

Press Release



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KWS Vegetables sells trading business of Pop Vriend Vegetable Seeds to Zasco

The two Dutch seed companies KWS Vegetables B.V., and Zasco B.V. have agreed that the Pop Vriend Vegetable Seeds trading business will be transferred to Zasco in an asset deal. This business area involves sourcing, producing and supplying a broad range of vegetable seeds that are well-adapted for use in Africa, Middle East and Central Asia, predominantly high-quality open pollinated (OP) seeds.

Pop Vriend Vegetable Seeds is a main player in this segment in these regions and offers a broad portfolio of open-pollinated seeds, including Broccoli, Eggplant, Lettuce and Okra amongst others. Sales are in the mid-single-digit million range.

"In expanding our vegetable seed business, we are focusing on developing and selling high-performing varieties for nine vegetables, namely tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, melons, watermelons, spinach, beans, red beet and chard with a geographical focus on Southern Europe, Asia and Latin America. This is why we decided to sell the Pop Vriend Vegetable Seeds trading business", Paul Degreef, Head of the Business Unit KWS Vegetables, explains. "We are delighted that Zasco as a strong market player will now use its expertise, network and market position to further develop the OP seed business."

"The products of Pop Vriend Vegetable Seeds are an appropriate addition to assortment and customer base in Africa and Middle East. Also the coating and canning line is a welcome addition to our service activities, says Gert-Jan de Groot, Director of Zasco. Zasco was founded in 1994 by Laurens Zwaan. The company offers a full range of OP vegetable seeds, field crops and fertilizers with a clear focus on the Mena and African countries.

The acquisition was completed on 28-09-2022. The employees of Pop Vriend Vegetable Seeds will continue to work within the Pop Vriend and KWS Vegetables organization.

About KWS

KWS is one of the world's leading plant breeding companies. Over 5,000 employees* in more than 70 countries generated net sales of around €1.5 billion in fiscal 2021/2022. A company with a tradition of family ownership, KWS has operated independently for 165 years. It focuses on plant breeding and the production and sale of seed for corn, sugarbeet, cereals, vegetables, rapeseed and sunflowers. KWS uses leading-edge plant breeding methods to continuously improve yield for farmers and plants' resistance to diseases, pests and abiotic stress. To that end, the company invested more than €285 million last fiscal year in research and development.

KWS is developing its own vegetable seed business through a greenfield approach with organic growth, supplemented by suitable acquisitions and the sales of licensed-in varieties. In the summer of 2019, KWS announced its entry into the long-term growth market for vegetable seeds. This move included the acquisition of Dutch vegetable breeding company Pop Vriend Seeds, the world market leader in spinach seed.

*excl. seasonal workforce

More information about Zasco B.V. can be found at www.zasco.nl

Contact:

Jacco Kaarsemaker
Marketing Communications Manager
Phone +31 228 591 462
Mobile +31 6 550 00 605
jkaarsemaker@popvriendseeds.nl

Sina Barnkothe
Expert Corporate Communications
Phone: +49 5561 311-1783
sina.barnkothe@kws.com

www.popvriendvegetableseeds.com
www.popvriendseeds.com
www.kws.com