



# Cooperating with **local** authorities – working for **high-quality** vegetable production



## The Chinese Vegetable Project



# The challenge of consumers' expectations

## *How it all started*

Besides working to improve living standards, the Chinese government now attaches more importance to food safety. Safe food should be traceable to the start of the food chain. Especially in China, where poorly educated Chinese farmers, insufficient crop protection capabilities and small-scale farms are a reality, and good- and bad-quality agrochemical products are intermingled in the market, it is critical to deploy high-quality vegetable production techniques.

In China, exported vegetables comply with stringent production standards and satisfy MRL limits. However, most vegetable production is for the domestic market and the media often report on excessive agrochemical residues in vegetables. But consumers are concerned about what they are eating and the Chinese government is doing its best to increase the quality of domestic vegetables by reducing agrochemical residues. Therefore, what Bayer CropScience has been doing in the main vegetable production areas is meeting the requirements of both the market and the government.

## *Who got involved*

**Vegetable growers:** In combination with the Bayer CropScience China AgriCare project, we designed economical and effective technical solutions for high-quality vegetable production through integrated crop management. They aim to increase farmers' incomes and enhance the reputations of those who can produce high-quality vegetables.

**Authorities and associations:** Through cooperating with local agriculture bureaus and science and technology associations, we have researched the main pests and diseases and developed suitable technical solutions adapted to local conditions. In cooperation with the above partners, we have conducted farmers' training courses to pass on these technical solutions and advanced products. Meanwhile, we are cooperating with the Chinese authorities to develop a suitable vegetable traceability system.

## *What we aimed to achieve*

In the main vegetable production areas we are aiming, through cooperation with authorities at different levels, to bring advanced vegetable technical solutions to vegetable growers and to help them increase yields and improve the quality of vegetables so they can meet the customers' demand for safe vegetables.



In China, Bayer CropScience aims at increasing vegetable quality and meeting the Chinese consumers' demand for high-quality vegetables. With the development of specific crop solutions, we share our know-how and expertise across the whole food chain.

**Bayer CropScience:** We are dedicated to introducing the most advanced products into the Chinese market, guiding vegetable growers in the scientific use of agrochemicals and increasing their awareness of high-quality vegetable production via training and in-field guidance. Our goal is to increase vegetable quality and yields, increase farmers' income and meet the Chinese consumers' demand for safe vegetables.



## The confidence-building solution

From November to May, vegetable production in Northern China relies on greenhouses. The main crop varieties are cucumbers, tomatoes and peppers and eggplants. The warm and humid conditions in greenhouses mean that diseases and pests are more serious than normal. By combining high effectiveness, low residue levels, low toxicity and environmentally friendly products with good agriculture practices, we can not only increase yields and improve vegetable quality, but also ensure high-quality vegetable production.

Experts from Bayer CropScience cooperated with local agriculture bureaus to establish practical solutions for producing vegetables to these high standards:

**Technical solutions:** We conducted trials on high-quality vegetable production, researched typical diseases and pests and developed suitable technical solutions.

**Communication and guidance:** In cooperation with the authorities, we produced a technical advice card to remind vegetable growers of spraying intervals, dose rates and recommended products.

We staged training courses for farmers and introduced the safe vegetable concept and vegetable production technology. We visited vegetable greenhouses, listened to the farmers' expectations and worries, and helped them in solving their problems. We printed a High-Quality Vegetable Production Handbook and illustrated the technology to vegetable growers.

Shandong Shouguang is one of the most important vegetable production bases in China. In this area alone, Bayer CropScience trained over 30,000 vegetable growers in 2006. Through Bayer CropScience's technical solutions, the average farmer's income in Shouguang increased by 10%.

In 2007, Bayer CropScience is extending this successful experience from Shouguang to Chengde, a major vegetable supply base for Beijing. Besides implementing a similar proposal to Shouguang, Bayer CropScience is cooperating with Chengde Agriculture Bureau to perfect the vegetable traceability system, build up a well-known high-quality brand and enhance Chengde's reputation for high-quality vegetables.

### *What we achieved*

- **Higher farmers' incomes**
- **Lower agrochemical residues**
- **Better quality vegetables**





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.

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