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UK Biostimulant Firm Secures £1 Million Funding

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SugaROx, a UK-based company specialising in precision biostimulants, has secured a £1 million extension to its seed funding, enabling the firm to accelerate field testing of its innovative crop treatments. The extension includes a £400,000 strategic investment from The Mosaic Company, a global fertiliser industry leader, alongside £600,000 from existing UK-based angel investors and sustainable growth-focused funds Future Planet Capital and Regenerate Ventures.

The investment comes at a time when biostimulants are among the fastest-growing sectors in crop inputs, with an estimated compound annual growth rate of 11%. This latest funding round follows a £2.4 million grant awarded to SugaROx by the UK's national innovation agency, Innovate UK, which aims to scale production of the company's first active ingredient, Trehalose-6-Phosphate (T6P).

SugaROx's T6P biostimulant is designed to improve crop yields and resilience. It works by inhibiting SnRK1, an enzyme that signals energy scarcity in plants. Safety tests conducted in early 2024 indicated a promising regulatory outlook for T6P, prompting interest from potential go-to-market partners who have requested samples for field trials.

The company plans to launch its T6P wheat biostimulant in the UK in 2027, followed by entry into the European Union market in 2028. In the meantime, SugaROx has initiated trials in soybean and maize to expand into the United States and Brazil shortly.

Mark Robbins, chief executive officer of SugaROx, said the funding would support the transition from laboratory-scale production to a pilot manufacturing facility. "In response to increasing demand for product samples, we decided to accelerate our manufacturing timeline," he explained. "The Innovate UK grant and additional investment allow us to do that."

Robbins added that the participation of Mosaic as a strategic partner strengthens the company's capacity to scale its operations. "Our existing investors were quick to subscribe to the seed round extension, which we are delighted to complete with Mosaic. We aim to transform the biostimulants industry with science-based solutions, which is only achievable through collaboration with other stakeholders," he said.

Dr Cara Griffiths, chief technical officer and co-founder of SugaROx, highlighted the advantages of the partnership with Mosaic. "Through Mosaic, we gain access to an established network of trial sites, allowing us to validate our first product in the US at scale," she said. "Additionally, Mosaic provides access to TruResponse®, a digital platform to visualise field results, which will be invaluable for our research."

The biostimulant sector is attracting increasing attention from investors due to its potential to improve crop efficiency while supporting sustainable agriculture. SugaROx's approach represents a shift towards precision agriculture, where products are designed to target

specific plant processes, optimising growth and resilience without relying solely on conventional fertilisers.

While regulatory approval and large-scale commercialisation remain critical milestones, SugaROx's recent funding round and strategic partnership signal strong investor confidence in its technology and prospects. Analysts note that the global market for biostimulants is poised for significant growth, driven by the need for more resilient crops and sustainable farming practices.

As the company prepares for broader field trials and eventual market launch, SugaROx continues to focus on innovation and evidence-based results. The partnership with Mosaic is expected to accelerate product validation and facilitate access to data-driven insights, supporting the company's ambition to establish a leading position within the biostimulants industry.

With both domestic and international expansion plans underway, SugaROx's development demonstrates the role of UK-based innovation in addressing the challenges faced by modern agriculture. The company's work reflects a broader trend of integrating biotechnology into crop management, offering the potential to enhance productivity while maintaining environmental sustainability.