

Industrial Products

Streamlining and simplifying IT across the globe

Yara International

By standardizing IT at its fertilizer production plants with Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI, Yara gains newfound flexibility and unlocks greater efficiency.



Lenovo

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Who is Yara International?

Yara International is the world's leading crop nutrition company, growing knowledge to responsibly feed the world and protect the planet. It produces fertilizers used by farmers across the globe to improve the efficiency and sustainability of food production, as well as industrial solutions essential for society.

Headquartered in Oslo, Norway, Yara operates an integrated business model with around 17,000 employees and a presence in more than 60 countries.



Knowledge grows

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The Challenge

With 25 production plants on six continents, keeping operations running smoothly is a constant challenge. Yara relies on a diverse range of manufacturing equipment, operational technology (OT), and IT systems to keep production on track.

As part of its wider digital transformation, Yara has adopted a hybrid cloud strategy. Its central business applications, including SAP, now run on Microsoft Azure. Previously, each plant ran local applications for production site management—such as loading and unloading systems, safety systems, and security camera systems—on a single bare-metal server installed at an on-site data center.

Running these local systems on premises was an important requirement for latency and security reasons. However, each plant used hardware from different infrastructure vendors, complicating support, reducing efficiency, and driving costs. To solve these challenges, the company decided to standardize its on-premises IT platforms, and looked for a vendor to help it to realize the goal.

Making the move to **HCI**

After evaluating its options, Yara selected Lenovo ThinkAgile MX Series—a hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) solution powered by Microsoft Azure Stack HCI that hosts virtualized compute running Windows Server and Linux with software-defined storage in a hybrid cloud environment, combining on-premises infrastructure with Azure cloud services.

Yara worked closely with Lenovo to design and architect the solution, opting to deploy a two-node cluster of Lenovo ThinkAgile MX3520-H appliances at each production plant. To date, the company has implemented the ThinkAgile MX appliances at 15 sites with installation and migration support from Lenovo.

Hardware

Lenovo ThinkAgile MX3520-H Appliance

Software

Microsoft Azure Stack HCI

Services

Lenovo Premier Support
Lenovo Keep Your Drive Service



Peter De Herdt, IT/OT Services Manager at Yara, says: “Lenovo has always been there to support us. We particularly appreciate their efforts to keep our implementation project on track despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We’re now working closely with the team to migrate the remaining production plants to the Azure Stack HCI solution.”



“With Lenovo and Microsoft, we’re consolidating and modernizing the technology deployed across our distributed data centers at production plants all around the world, gaining new efficiencies.”

Peter De Herdt

IT/OT Services Manager, Yara International

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Results

By moving its production plants to HCI solutions, Yara can provide high availability and resilient storage for local applications cost-effectively.

With Lenovo ThinkAgile MX Series as its standard global platform, Yara will streamline both physical and virtual environments. On the infrastructure side, the company will migrate a complex non-standardized environment running on multiple hypervisors and multiple storage solutions onto one common platform with Azure Stack HCI. This will not only reduce complexity and simplify the management of global IT operations, but reduce costs too.

And with Lenovo ThinkAgile MX Series appliances underpinning the new HCI environments, Yara can provide higher availability and greater capacity for virtual servers at the production plants—helping them to keep manufacturing operations running reliably.



Standardizes IT across
25 production plants



Provides high
availability for
local applications



Simplifies IT
management



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“With Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI, we’re standardizing our Edge platforms at production plants in line with our cloud hosting strategy and driving greater efficiencies.”

Peter De Herdt

IT/OT Services Manager, Yara International

Why **Lenovo**?

Lenovo ThinkAgile MX Series for Azure Stack HCI is a complete solution validated by Microsoft and fully covered by Lenovo Premier Support.

“We looked at other hardware vendors certified by Microsoft, but Lenovo ThinkAgile MX Series stood out,” says De Herdt. “We liked the fact that Lenovo provided more technical details than other vendors and helped us to tailor the design of the solution to meet our needs. Another key consideration was Lenovo’s global support coverage, as our production sites are based all around the world.”



How do you keep global operations running smoothly?

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