



By Mike Knowles

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Syngenta posts strong first-half results



Global demand for crop protection products and seeds set to continue growing, says group CEO Mike Mack

As the global agriculture sector comes under greater pressure to boost yields and meet the demands of a rapidly expanding global population, crop protection specialist and seed developer Syngenta says it is confident its business will continue to grow.

The company today published strong half-year **results**, revealing its overall group sales increased by 20 per cent to US\$7.3bn, boosted by a 21 per cent rise in crop protection sales to US\$5.5bn and a 15 per cent upturn in seed sales to US\$1.7bn.

Mike Mack | Syngenta

"Rising commodity prices and their impact on the cost of food have heightened awareness of the vital role of agriculture," commented Syngenta chief executive officer Mike Mack (pictured left). "The challenge of increasing global food supply by 50 per cent over the next 20 years means that not only must yield improvements continue but their pace must accelerate."

According to Mr Mack, Syngenta's performance in the first half of 2008 illustrated the role that technology is already playing in helping the agriculture sector to raise productivity. "Strong growth across all regions demonstrates the readiness of growers worldwide to invest more in their crops," he said

In its seed division, Syngenta reported "rapid growth" in sales of vegetable seeds, while across all of its businesses, Mr Mack said the company was intensifying its focus on emerging markets "in order to bring the benefits of

modern agricultural technology to countries where the need for productivity gains is most pronounced".