



Working together
to ensure **food safety**
and **quality**
production



The Mexican Vegetable Project



How it all began

Among the most important vegetables grown in the Mexican state of Guanajuato, the central region of the country known as El Bajío, are broccoli and cauliflower. Over 90 % of the produce is exported, above all to the USA. The recent publication of the U.S. Food Safety Modernization Act has led to stricter safety controls on primary producers and packers of food. This has obliged all participants in the value chain to invest more resources in programmes to reduce the infestation risk at all stages from the field and the processing and packing facilities to the distribution and sales outlets.

MarBran, one of Mexico's largest exporters of frozen broccoli, cauliflower and carrots, has been using Bayer CropScience products to control the main pests affecting broccoli, cauliflower and other vegetables for many years. But as MarBran was increasingly concerned about food safety issues during the production process, Bayer CropScience was invited to present its Food Chain Partnership concept in 2010.

What we aim to achieve

The main goal of this Food Chain Partnership project has been to collaborate in the consolidation of an important Mexican plan, "System-Product-Broccoli", to establish El Bajío as a premium broccoli production zone in global terms. The idea is that the El Bajío zone should become the safest and most reliable production area of broccoli in the world. MarBran also sees the plan as a means of increasing sales of frozen broccoli, above all to the USA. The third and final goal is to support the correct use of Bayer CropScience's crop protection products as sustainable solutions for pest control and management and ensure strict compliance with the relevant norms and Maximum Residue Limits.

One of the main concerns of the Association members is that their farmers obtain the SRCR (System for the Reduction of Contamination Risks) certification, but the main focus is on attaining certifications such as SQF (Safe Quality Food) 2000.



Who is involved

Founded in 1962 with just one farm and one processing plant, **MarBran** is now a world-class company and a leading member of Mexico's Association of Processors and Exporters of Fruit and Vegetables. The Association represents the most important companies in broccoli and cauliflower production who are responsible for more than 80 % of Mexico's broccoli and cauliflower exports. MarBran exports 93 % of its total produce to a variety of countries, though the USA is its main market. MarBran's mission includes aiming to offer its customers the best possible combination of quality, service and price, while fulfilling its obligations to the community and environment in a responsible way.

Besides supplying crop protection products, **Bayer Crop-Science Mexico** sees the Food Chain Partnership programme as an ideal tool for supporting vegetable farmers by giving advice and practical training in good agricultural practices and integrated pest management. The goal is to maximise food safety and quality standards as well as to optimise production costs.



The integrated solution

The main pests affecting broccoli and cauliflower in this region of Mexico are the diamond back moth (*Plutella xilostella*), other larvae and aphids (*Brevicoryne brassicae*). The Bayer CropScience products Movento®, Belt® and Confidor® have been used to combat these pests. MarBran's specialists had already designed a pest and disease control programme, but as the Food Chain Partnership project developed it became clear that there were further opportunities to introduce technical innovations to the programme. The solutions developed came from specialists working for the Technical Committee of Freezing Plants (COTECO), universities, government research centres, seed producers and Bayer CropScience.

The training courses run for vegetable farmers, suppliers and MarBran's technical staff focused on the safe use and management of crop protection products while those for processing plant personnel dealt with the control of rodents and urban pests.





What we have achieved

The project is still continuing, but already it is clear that all those involved are benefiting from a more responsible and optimised use of crop protection products to control pests and diseases, the application of good agricultural practices, and compliance with food safety requirements.

The next steps

The project continues with the ongoing aim of establishing El Bajío as a premium broccoli production region through the Mexican “System-Product-Broccoli” plan. Moreover, the project is intended to include other members of the Association besides MarBran.

“MarBran and Bayer CropScience are both interested in applying good agricultural practices to ensure food safety, and to fulfil the requirements of purchasers and consumers the world over.”



left:
Miguel Ángel Baltazar
Sales Representative
of Bayer CropScience Mexico

right:
Fermín Vaca Delgado
Operations' Manager
of MarBran S. A. de C. V.



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.



MarBran S. A. de C. V.
Boulevard San Roque 1540
Col. 18 de Agosto
C.P. 36590
Irapuato, Guanajuato
Mexico
Phone: +52 462 626-8626
Fax: +52 462 627-6474
Internet: www.marbran.com
Email: fvaca@marbran.com.mx

For more information contact:

Food Chain Partnership Team Mexico
José Gildardo Cuevas
Bayer de Mexico, S.A. de C.V.
Bayer CropScience
Marketing
Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra 259
Col. Ampl. Granada
C.P. 11520
Mexico, D. F.

Phone: +52 55 5 72 83 000 Ext. 2782
Cell: +52 55 4363 3975
Fax: +52 55 5262 9531
Email: jose.cuevas@bayer.com
Internet: <http://www.bayer.com.mx>

Bayer CropScience AG
Food Chain Management
Alfred-Nobel-Str. 50
40789 Monheim
Germany

Phone: +49 2173 38 5834
Fax: +49 2173 38 3383
Email: foodchainpartnership@bayer.com
Internet: www.foodchainpartnership.com

