



Science For A Better Life

A strong alliance
generating significant
added value
for all partners



food chain partnership



How it all started

Potatoes are an important crop in Turkey, where they are grown on around 125,000 hectares of land, mainly in Ödemiş, Eskişehir, Konya, Afyon, and Sivas. Of this total, industrial potato production accounts for around 15,000 hectares, a figure that is increasing year by year. Potatoes, which are planted between February and May and harvested between July and September, are mainly grown for domestic consumption or export to countries of the Middle East, mainly Syria, Iraq, and Iran.

The main demands on Turkish potato growers are high yields and quality, pest-free produce, crop safety, and compliance with the MRLs of the domestic customers and export countries. Efficient crop management, efficacy, and traceability, compliance with these MRLs, and the use of registered crop protection products were therefore essential elements of this Food Chain Partnership project. Özgörkey and Bayer CropScience Turkey started this collaboration in 2013, with the aim of tackling these issues and contributing to sustainable potato production.

What we aimed to achieve

This Food Chain Partnership demonstrated to the potato growers the importance and value of engaging in a strong alliance to achieve high quality and safe produce, increase marketable yields, and thus generate more income for the farmers. Besides high quality and disease-free produce, another important goal has been to ensure compliance with MRLs.



Who is involved

The Özgörkey Group operates in six different business sectors, holding a leading position in Turkey. Its frozen foods division, Özgörkey Gıda, is currently the country's largest frozen food manufacturer in terms of capacity and also Turkey's leading frozen food company in export, private label, and food service channels. The frozen finger potatoes represent a large share of Özgörkey Gıda's business. The drivers for Özgörkey's frozen finger potato business are high quality, disease-free produce, and crop safety through a sustainable farming model.

More than 250 contracted farmers supply their potatoes via traders to Özgörkey. Özgörkey provides input such as fertilizer, crop protection products, and seeds in order to obtain high quality and low-residue tubers, as well as to retain its customers.

Since 2013, **Bayer CropScience Turkey** has been providing technical service, been involved in joint training programs, joint demo trials, and joint marketing activities, and has set up a weather station to ensure optimum pest control for the contracted potato growers.



The integrated solution

Bayer CropScience and Özgörkey began this Food Chain Partnership project by organizing a demo trial in which the spray program was implemented in the Ödemiş production area. Bayer's customized crop protection program comprised Gaucho® as a seed treatment against Agriotes and Colorado potato beetles; Serenade®, a biological fungicide, to tackle root disease; Antracol®, Consento®, and Infinito® to deal with late blight and *Alternaria fungi*; Sencor® to control weeds; and last but not least, Movento® to combat sucking pests.

The technical solutions provided included a training program for Özgörkey agronomists and their contracted farmers, stewardship activities, and field support. These training measures and technical service were organized for farmers at three locations to improve sustainable field practices, such as application techniques to increase marketability, crop quality,

and safety. Another major component of the project was shelf-life extension. In order to improve shelf life, post-harvest storage management was implemented to decrease storage loss at all stages of the food value chain. Furthermore, the project included quality tests at frying level to assess and then improve quality parameters, such as potato color (shiny yellow), in order to meet the requirements of markets and consumers.



What we achieved

The most immediate outcome of the project was a 22% increase in profits for the partners involved in the demonstration program in the Ödemiş production area. This was achieved thanks to the excellent Bayer crop protection program that helped in achieving better quality, attractive color, and homogenous tubers. This satisfied the customers' demand and increased the potatoes' marketability. The feedback received so far from local markets has been very positive and Özgörkey Gıda has profited from the higher quality and safety of its Feast frozen finger potatoes.

Moreover, the project has also delivered a positive contribution in terms of capacity building for the farmers, sharing know-how, and coaching.

Next steps

This Food Chain Partnership is not only an ongoing project, but is also being extended to include peas, tomatoes, and artichokes. In addition, Özgörkey is expanding its processing capacity in the Afyon area by establishing a new factory. Bayer CropScience and Özgörkey aim to be perceived by farmers, traders, processors, retailers, and consumers as strong partners who are working together towards sustainable potato production.



left:
Osman Bozkurt
Agricultural Manager of Özgörkey

right:
Mustafa Dere
Marmara Regional Manager
of Bayer CropScience Turkey

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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.



Bayer CropScience

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