



## Herbicide resistance crisis targeted by new Oxford tech firm MoA Technology

- *MoA Technology, borne out of Oxford University research, launches to confront the global herbicide resistance crisis*
  - *The Company launches with £6.3m Series A funding round.*

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MoA Technology Limited, the crop protection discovery company, has secured £6.3m (\$8m) Series A round to develop its unique crop protection discovery platforms in a bid to avert the global herbicide resistance crisis.

Farmers across the world are now facing an increasingly difficult challenge: overuse of a small range of herbicides has led to increasing levels of weed resistance. The weeds are winning, and the only way to restore and grow crop yields is to find a new range of clean and effective herbicide options. Similar to the antibiotic resistance crisis affecting healthcare, there have been no major new herbicides introduced to the market with a novel mode of action (the way the herbicide kills the weed) in the last thirty years. This has forced overreliance on a small number of similar products that, in turn, has led to the growth of weed resistance.

Spun out from Oxford University's Plant Sciences Department in 2018, from ground-breaking research by co-founders Professor Liam Dolan FRS, and Dr Clement Champion, MoA Technology was set up to address this challenge. The company has developed its own discovery platform and is focused on the discovery of next generation sustainable herbicides with new modes of action from both natural and synthetic chemistry. MoA Technology has developed three proprietary platforms: MoA GALAXY™, MoA TARGET™ and MoA SELECT™. Each platform is powerful in its own right, but when used in combination, offer the opportunity to revolutionise the herbicide discovery process and critically identify new, effective and environmentally-sustainable herbicides. The platforms are based upon a unique combination of genetics, trait analysis and data analytics.

The funding round into MoA was co-led by Oxford Sciences Innovation, the world's largest university venture fund, and Parkwalk Advisors, the largest EIS growth fund manager focused on university spinouts. Oxford University Innovation, the University's innovation arm, assisted in spinning the company out in 2018.

Liam Dolan, Sherardian Professor of Botany at the Department of Plant Sciences, Oxford University, said:

"In recent years industry has moved from high throughput screening to lower throughput *in-vivo* plant screening but neither method has been successful in uncovering marketable herbicides that have new modes of action. We have redesigned the discovery process in its entirety. Not only do we focus on identifying new potential modes of

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action at the outset, our platform combines *in-vivo* screening with a high throughput capability that we believe is a first in this industry. Early results are extremely promising”.

Hadyn Parry, Chairman at MoA Technology, added:

“Weeds are now a greater threat to crop yields than at any time in recent decades. New solutions are urgently needed. Raising £6m at this stage in the company’s development is a real testament to the strength of the company’s prospects.”

Over the next couple of years, MoA Technology plan to generate several new product candidates to take into development and to create industrial partnerships that can then take these products to market.

**ENDS**

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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