



“This fungicide is a game-changer in the US”

The first-ever hybrid fungicide was recently approved by the EPA in the United States. It has been used successfully in 14 countries around the world outside of the USA already.

STK Bio-ag Technologies is now rolling out this product in America with the help of its partner in that country, Summit Agro USA. “REGEV ‘hybrid’ fungicide is a significant game-changer,” says Julia Levy, STK Bio-ag Technologies’ Director of Business Development. “STK has been successful in U.S. markets for several years with its botanical-based biofungicide TIMOREX GOLD. Now comes REGEV, which is a ‘bridge’ for many growers who have never tried a product with biological content. That’s because REGEV is a ‘pre-mix’, so it is easy for the grower to use in exactly the same way as his current chemical fungicide. Nevertheless with REGEV the grower gets the added benefits of reduced chemical inputs, lower chemical residues of his fruit and vegetables, a dual mode of action providing outstanding management resistance, and much higher yields.”



“We’re very enthusiastic about introducing REGEV™ to the USA,” says Julia Levy. “We’ve been doing field trials there for more than three years now. The results are excellent. Growers there are really enthusiastic about the product, as are we to work with them.”

“The three main markets in agricultural pesticides are the EU, the USA, and Brazil,” says Yair Nativ, VP Sales VP at STK Bio-ag Technologies. “Getting REGEV registered in the US is a huge step for us. Brazil will follow in, I believe, two to three years. And then it’s Europe’s turn. It will take a long time to register in the EU due to all the regulations.”

Eight years of work

“We’ve been working on REGEV™ for the last eight years. The question now is how to pass this experience to growers as quickly as possible. We consider this product to be the bridge to the bio-pesticide future.” However, the vast majority of growers, including those in the fruit and vegetable sector, have never used or even tried biological products.

“REGEV™ is a much easier product to use, understand, and see its benefits,” says Yair. It’s a premix, hybrid product. Farmers can use exactly the same way they’re using their current chemical fungicide. But, now they have the benefits of lower residue on their products, improved resistance management, and higher yields. All that makes the growers more competitive.

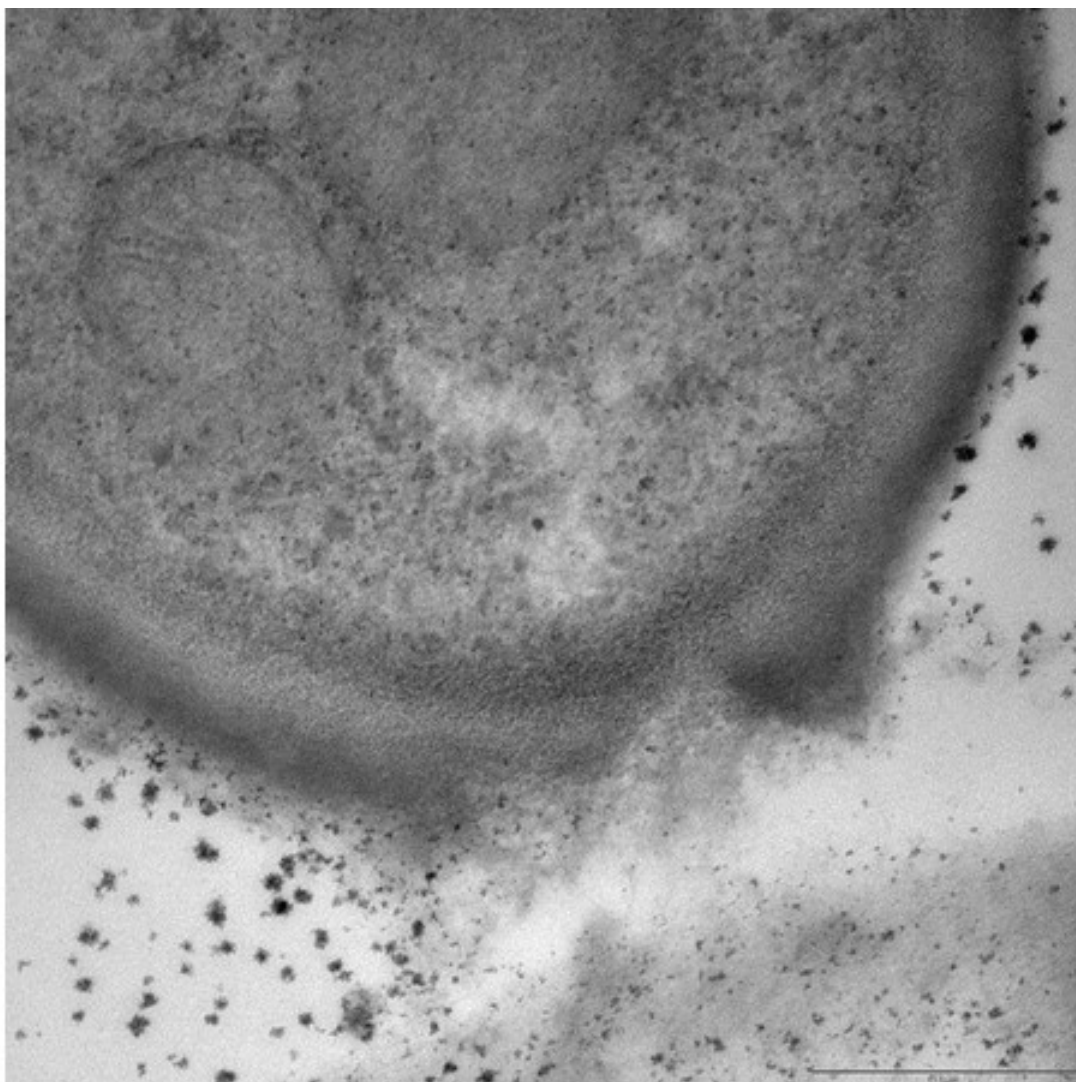


“It’s been a challenge to introduce this product to the US. That’s because of the country’s size. That’s why we’ve sought a partnership with Summit Agro USA. We consider them to be an excellent partner. They also usually offer something new to their clients.”

Summit Agro USA is an innovative company with its own distribution team. It has a presence across the United States, says the Sales VP. “Together, we are going to continue introducing the product to customers in that country. COVID-19 is, however, hampering events such as conferences at the moment.”

Challenge

One of the main challenges currently facing STK Bio-ag Technologies in America is getting REGEV registered in California. Nativ expects that will happen within a year. “California’s a huge agricultural state within the US. So, that’s essential. We also need to introduce the product to as many growers as possible, in the shortest time possible.”



But, why would fruit and vegetable growers switch to REGEV™? “REGEV™ has two main advantages,” says Yair. “Firstly, the product contains two active ingredients. One is chemical, the other natural. That means there’s only one MRL on the fruit or vegetables. Especially since people want to eat foods with fewer and fewer pesticide residues, REGEV™ is currently particularly suited to crops that are eaten fresh, such as tomatoes and grapes.”

He considers that the second advantage is allowing the growers to access a dual mode of action with a very low probability for the development of resistance. Indeed, using only one active ingredient could lead to the build-up of resistance. “So, we are allowing the farmers to use two modes of action.”

This product can, however, not be used for organic groups. But, it can contribute to growing more sustainable, conventional products. “We believe that in order to create sustainable agriculture, you need to lower the rate of application of chemicals. And bio-solutions is one of the best ways to do so and remain sustainable.”

Very effective product

REGEV™ is very effective in doing this. “That makes growers more willing to learn more about it,” adds Julia. “Its biological component provides improved health and stress resistance. That might lead farmers to move to a fully natural product sometime in the future.”

Yair says they’ve certainly noticed that growers are also becoming increasingly environmentally-conscious. “They supply whatever the public demands. It’s all a question of price and what the customer wants. Growers are very open to change. They just need to understand what’s needed.”

When it comes to Asia, REGEV™ is, so far, registered only in the Philippines. “The Asian market is slower to adapt to bio-pesticides. But we do believe we will get there. It will just take a little longer.”

STK Bio-ag Technologies plans to introduce another hybrid product to the market within the next three to four years. “In the long term, we have other products coming to the market too. We believe that in ten to 20 years, biological fungicides will be far more widely accepted. But, until then, we think hybrid products will lead the way,” concludes Yair.

For more information:

Yair Nativ

STK

Email: yair@stk-ag.com

www.stk-ag.com

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Author: [Sander Bruins Slot](#)

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