Cooperating with the whole value chain – ensuring exceptional quality for table grapes

The Spanish Table Grapes Project
Increasing consumer confidence in Spanish table grapes

How it all started

The producer Frutas Esther is a very market-oriented organisation, keen to prove the transparency and traceability of the production process. Through close cooperation between Frutas Esther’s field technicians and Bayer CropScience’s specialists it was possible to develop a grapes protection programme for the entire season. This programme ensured that the harvested table grapes stayed in the best possible condition by practising sustainable agriculture.

What was the aim

The key to improve consumer confidence in Spanish table grapes was to address the issue of sustainability and introduce the principle of traceability – so that each bunch of grapes could be seamlessly traced from field to fork. But sustainability and traceability are only possible if an effective partnership is established along the whole food chain. Therefore Andretta, Bayer CropScience and Frutas Esther, one of the key Spanish producers and exporters of table grapes and other fruit, decided to implement a food chain partnership to guarantee the quality of Spanish table grapes. The plan was to develop a grape protection programme that optimised the use of agrochemicals based on sustainable agriculture by using the outstanding expertise of the different food chain partners.

Who got involved

The producer Frutas Esther is a very market-oriented organisation, keen to prove the transparency and traceability of the production process. Through close cooperation between Frutas Esther’s field technicians and Bayer CropScience’s specialists it was possible to develop a grapes protection programme for the entire season. This programme ensured that the harvested table grapes stayed in the best possible condition by practising sustainable agriculture.

The trader Andretta has to cope with consumer sensibility towards the appearance and perceived healthy qualities of fresh food. That is why it is not just tangible quality criteria like taste and appearance of fruit that are important, but also consumer confidence that the produce is safe and produced according to the highest environmental standards.

The input provider Bayer CropScience wanted to prove that a concept based on a food chain partnership, innovative sustainable crop solutions and traceability could achieve the best possible grape quality.
Integrated crop management from field to fork

The confidence-building solution

As the programme developed, it soon became apparent that the task was more complex than had been expected. After all, the partners wanted to establish a programme that was integrated into the entire grape production process and did not just involve crop protection products. This involved adapting the programme to suit the local soil and weather conditions in Murcia and adding physical barriers as well as pheromones in line with the “Region of Murcia Clean Farming” Programme. However, thanks to the very professional technical assistance provided by Frutas Esther and regular consultations with specialists from Bayer CropScience, it was possible to develop the best solution for this crop.

Grapes protection programme: The treatment programme, a crucial factor in the entire process, was not only adapted to the specific table grape growing area, it was also made compatible with all the integrated control programmes and alternative crop protection systems.

Follow-up: During the campaign, visits by Bayer CropScience specialists to, and conversations with, Frutas Esther technicians proved crucial in adjusting the initial programme to the real conditions encountered and dealing with difficulties met on the way.

Quality control: Analyses were carried out at several stages of the growth process. During harvesting several analyses of residues were made to carry out regular checks on the quality of the production.

What was achieved?

Proof of the first-class quality of export table grapes through the Bayer CropScience food chain partnership programme

“Sustainability + Traceability + Quality = Added value for every partner in the food chain.”

Jesus Gomez, Managing Director, Frutas Esther, S.A.
Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of the need for healthy nutrition. Food chain partnerships help to supply consumers with high-quality fresh produce, which forms the basis of a healthy diet. But such partnerships can only succeed if they involve every player in the food chain – from the farmer and processor to the exporter or importer and retailer. Bayer CropScience has the global experience and cutting-edge expertise to create a successful partnership at every level.

For more information contact:

**Food Chain Team Spain**
Bayer CropScience, S.L.
Poligono Industrial El Pla, 30
46290 – Alcácer (Valencia)

Phone (reception): +34 (0)96 1965 300
Fax (reception): +34 (0)96 1965 345

**Global Food Chain Team**
Bayer CropScience Aktiengesellschaft
PM-MBE-Food Chain Management
Alfred-Nobel-Str. 50
40789 Monheim am Rhein
Germany

Phone: +49 (0)2173 38 5184
Fax: +49 (0)2173 38 3253
Email: foodchainpartnership@bayercropscience.com
Internet: http://www.foodchainpartnership.bayercropscience.com

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**Frutas Esther**
Ctra. de la Estación, km. 2
30550 – Abaran (Murcia)

Phone: +34 (0)968 770 000
Fax: +34 (0)968 770 879
Internet: http://www.frutasesther.es