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Traditionally, seed treatment was used to control seed and soil-borne diseases and insects. Recently, new generation fungicides and insecticides with strong systemic properties have been commercialized that provide control of early foliar diseases and insect pests, with more favorable environmental and operator safety characteristics.

Although most pesticide formulations are applied by spraying onto crops or weeds, a significant amount of pesticide is applied directly to seeds prior to planting into the soil. The major areas for seed treatment are cereals and vegetables in Europe, using mainly insecticide and fungicide formulations to treat the seeds.

Flowable concentrates for seed treatment (F.S.) are usually applied by pumping the liquid suspension directly onto the seed. The formulations are very similar to suspension concentrates (S.C.) and very often contain similar dispersing agents.

Solvay has developed innovative FS formulations based on tristyrilphenol surfactant technologies.