa or Latin-American projects in Brazil, Colombia and Guatemala for example. The Food Chain Managers work on-site with farmers to give them hands-on advice as to how to implement integrated crop solutions, enabling greater biodiversity or innovative water management practices for instance. Additionally, they assist farmers in complying with residue regulations in the import countries and fulfilling quality standards and customer requirements. At the same time, the Food Chain Partnership projects have raised awareness of hygienic and environmental issues and given farmers a new sense of self-esteem and extended market access.

Who benefits most from Bayer's Food Chain Partnership?

The Food Chain Partnership benefits not only a single partner but rather all food chain partners involved safety, quality, yield and traceability, that is growers and traders as well as processors and retailers. Bayer supports all of these partners from seed to shelf, where the benefits are most pronounced. Resulting in a broader, more sustained variety of safe, healthy, and affordable fruit and vegetables all year-round, Bayer's numerous Food Chain Partnerships ultimately benefit consumers. The common goal of all the Food Chain Partnership projects is to improve yields and harvest high-quality products, helping to increase productivity and efficiency based on sustainable agricultural principles.





Why does a company like Bayer, an expert in crop protection products, support an initiative that fosters sustainable practices?

Sustainability is an integral part of the company's business strategies along the entire value chain – in order to create value through innovation for customers, the company and its employees worldwide. Bayer supports the principles of sustainable agriculture with the aim of overcoming challenges such as population growth, the growing demand for food, feed and renewable raw materials, limited natural resources and climate change. Bayer believes that safeguarding global nutrition demands a holistic approach that balances economic interests with social and environmental responsibility.

Did Bayer initiate the Food Chain Partnership business model simply to sell more crop protection products?

Being committed to the principles of Sustainable Agriculture, Bayer strives to balance economic growth with ecological and corporate social responsibility. The Food Chain Partnership builds on this commitment. By implementing integrated crop solutions on the farms, the farmers are able to reduce crop protection applications by up to ten percent in some cases. This leads to reduced environmental impact and complies with the company's set sustainability standards.

Why does the Food Chain Partnership business model have such a strong focus on fruit and vegetables?

The Food Chain Partnership initiative started in 2005 mainly as a reaction to public concerns about food safety, especially residues in fruit and vegetables. At this time the industry was called upon to address the need for greater food security, with consumers placing increasing importance on products that are both sustainably produced and traceable all the way back to the producer. That's why the initial focus was on fruit and vegetables. But this successful model was recently expanded to include field crops such as oilseed rape, wheat and rice.

Is the Bayer support within Food Chain Partnership restricted to any countries?

No it is not restricted. The Food Chain Partnership initiative benefits all members of the food value chain in more than 30 countries worldwide and is still growing. From Latin America to Europe to Asia and Africa, Food Chain Partnerships are of long-term benefit to the participating farms and communities worldwide.

What are the main topics the several Food Chain Partnership projects are focused on?

The Food Chain Partnership focuses primarily on sustainability, more specifically the implementation of sustainable agricultural practices on a global scale. This is achieved by introducing innovative integrated crop solutions and proactive stewardship measures to farms of all sizes worldwide. As only 30 % of agricultural production comes from large scale enterprises, while 50% of crops are produced by small-holders, supporting small farms remains a very important issue for the Food Chain Partnership initiative. Additionally, encouraging biodiversity, such as blossom stripes or bee care programs, as well as social responsibility, are vital components of the Food Chain Partnership's holistic approach.





What differentiates the Food Chain Partnership business model from other projects in the market?

The Food Chain Partnership is the only business model of its kind in terms of size, scale and the holistic nature of its approach.

What about MRL and secondary standards: Are they part of the Food Chain Partnership's holistic approach?

Bayer supports importers and exporters by helping growers meet quality standards for trade, including advice on compliance with maximum residue levels (MRLs), enabling them access to a global market. The European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) latest Annual Report on Pesticide Residues contains findings from tests carried out in 2013 on nearly 81,000 samples— and found that overall 97.4 % of these food products were within the maximum residue levels of pesticides permitted in the EU. This is a very high compliance rate and reinforces the notion that food in Europe is amongst the safest in the world.

Setting individual private retailer standards (secondary standards, individually defined lower MRLs), which simply ban the use of certain pesticides, restrict the use to specific products or limit the number of active ingredients, is not an appropriate means of ensuring sustainable production methods and high quality produce. These actions do not support good agricultural principles. The limited usage of certain plant protection products without the ability to rotate the application of active substances will eventually lead to resistance and higher usage of products – exactly the opposite of the desired outcome! In addition, individual stronger standards are undermining the confidence in the existing science-based European approval process. Nevertheless, we work closely together with different partners of the value chain to support the individually defined standards in their programs.

What is BayG.A.P and how does it fit with the Food Chain Partnership initiative?

BayG.A.P. is a training tool that enables farmers to comply with quality standards and international certification schemes. Local and global certification systems make sure producers meet international standards and follow sustainable growing practices, e.g. GlobalG.A.P.. A challenge for broad implementation remains: many smallholder farmers, especially those in developing countries, lack expertise in good agricultural practices and need support and advice in crop growing during the season. GlobalG.A.P. has therefore developed a number of local assessment schemes, called localg.a.p. to serve as an entry level criteria on the path to gradual recognition. In a collaboration with GLOBALG.A.P. Bayer is currently customizing its service program BayG.A.P. to the requirements of the new localg.a.p. standard.

The BayG.A.P. service program consists of three main pillars: intensive group training, individualized crop advice and Farm Assurance with localg.a.p.. Participating farmers benefit from certified high-quality produce that they can sell at higher prices and thus improve farm income, while traders and retailers benefit from consistent high product quality, safety and traceability.

How do Food Chain Partnership projects benefit consumers?

Consumers are increasingly concerned with environmental, social, and economic topics. So the message of the Food Chain Partnership is simple: consumers can be sure the food they are buying has been produced in a sustainable manner. The Food Chain Partnership ensures that across the value chain, partners can collaborate to safeguard a high-quality, diverse, and healthy food supply, thereby ensuring the well-being of future generations..

