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KingAgroot strengthens market reach through strategic alliance with Tianhe

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The partnership combines KingAgroot's pesticide innovation capabilities with Tianhe's nationwide distribution network and agricultural advisory services, introducing three herbicide formulations targeting complex weed-management challenges across rice fields, orchards, plantations and non-cultivated land



China's agrochemical industry is witnessing another push towards innovation-led growth and stronger last-mile distribution, as Qingdao KingAgroot Crop Science Group and Guangdong Tianhe Agricultural Materials formalise a strategic partnership aimed at expanding access to advanced herbicide solutions.

The two companies announced their collaboration at a national strategic cooperation and new product launch conference in Hefei, Anhui, themed Clear Cultivation, Fertile Fields; Grain Initiates a New Journey. The event brought together agricultural experts, distribution partners and industry representatives to discuss the growing challenge of herbicide resistance and the need for more effective and sustainable weed-management approaches.

The partnership also marked the launch of three herbicide products – Anchu, Wentianqiang and Zhencaoning – designed to address different weed-control requirements, ranging from post-emergence applications in rice fields to long-duration and rapid-contact non-selective weed management.

The agreement brings together KingAgroot's research and product development capabilities with Tianhe's extensive distribution infrastructure and technical service network. The collaboration is expected to strengthen the commercial reach of newly developed crop protection products while improving growers' access to specialised weed-management solutions.

Innovation meets distribution

Founded in 2009, KingAgroot has built its business around the development of green pesticides and biotechnology-based agricultural solutions. The company has focused on developing proprietary active ingredients and formulations, seeking to reduce dependence on technologies historically dominated by multinational agrochemical companies.

According to ISO nomenclature statistics cited by the company, KingAgroot has contributed 22 per cent of new pesticide varieties introduced globally since 2018. Its contribution rises to approximately 40 per cent within the herbicide segment, positioning the Chinese company among the prominent contributors to herbicide innovation.

Tianhe, meanwhile, brings a sizeable distribution and agricultural services network to the partnership. The company operates more than 100 distribution centres across China and serves over 25,000 retail agricultural input outlets. Its technical service teams work directly with growers, providing crop advisory support and helping translate agricultural technologies into practical field-level solutions.

The strategic agreement is intended to connect these complementary capabilities, allowing KingAgroot's product innovations to reach a wider grower base through Tianhe's established distribution channels.

Cui Yongtao, Deputy General Manager of Tianhe, said the partnership would integrate KingAgroot's innovative products with Tianhe's direct-to-terminal distribution network and professional agricultural technical services. The objective, he noted, is to ensure that more effective crop protection products reach growers directly.

Three products target distinct weed-management challenges
The three products launched at the conference reflect an effort to address increasingly differentiated weed-management requirements. Herbicide resistance, complex weed populations and the need for greater application flexibility are creating demand for solutions that combine broader weed-control efficacy with improved crop compatibility.

Anchu: Targeting resistant weeds in rice cultivation

Designed for post-emergence weed management in paddy fields, Anchu combines flusulfinam, a proprietary HPPD inhibitor developed by KingAgroot, with bentazone.

The formulation is intended to address complex weed populations in rice-growing environments, particularly where resistance is reducing the effectiveness of conventional herbicide programmes. According to the company, it provides control of resistant barnyardgrass, Chinese sprangletop, common crabgrass and other annual grass weeds, while also targeting selected broadleaf weeds and sedges.

KingAgroot highlights the product's compatibility with both indica and japonica rice varieties, alongside a relatively broad application window and flexibility across different field conditions. These characteristics are intended to provide rice growers with additional options for managing mixed weed populations without compromising crop safety when used as directed.

Wentianqiang: Longer-duration control of difficult weeds

Wentianqiang is positioned as a long-lasting, non-selective herbicide built around KingAgroot's patented compound fluchloraminopyr-tefuryl.

The product is designed to address difficult-to-control broadleaf and grass weeds, including resistant species that frequently persist in orchards, plantation areas and non-cultivated land. Its target weed spectrum includes water peanut, Canada goldenrod and bermudagrass, alongside invasive vines and woody species such as Cayratia japonica, Trachelospermum jasminoides and paper mulberry.

The company attributes its performance to bidirectional systemic translocation, which is intended to move the active ingredient through the plant and deliver control extending to the root system. KingAgroot also reports stable efficacy under average daily temperatures of 12–15°C.

Another feature highlighted by the company is the absence of cross-resistance with widely used herbicides such as glyphosate, glufosinate-ammonium and diquat. The product is intended for applications in deep-rooted orchards, between forest rows and in mountain forest wasteland clearance, where persistent weeds can increase labour requirements and complicate land management.

Zhencaoning: Faster contact action for non-selective weed control

Zhencaoning, based on KingAgroot's new PPO inhibitor flufenoximacil, is positioned for rapid-contact, non-selective weed management.

Unlike products primarily marketed around longer-duration systemic control, Zhencaoning is designed to deliver visible weed-control effects shortly after application. The company states that its action can become evident on the day of treatment, offering a faster response than conventional glyphosate- and glufosinate-ammonium-based products.

Its reported control spectrum covers more than 170 common weed species, including difficult targets such as goosegrass (Eleusine indica), nutsedge and common reed. KingAgroot also highlights consistent performance across high- and low-temperature conditions.

The formulation is intended for directed spraying in orchards, economic crops and field crops, as well as weed clearance along field boundaries, ridges, drainage channels and non-cultivated areas. The company further states that the product presents no fumigation risk and does not harm roots or soil when applied according to recommended directions.

Building a broader crop protection portfolio

The launch reflects a broader commercial strategy in China's crop protection market, where product innovation increasingly needs to be supported by distribution reach, technical guidance and reliable access to growers. For KingAgroot, the partnership offers an opportunity to extend the market presence of its proprietary herbicide technologies through an established agricultural distribution network. For Tianhe, the addition of new formulations strengthens its crop protection portfolio and expands the range of solutions it can offer farmers dealing with increasingly complex weed populations.

The success of the collaboration will ultimately depend on how effectively the companies translate product innovation into field-level performance, farmer adoption and sustained commercial demand.

As herbicide resistance continues to complicate weed management across major agricultural systems, the ability to combine differentiated active ingredients with application-specific recommendations and accessible technical support is likely to become an increasingly important competitive factor in the crop protection business.