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## Jesus Saro Boardman

Fagro

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“ I saw an opportunity to become a leading innovator and provider of eco-friendly fertilizers and agricultural inputs. ”

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<b>COUNTRY</b>	Mexico
<b>INDUSTRY</b>	Industrials
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	107
<b>YEAR SELECTED</b>	2012
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://www.fagro.com.mx">www.fagro.com.mx</a>

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## COMPANY SNAPSHOT

What you eat is what you are. Based in rural Ramos Arizpe, Fagro is helping to fuel the agricultural production that will satisfy the growing appetite for organic produce. Founded in 1995, Fagro has long been committed to the development of biologically-based agricultural inputs such as biofertilizers, biofungicides and bioinsecticides. With its portfolio of organic inputs, the company has positioned itself as an expert in navigating regulatory intricacies as well as the many certification agencies that shape the industry landscape. Fagro's products are registered and certified across the world, allowing its clients to tap into hungry export markets.

In Ramos Arizpe, which boasts a population of just under 50,000, Jesús stood out from an early age for his entrepreneurial spirit. At the age of 13, he started breeding and selling rabbits. His operation quickly grew to a monthly production of 500 rabbits, which he sold to restaurants and supermarkets. At the age of 20, he started exporting cilantro to the United States. After graduating with a degree in Agronomic Engineering from Tec de Monterrey in 1979, Jesús joined the Saro family business, a medicine production company. Leveraging his family's business platform, Jesús began selling first aid kits to the local chain of convenience stores. From first aid kits, he developed the concept of 5 x 2 m<sup>2</sup> mini pharmacies under the name of PUREX, which he grew over the next fifteen years into a brand with 90 stores and 150 employees. Soon after selling PUREX to a pharmaceutical wholesaler in 1995, Jesús started to look for other business opportunities.

Jesús had long wondered why more of Mexico's farmers were not exporting to the US market. After more research, he learned that stringent FDA regulations and inspections were effectively shutting out his farmer neighbors. In August 1995, he initiated partnerships with agronomists and professors from the Antonio Narro Agricultural University to begin developing zero-residue agricultural inputs that would help Mexican produce pass FDA inspection. The company gained immediate traction with farmers, and Jesús has slowly bought back shares from his original partners. In 2004, Fagro went a step beyond regulatory compliance by developing expertise in getting organic certification. That same year, the company opened its own research and development center, Biorganix, which partners with local universities to develop biologically-based products for agricultural use. Today, Fagro has over 40 different products to its name sold across nine different countries in Latin America and Spain.

As an integrated R&D and sales company, Fagro is creating jobs along several steps of the value chain, from manufacturing to sales to research. With its long history in the sector, Fagro is well positioned to capitalize on an accelerating worldwide trend, helping Mexico's farmers participate in the rising wave of demand for organic products.

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