

### **New Seed Treatment Patent:**

#### **Becker Underwood Granted Exclusive Marketing Rights For Patented New Seed Treatment Technology**

Plant Bioscience Limited (PBL) of Norwich, United Kingdom, and Becker Underwood of Ames, Iowa, a developer, marketer and producer of bioagronomic products for agriculture, have announced the signing of an agreement granting Becker Underwood exclusive global marketing rights to patented new seed treatment technology. The technology provides a radical new approach to protecting major food crops from pest attack, according to officials of both organizations.

The new pest control method was developed by Drs. Michael Roberts, Nigel Paul, Jane Taylor, Patricia Croft and Jason Moore of Lancaster University, Lancaster, United Kingdom, and their collaborator Patricia Croft of Stockbridge Technology Centre. The technology uses a natural plant compound that “primes” the plant’s natural defense mechanisms so they are deployed more effectively when challenged by a pest.

Field tests of the new technology in a number of important agricultural crops have shown a significant reduction in pest damage as well as increased crop yields, notes Eda Reinot, head of research and development for Becker Underwood. When applied as a seed treatment, this new technology appears to result in long-lasting protection following germination. Additional field tests are currently in progress.

“The use of this natural plant compound will offer farmers an environmentally sustainable approach to crop protection,” says Dr. Peter Innes, Becker Underwood chief executive officer. Becker Underwood will incorporate the technology into the company’s products, and the agreement also allows Becker Underwood to establish licensing relationships with additional partners in applying the technology as widely as possible.

“The combination of Becker Underwood’s expertise and market position as an established supplier of seed treatments will allow the far-reaching potential of this natural-product technology to be quickly realized,” said Dr. Jan Chojecki, PBL’s managing director. “Becker Underwood was quick to move into an extensive testing program which then led to a commercial license, and we are delighted Lancaster University’s first-class science is being taken forward with such a committed partner.”

“We are extremely pleased about the addition of this new technology to the Becker Underwood product line,” said Reinot. “The potential for significant yield improvement due to the lessening of plant damage caused by pests in each of the crops in which the technology has been tested is very exciting.”

“We’re delighted to announce this license agreement with PBL and look forward to the introduction of products utilizing the technology as soon as possible,” added Dr. Innes. “This is one more step in Becker Underwood’s planned strategy for increasing our marketplace presence and performance in the development of environmentally friendly and natural-product options that can improve the profit potential for crop farmers around the world.”

**Becker Underwood, Inc.**, founded in 1982, is an international developer of bio-agronomic and specialty products. In addition to being the leading manufacturer of seed coatings and colorants, the company is also the leading global producer of inoculants, beneficial nematodes, and a wide range of agricultural and horticultural products. To learn more about its products, visit the company's Web site at [www.BeckerUnderwood.com](http://www.BeckerUnderwood.com).

**PBL** (Plant Bioscience Limited, [www.pbltechnology.com](http://www.pbltechnology.com)) is an IP management and technology development company, investing in emerging technology across the life sciences. The Company is jointly and equally owned by The John Innes Centre and The Sainsbury Laboratory and the [BBSRC](#) (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council). PBL brings together innovative technologies from public research sources worldwide, invests in building intellectual property protection and technology development, and commercializes through licensing and, where appropriate, new venture formation.

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