

DuPont acquires microbiome company, plans release of 'natural' pest solutions

DuPont is buying a California-based microbiome discovery company, Taxon Biosciences Inc., for development of biological crop products, a move that the chemical and crop company hopes will give it an edge in an emerging agricultural market.

DuPont said the 15-year-old company brings a “broad intellectual property estate” that will contribute to new seed treatments, and foliar and soil applications for row crops, fruits and vegetables.

Wilmington, Delaware-based DuPont’s move is the latest in a string of acquisitions and expansions by the world’s largest agrichemical companies to harness microbes, plant extracts and other natural substances to try to better control pests and improve plant health, quality and yield.

They have long been the subject of exploration and analyses by scientists, both for use in human and plant health. New technologies have sped up the process.

Industry leaders have said biological-based product offerings have the potential to dramatically increase the number of bushels farmers coax from their crops. Future improvements are forecast not just for corn and beans, but wheat, canola, cotton and fruits and vegetables.

The move coincides with concerns from consumers and environmentalists, and increased regulatory rigor, over the effectiveness and efficiency of some genetically engineered crops and agricultural chemicals that many U.S. farmers rely on. The more natural biological solutions face fewer concerns and regulatory hurdles, according to agricultural experts.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: DuPont buying microbiome firm, seeks edge in emerging crop products