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News Release

Bayer and Fair Planet renew commitment to improve access to seeds in Ethiopia

Five-year renewal aims to improve food and nutrition security, provide economic opportunities for smallholder farmers in Ethiopia

Monheim / Bergschenhoek, April 16, 2019 – Bayer has renewed its commitment to the “Bridging the Seed Gap” project for five years. The project, developed by the non-profit organization [Fair Planet](#), facilitates smallholder farmers’ access to seeds of high-quality vegetable varieties suited to local growing conditions. Additional training on how to use these seeds sustainably and with minimal changes to traditional production practices helps the farmers improve their incomes based on significantly better harvests. The increase in income opens the door for better education and a better future for the next generation.

The collaboration between Bayer and Fair Planet started in 2015, and has supported the creation of three Vegetable Excellence Centers, where a range of seed varieties most suitable to Ethiopian conditions were identified and evaluated. Under the renewed agreement, Bayer will provide Fair Planet, free of charge, with high-quality hybrid vegetable seed varieties and agronomic knowledge from its recently acquired De Ruiter and Seminis vegetable seed businesses.

“As the leading company in the agriculture sector, we support small-scale farming all over the world,” explains VK Kishore, Head of Vegetable Seeds Breeding and Testing for the Europe, Middle East, and African region at Bayer. “Smallholder farmers can have an exponential impact in eradicating hunger. Through the ‘Bridging the Seed Gap’ project, smallholder farmers can help their communities so that the more rural areas can thrive. Kudos to Fair Planet for everything they have achieved so far in Ethiopia.”

Dr. Shoshan Haran, Founder and Operations Manager of Fair Planet: “Fair Planet is excited about the continuation of the partnership with Bayer and the addition of De Ruiter and Seminis seed varieties to our open-aid seed platform. The results of our joint program are astounding: we identified vegetable varieties that can increase farmers’ crop productivity five-fold, while improving produce quality and marketability.”

Together with Haramaya University and the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture, Fair Planet developed a unique extension model and trains hundreds of farmers through a “train-the-trainer” concept every year in how to improve farm productivity and profitability. According to Fair Planet, to date more than 50,000 smallholder farmers' households in the project regions have produced more food due to better seeds and improved farming practices. This has led to improved food security and healthier nutrition for their families. Farmers are gradually shifting from subsistence farming to an agribusiness mode of operation, which contributes to sustainable economic growth for them and their families, benefitting more than 250,000 people.

About Bayer

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of health care and nutrition. Its products and services are designed to benefit people by supporting efforts to overcome the major challenges presented by a growing and aging global population. At the same time, the Group aims to increase its earning power and create value through innovation and growth. Bayer is committed to the principles of sustainable development, and the Bayer brand stands for trust, reliability and quality throughout the world. In fiscal 2018, the Group employed around 117,000 people and had sales of 39.6 billion euros. Capital expenditures amounted to 2.6 billion euros, R&D expenses to 5.2 billion euros. For more information, go to www.bayer.com.

About Fair Planet

Fair Planet is an Israeli non-profit organization whose mission is to increase food and nutrition security and provide new economic opportunities for smallholder farmers in developing countries. This is accomplished by making high-quality vegetable varieties that are suitable for local conditions, accessible and affordable to smallholder farmers.

Fair Planet is supported by Bayer, Limagrain, Syngenta, Enza Zaden, BASF, East-West Seed, the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO-FDOV), KKL-JNF, Mashav, Netafim and JoyTech. For more information, go to www.fairplanetseeds.org.

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