

Excerpts from an interview with

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- **With the Global Biocontrol Summit – 2nd edition coming up, can you give us a brief synopsis of what you will be covering in your session/presentation/ or part of the panel discussion?**

I'll be presenting BIOVEGEN, the Spanish Technology Platform for Plant Biotechnology, which is a public-private partnership, led by the business sector, which brings together entities from the agrifood sector with an interest in R&D in applied Plant Biology. Our objective is to improve the agrifood sector competitiveness through the entities, connecting technological offer & demand and generating business opportunities through public-private collaboration. BIOVEGEN develops collaborations and R&D projects, identifying technological challenges of the sector. The Platform also serves as an interface between the science community, business sector and administration. To do so, BIOVEGEN offers a wide range of tools to facilitate R&D activities to its members. Currently, the Platform has 142 members: 121 companies and 21 research centres, as well as the support of the Spanish Ministry of Science & Innovation, which co-finances the initiative. Furthermore, BIOVEGEN is open to partnerships with other entities within the sector.

- **What challenges do you think the market is currently facing?**

The main challenge the agrifood sector is facing is the need to increase plant production improving crop yields but also ensuring agriculture/environment sustainability

- **Where do you think the most commercial opportunities for development lie within the market?**

The whole sector is facing a technological revolution that provides access to multiple commercial opportunities, from farmers (everything related to biological material: new plant breeding techniques, CRISPR, etc.) to auxiliary industry (everything that has to be agricultural inputs: biostimulants & biopesticides, new/alternative sources of protein, circular economy, microalgae, etc.)
- **What excites you most about the direction that the industry is heading?**

The increasing interest of the sector in R&D&I issues, as well as the utilization of plant biotechnology in order to improve the competitiveness of the sector.
- **Covid – 19 has no doubt had some impact on the industry, what is your opinion should the industry be doing to get back on the road to recovery?**

Regarding the Covid-19 situation, I personally believe the food production sector has proved, once again, its importance to ensure the production and availability of products for the population. Thus, I think the industry should maintain its leadership in the future (also after the pandemic)
- **What key trends do you think will see in the global biocontrol market going into 2021 – 2022?**
  - Increased crop yields
  - Efficiency & sustainability
- **Which disruptive technologies do you think will make a massive impact on the industry over the next few years?**

I'd like to highlight CRISPR
- **What sort of companies are you most looking forward to hearing from?**

Agrobiotech companies.
- **Finally, what are you hoping to take away from the forum?**

Interesting contacts in order to boost potential collaborations.