



## Media Release

**EMBARGO 4<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**CEREALS EVENT 2011**

### **Syngenta's big solution for Beet Cyst Nematode**

Emphasising the threat of Beet Cyst Nematode (BCN), Syngenta (Stand B210) will be displaying a giant version of the *Heterodera schachtii* nematode, a pest which can devastate sugar beet crop yields.

As there is currently no chemical control, Syngenta's answer to Beet Cyst Nematode is their sugar beet variety, SENTINEL, which, in its first year of commercial sales, accounts for 80% of BCN-tolerant seed drilled this year. Although this market segment, formed just two years ago, currently makes up 4% of the overall sugar beet seed market in the UK, the industry consensus is that this segment is likely to at least double for the 2012 Campaign. This is for two reasons: BCN infestations continue to become more apparent and growers realise that there is at last a workable and affordable solution.

SENTINEL has proved to be popular with growers because it has a high yield potential in both infected and uninfected conditions. The variety is therefore able to effectively address the patchy nature of most BCN infestations seen in fields. (SENTINEL: four-year mean yield of 105.8 adjusted tonnes per hectare. BBRO/NIAB Recommended List 2012).

As well as being BCN-tolerant and *Rhizomania*-resistant, SENTINEL also has good resistance to bolting, making it suitable for early drilling, and excellent establishment, with a four-year mean of 94 %. (BBRO/NIAB Recommended List 2012)

The last detailed research into BCN infestation was carried out between 1977-1992 (*Source: Annals of Applied Biology, February 1992*). At that time it was concluded 30% of fields in the surveyed area were infested.

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“BCN is the hidden enemy,” said Richard Powell, Syngenta’s UK sugar beet crop group manager. “We can be certain that since the last survey, land which has continued to be used for sugar beet or other susceptible crops, such as oilseed rape, or had many of the weeds which host BCN, will still be considerably infected. Since the renewed interest in this problem and the launch of our SENTINEL variety we’ve seen more sampling of soils with some interesting results.”

“Addressing this pest will be a key issue for many growers in the 2012 Campaign. In a lot of cases, the “burnt out” patches in beet crops, often associated with bearded roots and seen in dry weather last summer, were initially blamed on *Rhizomania*, but turned out to be caused by BCN. The beauty of SENTINEL is that it addresses both of these threats with good yields in non-infested and infested patches. Added to this, the seed is attractively priced. We have every confidence in the variety’s ability and we believe that growers have everything to gain and nothing to lose.”

While patches of higher infestation can cause up to 85% or more yield loss, Syngenta trials in the UK have found that a ‘subclinical’ level of infestation can actually cause a loss of yield of 10-20% without showing any visible symptoms. So growers concerned about low yields may be well advised to test for BCN, even if there has been no obvious crop damage.

“If growers in historically susceptible areas find that their sugar beet yields have plateaued below about 55 tonnes per hectare, even though they have improved management, used new seed treatments and tried *Rhizomania*-resistant varieties, the chances are that they might have a nematode infestation robbing them of yield. In which instance they will fare better with SENTINEL,” concluded Richard Powell.

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**Notes for Editor:**

Syngenta is one of the world's leading companies with more than 26,000 employees in over 90 countries dedicated to our purpose: Bringing plant potential to life. Through world-class science, global reach and commitment to our customers we help to increase crop productivity, protect the environment and improve health and quality of life. For more information about us please go to [www.syngenta.com](http://www.syngenta.com).

Other Syngenta sugar beet varieties on show at the CEREALS Event include: AIMANTA, the early-lifting *Rhizomania*-tolerant variety, and SY MUSE, a very high yielding *Rhizomania*-tolerant variety which is a candidate for Recommendation next January.

Completing Syngenta's sugar beet line-up at the Event are the crop protection products: CRUISER FORCE SB, the number one seed treatment for sugar beet in the UK, preferred for effectiveness of control and extended persistence. SPYRALE, giving longer lasting control of all the major foliar diseases. PRIORI XTRA, a fungicide which gives excellent control of the major leaf diseases of sugar beet and is particularly recommended where rust is the major problem.

For further information on Syngenta's complete sugar beet product portfolio please visit: [www.syngenta-crop.co.uk/products/?crop+Sugar%20Beet](http://www.syngenta-crop.co.uk/products/?crop+Sugar%20Beet)