



Photo by John Clewley

Advanta Seeds Names New CEO

One of India's major seed companies, Advanta Seeds, a part of UPL Group, has announced that Mr. Bhupen Dubey will replace outgoing CEO Claudio Torres.

Advanta Seeds is the first Indian multinational seed company with a global footprint. The company specialises in field crops and vegetable seeds. Advanta Seeds markets its products under Advanta, Pacific Seeds and Alta Seeds global brands and regional brands - Golden Seeds for vegetables in India, and Vereda for soybeans for Brazil.

Advanta Seeds has operations in more than 25 countries and sales in over 60 countries around the world.

UPL began as a small agri-chemicals company 40 years ago and has developed into a global producer

of crop protection products, intermediates, and specialty chemicals. UPL is the largest manufacturer of agrichemicals in India and claims a customer base in 123 countries. The UPL Group has a full agri-input value chain from seeds to post-harvest chemicals. The combined market capitalisation of the three main UPL companies (Advanta Seeds, UPL and UEI) is worth approximately \$2.5 billion. UPL acquired Advanta in 2006.

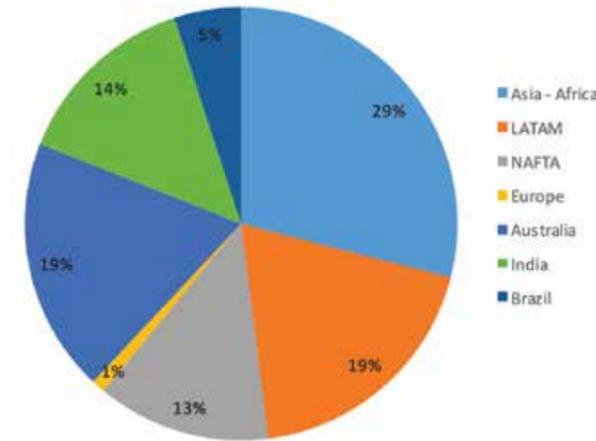
Bhupen Dubey talked about his 20-year rise to the top at UPL and Advanta, a recent interview with Dr. NK Dadlani, Director of Technical Affairs, and John Clewley, Managing Editor.

"I joined Hoechst as a scientist, straight after my Master's degree, I discovered that I had a flair for communicating and presenting in a simple, clear way, which is good

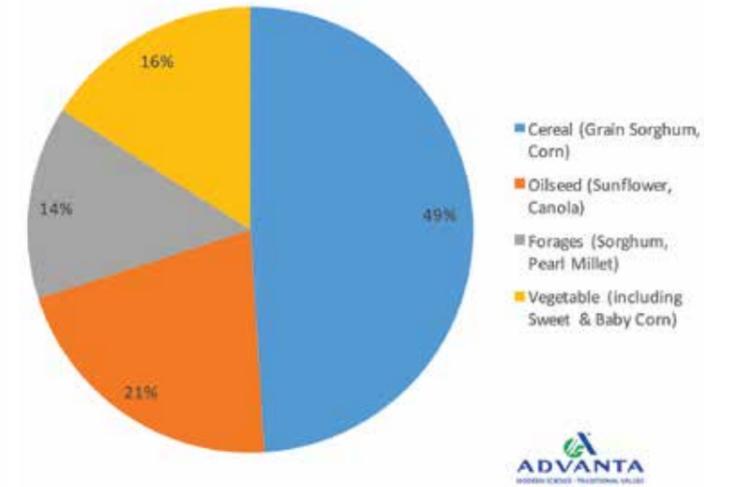
for marketing," he said. After this, Mr. Dubey went on to work with Agrevo, Aventis and Bayer Crop Science, during a period of intense M&A activity. "With every merger, I moved up the value chain."

In 2003, UPL contacted him and asked him to join the company to help it develop a successful domestic business, as it had done internationally. "At that time, the company was not a major player," revealed Bhupen. "I was 42 and needed a challenge. I jumped in, but it was difficult - it was a big culture shock." But his straightforward managerial style helped him manage many business projects for UPL and Advanta India. He stated that he accepted the CEO role at Advanta Seeds because it was a 'global position' that required someone with his experience, drive and ability to work on integrated projects. 🐦

Advanta Seeds Revenue by Region 2015



Advanta Seeds Revenue by Crop 2015



Is the Seed Industry Important?

"Before I accepted the CEO position, I asked the board whether they were committed to growing the seed business, which they said they were." He added that agriculture is critically important in Asia, unlike in many developed economies, and that India has much untapped potential - it has a large percentage of arable land (48%) and over 30 climate zones, all of which are distinct advantages.

He pointed out that the trade gap between China and India presents an opportunity for farmers; moreover, he sees seeds as a catalyst for other growth. "I spend time or stayed with farming families for a week or more, so I base my ideas on the reality on the ground. I know the science and I know the social background." He commented that when the economies of Japan, China

and South Korea are taken out of the equation, the rest of the economies in Asia are agriculture-based with farmers operating at different levels. "So, we have to help them migrate their production upwards".

He explained how an expert had told them that Golden Seeds should change its product seed mix from 75% OP and 25% hybrid to boost the company's bottom line, but he said that in the case of green peas, growers (and consumers) preferred the sweetness of OP peas to hybrid varieties, and also liked 10 seeds per pod and higher germination rates. So Golden Seeds worked on germination rates for OP green peas and, after one year, was selling 1,500 tons of OP green pea seeds. He said that he believes that saved seed is also important for farmers as well. 🐦

Are Price Controls for Seeds Worth It?

"The legal wrangling over the price of cotton seed in various states in India is problematic", says Dubey. "I'm not really supporting the government's position to fix the price of seeds. I think as a general principle, the government sector should have no place in fixing the price of anything. Having said that, we have to understand the reality that the agricultural sector is really important in a country like India, so having one or two corporates controlling this market is unacceptable." 🐦

- Bhupen Dubey**
 Education: Masters in Agricultural Science, Diploma in Sales & Marketing
 • Holds positions in Indian Society of Naturalists, Society of Pesticides and the Indian Society of Weed Science
 • Recently appointed Director of the Agriculture Skill Council of India
 • Member of NVA India Business Council (World Economic Forum)
 • Director of Crop Life India and a member of management committee for ABLE AG
 • Advanta Seeds statistics displayed above: 2 x pie charts on revenue and crop breakdown (2015)