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Yara invests in Stenon as fertiliser price volatility raises stakes for precision agriculture

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Yara Growth Ventures takes a minority stake in the German soil-sensing startup, backing technology designed to help farmers optimise nitrogen use, manage input costs and improve nutrient efficiency

Yara International, one of the world's leading crop nutrition companies, has made a strategic investment in Stenon, a German agritech startup developing real-time soil nitrogen sensing technology, as fertiliser price volatility and mounting pressure to improve nutrient efficiency sharpen the case for precision agriculture.

The investment was made through Yara Growth Ventures, Yara's venture investment arm, as part of the second close of Stenon's Series B funding round. Financial terms were not disclosed. The round's initial €18 million close earlier in 2026 was led by Dutch impact investor Pymwymic.

The deal brings together a major player in global crop nutrition and a technology company seeking to make soil data more accessible at the field level. For farmers navigating unpredictable input costs and increasingly demanding environmental standards, the ability to measure nutrient availability more accurately could help narrow the gap between fertiliser expenditure

and crop requirements.

Nitrogen management remains a central challenge for agricultural productivity. Applying too much fertiliser can increase production costs and contribute to environmental losses, while insufficient application can constrain crop growth and yields. Decisions based on limited soil information may also fail to account for variations in nutrient availability within individual fields.

Stenon aims to address this challenge through FarmLab, a portable soil-sensing system designed to measure plant-available nitrogen, organic matter, moisture and temperature directly in the field. Its hardware and software combine soil measurements with artificial intelligence to generate localised fertiliser recommendations, allowing farmers and agronomists to make nutrient-management decisions using more immediate field data.

The technology offers an alternative to relying exclusively on conventional soil testing, which can involve laboratory analysis and may not capture changing conditions across a field throughout the growing season. By identifying spatial differences in soil characteristics, real-time sensing can help growers assess where nutrient applications may need to vary.

The investment comes amid continuing uncertainty in global fertiliser markets, where geopolitical tensions, energy costs and disruptions to shipping and supply chains can expose farmers to sudden changes in input prices. Higher fertiliser costs can put pressure on farm margins, particularly where growers have limited flexibility to pass additional expenses on to buyers.

As agriculture faces the dual challenge of maintaining productivity and reducing the environmental footprint of fertiliser use, technologies that connect soil measurements with practical farm decisions are gaining strategic importance. Yara’s investment gives Stenon a new industry partner as it seeks to expand the role of real-time soil intelligence in crop production.

The broader commercial question is whether such tools can demonstrate consistent, measurable returns for farmers. In a market where fertiliser prices can change rapidly, precision technology must prove not only its ability to generate data but also its capacity to translate that information into better nutrient decisions and stronger farm economics.