

Visit of the ThermoSem seed treatment facility of UFA Samen in Lyssach

www.thermosem.ch/ (German and French)

Some informations by the company:

Under the "ThermoSem" brand, Fenaco (the owner of UFA Samen) put the first steam system for ecological seed treatment of cereals into operation in 2021. The technology combats diseases on the seed and completely dispenses with chemical-synthetic active ingredients.

Growing organic market

Currently, 19'500 tons of cereal seed are chemically and synthetically dressed in Switzerland every year. Around 2600 tons remain untreated for the organic and Integrated production (IP-Suisse) market or are treated using organic methods. With an annual increase of 5 to 10 percent, the organic market is growing significantly. In addition, the federal government's Plant Protection Action Plan promotes the reduction of chemically synthesized active ingredients. The prospects for the new organic treatment are therefore good. "With this range, we are satisfying Swiss consumers' strong demand for sustainably produced food. The organic market will continue to grow, also thanks to our new organic seed treatment with steam," says Jürg Jost, head of UFA Samen.

Seed treatment is an important step in grain production. It protects germinating crops by killing diseases that are present on the grain. In Switzerland, seed grain is mainly treated against snow mould, smut, dwarf smut and blight, until now mainly with synthetic chemicals. The new seed plant in Lyssach (Kanton of Berne), on the other hand, uses the principle of thermal seed disinfection by means of steam pasteurization and thus completely dispenses with chemical-synthetic agents. The plant can treat up to 15 tons of seed per hour. The treated seed is free of superficial fungal spores and dust. The application is extremely safe for farmers and protects the soil and the environment. At the same time, the treatment is very effective.

Growing organic market

Currently, 19,500 tons of cereal seed are chemically and synthetically dressed in Switzerland every year. Around 2,600 tons remain untreated for the organic and IP-Suisse market or are treated using organic methods. With an annual increase of 10 percent, the organic market is growing significantly. In addition, the federal government's Plant Protection Action Plan promotes the reduction of chemically synthesized active ingredients. The prospects for the new organic treatment are therefore good. "With this range, we are satisfying Swiss consumers' strong demand for sustainably produced food. The organic market will continue to grow, also thanks to our new organic seed treatment with steam," says Jürg Jost.

Award-winning technology

The steam technology was developed by ThermoSeed Global, a subsidiary of the Swedish agricultural cooperative Lantmännen. For this achievement, the cooperative received the European award for cooperative innovation in the field of natural resources and biodiversity on July 4, 2021. Agroscope, the Swiss Federal Research Centre for Agriculture and Fenaco had already confirmed the high effectiveness of the steam treatment in a comprehensive research project.

The website of ThermSeed Global: <https://www.lantmannenbioagri.com/thermoseed/>

How it works: Seed treatment with steam instead of synthetic pesticides

