

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?**

We cover one aspect that is: How the new technologies are discovered and how they are transferred to the industry. We have a “method” to screen the flora finding native plants producing biological agrochemicals. And the method involves a selection of plant extracts in the lab. At the end we discover plants producing agrochemicals like herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides to be applied in the crop protection industry.

We cover later the topics of How to transfer a new technology to the industry. How is it done? After we discover a new natural product, we do many different experiments to show the spectrum of the plant extract to work as herbicide for instance. With the studies of a particular extract at herbicide level we obtain a pdf file that we share to the industry. That file is the tool to approach the industry. We transferred to two global companies two prototypes working in this direction.

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

One important challenge is the efficacy of natural products. For instance, there are many herbicides but they are difficult to be used because the efficacy is not plant,

always good. Many times, they do not kill the weeds. We have one that kills the plant, but we have to work on it because we use a high concentration that the market cannot tolerate. We have progressed a lot in the direction to improve the efficacy using new natural surfactants. At the end we will work with a natural herbicide that will kill the weeds at low concentration.

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

Natural products have good chances in the USA, Europe and Latin America. Organic crop protection will have a good chance in these regions.

● **What excites you most about the direction that the industry is heading?**

I love the idea of having an organic global production. I really dream of a global scenario where food and the environment is part of the equation in crop production. The future is supported by the new developments we are doing at this time globally in different companies.

● **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?**

The industry is recovering. The new opportunities rise up as a source of new promises of better business. And that scenario is exceptional for the organic-biocontrol business. The world is moving to produce commodities naturally. With the time, what is today organic food, and a special market will be a commodity. That will help the global population not only because of the quality of food, but also the environmental protection when we use natural chemicals in the crop protection.

● **What key trends do you think will see in the global biocontrol market going into 2021 – 2022?**

The competence in biocontrol in the crop protection industry was triggered. Just 10 years ago we never thought to see in the market the natural products we have now ready to be used. The prices are still higher but with time the whole production will be safer, natural and environmentally friendly. One key is the competence in the sector.

● **Which disruptive technologies do you think will make a massive impact on the industry over the next few years?**

One of the most important needs in the crop protection industry is the herbicide. We need herbicides for crop/vegetable production. For sure a good herbicide will bring a disruptive technology as glyphosate did in the past. The biocontrol applied in the crop protection industry is a disruptive technology.

- **What sort of companies are you most looking forward to hearing from?**
I am interested in botanical production. I would like to listen to companies producing natural extracts for the crop protection industry.

- **Finally, what are you hoping to take away from the forum?**
The forum is an update of the industry. We have the chance to be close to those players who are doing the industry to grow. It is a good time to think with others where the industry is going. It is great!